

The Hanes Wine Review, August 2014 Edition

Whoa. Really have not been drinking much wine past few weeks, really months. This is obvious when you have twenty something tasting notes done in like four months' time. Just as funny, it is obvious that the stuff one *is* buying is mostly mailing list wine as these wines show up as around 50% of the total wines reviewed. Been sick, been apathetic, been drinking beer. Plus it really is kinda demoralizing when most of one's "drinking peers" view every day wine as \$20 to \$30 a bottle. Ehh, who knows. This too shall pass.

Anyway. here's what we have. Timeliness is no longer a Hanes trademark. If something sounds interesting hopefully you can find it. Or at least know which winery direct mailing list to sign up for.

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This month's big winners... Bellivière is just a great producer out of the Loire and it is a legitimate question as to why Hanes does not buy their wine more frequently, even at their hefty prices. Witness the 2012 Chenin Blanc "Les Rosiers," a wonderful wine of complexity and richness. Arguably well worth the \$40. Hanes drinks so much Bedrock these days he can't keep them apart. Luckily they are adding new bottlings to their lineup. This will help clear things up. Based on numeric scores, it seems that the 2012 Papera Ranch Heritage blend is the winner this time around. Has been some time since last had a non-vintage bottling of Camille Savès Brut Rosé and it is still as remembered, kick ass bubbly. And at \$42, actually pretty reasonable. The Sherry wines of Lustau are uniformly excellent and because they are Sherry no one will care. Very much enjoyed the Moscatel Emilín Solera Reserva.

The best \$20 and under picks... Not much going on these days. Maybe Hanes has to readjust again and make bargain picks under \$30. Anyway, the 2012 Lioco Chardonnay "Sonoma County" bottling was pretty good, and only like \$19. Silvio Grasso's 2012 Langhe Dolcetto is pretty much why you buy Dolcetto, bright and lively and more about zip than complexity. Hard to argue with the results for about \$11. The Domaine du Salvard 2013 Cheverny was quite credible for \$13 and that is saying something. Worth actively seeking out. Have mentioned the wines of Borell-Diehl from Germany before and they remain a consistent value producer. You are missing out if you are missing out.

And the disappointments... Finally got to sit down one-on-one and review a bottle of Yvon Métras Beaujolais. In particular the 2012 Fleurie, which is about \$46. Métras is the darling of Beaujolais these days. Or was that last week? It has been awhile since a review has come out, Hanes may already be out of touch. Good wine, but not all that. Not sure Hanes will buy again at these prices. Was surprised by the Bedrock wine from the Teldeschi Vineyard, thought it would be better. Usually liked the old Ravenswood Zinfandel wines from this vineyard. Go figure. Been some time since trying Moro's "Finca Resalso" bottling from Ribera del Duero, Spain. Seemed to remember it being decent for the price. Whoops. Ehh at best and on the spoofy side (this is not good for those who are light on the lingo).

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Unlike *those other* professional reviews, Hanes only will share what he likes if it is *currently available* in stores for immediate purchase. If these wines are not to be found in some of your local stores, they suck and that's not Hanes's fault.

If you are interested in reading tasting notes by Hanes on the *older (or non-imported) wines* he has recently consumed, these notes are gathered here: <http://www.haneswinereview.com/reviews/oldervintages2014.html>

If you are interested in reading tasting notes by Hanes on *beer* he has recently consumed, these notes are gathered here: <http://www.haneswinereview.com/reviews/beer.html>

Here's the order in which Hanes humbly provides the wine review information:

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Winery/Producer Name

Region of Origin, Appellation, Brand Name/Wine Style, Single Vineyard (if any applicable)

Grape Type

Vintage Year, Price Hanes Paid (if available), Alcohol Percentage (if available)

Tasting Notes, Hanes's Numeric Score (on the traditional, yet inane, 100 point scale (which for Hanes truly begins at around 80 points and more or less ends around 94 points)

And here's Hanes's wine reviews for August!

