



Tasting Notes
November 2017 Pick-up
“Festive Holiday Wines of the World”

Welcome to your November 2017 Smart Wine Club pickup. We'll be exploring festive wines from all over the globe, perfect for the upcoming holidays. Moving forward, I've decided to focus each November wine pickup on festive wines rather than a particular region.

My choices include some sparkles and some bottles that I think will work well at a cocktail party or with your holiday meals. All are great options for a hostess gift as well – not that you want to give away all your wine! If you do end up loving one of these and want to make it your “house wine” this season, just let me know – I'd be happy to help with a special order.

Please tell your wine-loving friends about our wonderful little Smart Wine Club – an extra tote makes a great holiday gift for a good friend or special client, as well.

Keep an eye out on your email – I'll be planning a little wine get-together for our group coming up in early December – don't miss it.

I wish you the Happiest of Holidays over the next couple months. I hope you will enjoy sharing these wines with your nearest and dearest friends and family, and I hope that they will add to the joyousness of the occasion.

- **2015 Domaine Rosier Blanquette de Limoux, Languedoc, FR** – This fun sparkling wine is made in the traditional “methode champenoise” meaning the secondary fermentation occurs in the bottle. It is produced from 90% Mauzac, a grape indigenous to the Languedoc region, plus 10% Chardonnay. It is nice and dry with small fine bubbles, making it a wonderful affordable alternative to champagne. The label is fun and colorful too, which makes it a great one to bring to a lively party!
Reg retail: \$13 Smart price: \$12

Pairing: I always enjoy champagne-style wines with Classic Lays potato chips! Try it, you'll love it. Also a good partner for creamy risotto, brie-style cheeses and shellfish.

- **2016 Ca de Medici Rosso Frizzante “Terra Calda”, Emilia-Romagna, IT** – Remember I said the bottle of this one was unforgettable? Now you know what I mean! This lightly sparkling wine provides a soft foam atop a beautiful crimson color in the glass. Bursting with strawberry, cherry and red currant, plus hints of floral and creamy notes.
Reg retail: \$16 Smart price: \$14

Pairing: Bring this to a casual party and surprise your friends. Sparkling lambruscos are a match made in heaven with charcuterie. This bottle plus your favorite tasty salami make you the hit of the party.

- **2015 Chateau de Montfaucon Viognier, Rhone, FR** – The Montfaucon is a lovely interpretation of Viognier. Rich texture and very aromatic without becoming soapy or obnoxious. Can stand up to poultry and pork, as well as seafood. A great choice for a white on your Thanksgiving table.
Reg retail: \$18 Smart price: \$16

Pairing: This would be beautiful with grilled salmon or Dungeness crab, but as I mentioned, I think it would stand up well to the variety of dishes at Thanksgiving, too.

- **2014 Chateau de la Caunettes Cabardès Rouge, Languedoc, FR** – This attractive red is made by a family-owned tenth-generation winery. It’s a blend of 20% each Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Syrah and Grenache; plus 10% Malbec and Cab Franc. Easy-drinking, with dark plum and cherry, licorice and violet on the nose. Fine tannins provide a silky texture plus a surprisingly long finish.
Reg retail: \$14 Smart price: \$13

Pairing: Ready for a break from the hectic rush of the holidays? Stay in, make some comfort food, and enjoy this with a special someone. It would be lovely with a slow-cooked dish like Coq au Vin or Cassoulet.

- **2015 Domaine du Pas St. Martin Saumur Rouge “La Pierre Frite”, Loire, FR** – My wine rep visited this winery this fall, so she has a soft spot in her heart for this lovely Cabernet Franc, and after tasting it, I can understand why. The grapes are organically farmed and family-owned. The classic nose of bursting ripe blueberries really comes forward, along with graphite and a rich earthiness. Reg retail: \$18 Smart price: \$16

Pairing: This is my second pick for your Thanksgiving table. It will be a perfect match for your roast turkey and sides. Enjoy.

- **2015 Bodegas Noemía “A Lisa” Malbec, Patagonia, AG** – This is widely considered the greatest wine of the Rio Negro Valley, an intriguing cold desert region in Patagonia. The 2015 may be the best vintage produced yet, receiving top scores including 93 points from Robert Parker. Made from 90% Malbec plus 9% Merlot and 1% Petit Verdot, it is aged in neutral oak and stainless steel, producing great balance and freshness. Supple and elegant, with aromas of raspberry, mocha, leather and pepper. A really great value for an excellent bottle of wine.
Reg retail: \$22 Smart price: \$19

Pairing: If you serve beef for your holiday meal, you may want to consider this lovely bottle for a nice treat. You could cellar it for a couple years if you choose, but it is drinking well now.