



Jim's Value White Wines

HERE ARE SOME GREAT white value wines to enjoy this summer and beyond.

Tenshøn 2015 (\$16–20) Although a California wine (from Santa Barbara), this is a blend of three Rhône varietals, Rousanne, Viognier, and Grenache Blanc, with a small amount of Chardonnay added. It is widely appealing due to dry to off dry taste and an intriguing nose of floral and fruits. Tenshøn is excellent by itself, or with food such as lighter fare chicken and fish, as well as interesting salads. Drink over the next two years. It was recently (2016) rated in “Wine Spectator’s Top 100” wines of the world.

Tablas Creek, Patelin de Blanc 2015 (\$18–20) Tablas Creek wines are produced in Paso Robles, Calif., the joint venture of Château de Beaucastel owners (Perrin) and the U.S. importer of same (Robert Haas). Tablas Creek produces wines only from those varietals which are used in Rhône wines. This stunning wine is similar to Tenshøn, but includes four Rhône varieties, Grenache Blanc, Roussanne, Marsanne, and Viognier, but is made without any Chardonnay. It matches well with Niçoise salad and light fish with fennel, mussels Marinier, and many light-bodied cheeses. Although a U.S. wine, it drinks like a Rhône with nose of lemon, minerality, and apricot in the mouth. There is great

acidity, yet creamy with hints of green apple, grapefruit, and spice. This wine will age for three years and is also a great wine by itself.

Leeuwin Estate Art Series Chardonnay 2013 (\$70) This wine is a sure bet to contend as Australia’s best white wine and this year is no exception. It is very highly-rated by the press and does not disappoint. It has been produced for a third of a century by the Horgan family and takes its place at the apex of world-class Chardonnays regardless of place of origin, pedigree, or price. I have enjoyed this wine from most vintages and have never been disappointed. It ages extremely well (I am now drinking the 2002) and it takes its place stylistically with Corton Charlemagne when mature at a small fraction of the price. It is perfectly married with lobster or salmon. If consumed young, it rewards several hours in a decanter to round its intense aroma and tastes of lime, pear, lemon, and peach.

Baumard Clos du Papillon 2010 (\$35) Although Chenin Blanc is not one of my favorite wine grapes, it is responsible for one of my most cherished wines. This wine comes from the appellation of Savennières, in the Loire Valley in France. Both dry and sweet wines are made there, but this is the flagship

dry wine from Baumard, Clos du Papillon. I hesitate to write about this wine as it is very difficult to find; however the 2010 vintage has just been released and is currently in the market. At \$40 or less, I can say with no reservations that this is the best value wine for me I have ever found. Unfortunately, drinking it comes with a treasure hunt. It is produced in great years (2010 is one of the best) and can be aged for 10-20 years improving all the while. I am drinking my 2005 currently, and no wine makes me happier. It is bone dry, but with a mouthfeel that is beguiling. It is rich and textured and so complementary with so many fruits of the sea, especially crustaceans and firm white fish. Every time I have this wine, suffused with high acidity and intense minerality, I am convinced it is my favorite wine ‘deal’ and regardless of money, there are few if any wines I prefer to this icon.

Tenuta San Antonio Scaia (\$10) This Scaia was my new white wine find in 2016. It is an immensely satisfying summer wine. It is a blend of Garganega (50 percent), Trebbiano (30 percent), and some Chardonnay (20 percent). The result is extremely enjoyable and so good it is gone before you realize it. It has a very interesting glass closure so it is easy to open and prevents incidence of ‘corked’ wines. Produced by Tenuta San Antonio in Italy’s Veneto region, it has low acidity and ample fruit notes. It pairs well with white fish and lighter foods such as salads, soups, and is great by itself.

In addition to the featured wines in this article, I suggest you refer to the May/June 2014 issue “White Wine Values” and the March/April 2013 issue “Favorite White Wines and Food” from *Quintessential Barrington* (qbarrington.com). Most of the wines referenced therein are still available in this market but different vintages and are excellent values. A *Voire Santé!*

PHOTO: THOMAS BALSANO



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