CALIFORNIA RED

Bedrock Wine Co.

Russian River Valley, Papera Ranch, Papera Ranch Heritage Blend

Blend

2012, \$36.00, 14.7%

Fat glow to the impenetrable black purple core, the rims an equal mix of pink magenta and crimson red, just looks big. Primary nose, overstuffed with plum, ripe blackberry, black cherry fruit, heavy floral musk, milk chocolate chunks, blends in sour orange to grapefruit notes, cinnamon and beef jerky, develops a high toned and somewhat briny lift which is very interesting, sneaky complexity given dependence on the fruit. Full-bodied, about as smooth and fluid as can be expected for its weight, more concentration than raw sugariness in the blueberry, boysenberry, cherry fruit. Good acidity, heightens the floral side and helps to minimize the chocolate, peanut shell, ginger notes. The leather, iodine, mineral stuff helps flesh out the finish and keep you attentive. No doubt it leans on the fruit but not simple and leaves you suspecting it just might reward aging. Approximately 60% Zinfandel, 40% Carignane. 91

Lagier Meredith

Napa Valley, Mount Veeder

Mondeuse

2011, \$42.00, 13.5%

About as much crimson red in the core as purple, clear enough to avoid opacity, the rims a deep scarlet hue, overall has a "vengeful" look to it, all menacing reds. The nose has a loamy character but no real greenness, gets its snap from white pepper and metal flecks, oodles of zip in the red cherry, cranberry fruit scents, while not lean there is a certain "raciness" to its presentation. In the mouth it's medium-bodied, wiry with even more emphasis on its peppery qualities as well as mineral earth and tar to tobacco leaf components. The white grapefruit comes on with a vengeance in the mid-palate. More contour than flesh in the tart red berry, cherry fruit, the better for it. Long,

crunchy finish, filled with life and any oak is kept well within acceptable range. 90

Bedrock Wine Co.

Sonoma Valley, Weill a Way Vineyard, Mixed Blacks Blend

2012, \$36.00, 15.0%

The dark purple core slips over into opacity, deep cranberry red rims, lots of saturation and glow, clean throughout. While there is a healthy amount of vanilla and caramel in the nose, it is the vast majority comprised of free run blackberry, boysenberry, blueberry juice, there's something floral or minty too, manages to avoid being too heavy although having "lift" might be pushing it. Full-bodied, with a bit of effort stretches out from start to finish line, as if reclined on a couch. Sweet blackberry, blueberry, cherry to Italian plum fruit not as juicy here, however, sweetness is not an issue as the chocolate, vanilla, toffee, coffee has plenty of kick. Mint, lilacs, ginger, decent supporting cast, not tannic per se but gets clumpy at times texturally speaking. A "fun" wine with loads of flavor without being saccharine. Unspecified percentages of Zinfandel, Petite Sirah, Alicante Bouschet, Grenache, Tempranillo, Mourvèdre. 90

Turley

Central Valley, Lodi, Kirschenmann Vineyard

Zinfandel

2012, \$32.00, 15.3%

Very clear and trim garnet to violet hue, the rims a steady scarlet, more bright than deep. The nose offers raspberry, blackberry liqueur notes, coconut custard, butterscotch, subtle but consistent eucalyptus like accents, a good bit of citrus blossom too, has a pleasingly open lift, good tradeoff for any lack of persistence. Light to medium-bodied, smooth and yet possessed of good grip by the finish. Full array of strawberry, blackberry, apricot and apple fruit, light and zippy. Once it clamps down, that molasses, butterscotch, grill smoke increases at a swift pace along with mint. Offers a modicum of herbal, earthy kick at the end. Not really that pleasurable yet very honest and wears any roughness proudly. 89

Bedrock Wine Co.
Sonoma Valley, Bedrock Vineyard, The Bedrock Heritage Blend
2012, \$36.00, 14.8%
Bright red-magenta to violet in color, transparent on the whole with luminescent pinkish ruby rims, extremely reflective surface. The nose is like a candy store of butterscotch, toffee, milk chocolate intermixed with crushed blueberries, blackberries, cherries, has an oddly high toned dissolve which features sour orange peel, dried out potpourri, pine needles, kind of sends it lurching to one side. Full-bodied, evinces a dry, tacky mouth feel from the start, has a smoky to stony element which forestalls the coming of flowers, citrus blossom and the blackberry, cherry to red currant fruit. As it opens the oak recedes, still, there's a healthy amount of caramel, vanilla, butterscotch. Even at this youthful stage it curiously seems reluctant to enjoy its fruitiness, opting to play up its structure, albeit not an obviously tannic nor acidic wine. Kind of makes you reserve judgment. Approximately 55% Zinfandel, 20% Carignane, remainder unspecified percentages of Petite Sirah, Alicante Bouschet, Grand Noir de la Calmette, Syrah, Tempranillo, Trousseau, Mission, Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon. 88

Bedrock Wine Co.
Regional Blend, North Coast Syrah
2012, \$19.00, 14.5%
Kind of gauziness from when you stare at the sun in the otherwise saturated purple core, broad garnet rims, youthful and yet menacing after a fashion, all blood reds and such. The nose is dense, floral dew and orange to pink grapefruit spritz, borderline grapey, mostly Italian plum and boysenberry scents, maple syrup to mesquite grill smoke accents, doesn't quite release and lift as one might like but, again, no lack of stuffing. In the mouth it's medium-bodied, some peanut shell and coffee grind stuff to frame the attack, comes across as slightly more tannic than acidic but not strong in either regard. Cocoa, not really oaky, some mint intermixed with the grapefruit, eucalyptus and tanned leather. Strong core of plum, blackberry, black cherry fruit, pushes well into the finish. Easy enough to drink and no rough edges, perhaps lacking in distinct personality. Grapes sourced from Weill Vineyard, Hudson Vineyard, Griffin's Lair, Rossi Ranch, Alder Springs Vineyard. 88

Bedrock Wine Co.
Dry Creek Valley, Teldeschi Vineyard, Lorenzo's Heritage Blend
2012, \$36.00, 14.9%

Surprisingly clear and clean red magenta inflected purple core, not overly saturated, the rims take on a surprising amount of crimson red, at times looks a little older than it actually is. Sort of grapey nose, the fruit paste aspect extends the cherry, blackberry on into apricot and peach scents, the caramel eventually run down by toastier notes, touches of mint, grapefruit pith and pressed flowers in there, on the whole primary and chunky. Full-bodied, equally gluey in the mouth, spotlight squarely on blueberry, apricot, cherry, blackberry fruit, more jammy than outside sugary sweet. The oak brings caramel, butterscotch to the fore but you sense that even at this relatively early juncture it has started to pull back and knit in. Violets, orange sherbet, licorice drift in and out. Not discerning any meaningful tannin nor acidity presence. Weight gives it upright bearing. Leaves you empty handed as you search for something profound to say about it. Approximately 60% Zinfandel, 25% Carignane, remainder Petite Sirah, Alicante Bouschet, Cinsault, Valdigue', and other. 88

Turley
Contra Costa County, Duarte Vineyard Zinfandel
2012, \$32.00, 15.0%
Straightforward purple core of moderate opacity, not close to "impenetrable," fairly wide pinkish magenta to ruby rims, has very good surface shine, on the whole nothing striking about it which is in and of itself striking. Mint, eucalyptus, spiced oranges and chocolate create a pretty yet still openly knit nose, not that dense nor heavy, the plum, blackberry, cherry scents do come with an edge of prune to date, at times evokes more of a "white fruit" element, only a light dusty earthiness or meadow grass to it, marked most by ever present yet not showy fruitiness. Medium-bodied, sandpapery texture which could be considered smooth and gritty at once. Caramel, butterscotch, milk chocolate and mesquite grill smoke remind you there's oak involved, recedes an inch or two to create space for the only moderately strong prune, blueberry, raspberry, cherry fruit, less of the dried fruit stuff. You might credit some acidity to it but that's a judgment call. Still, doesn't seem unstructured, closer to the opposite. Mint, flowers, grapefruit to blood orange citrus, all garnish the mid-palate. What's missing here is fun – the components are basically there but it lacks an infectious joyfulness. 88

CALIFORNIA WHITE

Bedrock Wine Co.
Napa Valley, Abrente
Albariño

2013, \$22.00, 13.0%

Although there is a deep golden cast to it yet it maintains a transparency if not an especially brilliant shine. Salty, saline like quality to the nose, seashells and lemon to orange peel, the fruit scents are mainly green apple, peach and cherry, slight floral aspect, rugged without turning hard on you. Full-bodied with good forward momentum, the acidity is there but overall it leans more on density and firmness for textural effect. Florality better here, however, the seashell, chalk, saline stuff takes up a lot of room, even more as it warms. Perhaps more savory than sweet, the pear, apple, peach fruit pushed offstage with minimal struggle. That said, there is a mild vanilla and cinnamon stick undercurrent. Arguably turns too tart through the finish, yet this is a wine optimally enjoyed with food so better clean and brisk than diffuse. Just don't expect delicate movements. (Screwcap) 88

Lioco
Sonoma County
Chardonnay

2012, \$18.99, 13.5%

Straw yellow in color, curiously switches between bright and dull depending on the moment, minor loss around the rims, shows some fizz trace clinging to the glass sides. The nose has a slight toast to it, more floral and lime to lemon driven, not a lot of excess fat on the bones, apricot, peach and nectarine, all white fruit notes, leaves a clean impression behind. In the mouth it's medium-bodied, has nice grip even if the acidity is a touch hard to gauge. The toast, burnt sugar mostly during the attack, vanilla and butterscotch, pushed aside by that lime, orange, lemon citrus which then takes up most of the mid-palate. Any fruit comes across as slimmed down, pear, apricot, peach, apple, all with a fruit pit character. There's a jalapeño, chili pepper nuance which weaves in and out. Starts kicking hard so that it runs across the finish line. Has its flaws but its intent is pure. The kind of wine you pop open with that person who has to have a California Chardonnay and you have to drink half the bottle. (Composite Cork) 88

CALIFORNIA ROSE

Bedrock Wine Co.
Regional Blend, California, Ode to Lulu Old Vine Rosé
Blend

2012, \$19.00, 12.3%

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Extremely bright watermelon reddish pink color, richness at the core accentuates the loss around the rims, close to metallic reflectivity. The nose highlights strawberry, rhubarb, green apple fruit with a dusting of cocoa powder, under the sweetness is a sweaty barnyard thing going on, ends with an uptick in orange and grapefruit peel and crushed pulp. Full-bodied, layers itself heavily on the tongue, there's acidity there but it doesn't dance nimbly. The tangerine, lemon citrus has bite and asserts itself right out of the starting gate, knocks the cocoa, chocolate thing off to the side. Sour aspect to the strawberry, raspberry, watermelon, cherry fruit, more density than flamboyant sweetness. Notes of licorice, anise and roses give it dimension. You have to like its firm grip through the finish, can't help but pay attention to it. Likely needs food, and substantial food at that, to strut its stuff optimally. Unspecified percentages of Mourvèdre (Bedrock Vineyard, Pagani Ranch), Grenache (Gibson Ranch), Carignane (Contra Costa County). (Screwcap) 88

Lagier Meredith
Napa Valley, Mount Veeder, Rosé
Blend

2013, \$20.00, 14.3%

Bright metallic pink color while also deep, nothing wimpy visually, holds pretty well into the rims too, overall on the darker side of rosé. Savory nose with a saline element as well as grassy foundation, the fruit tends to congeal together rather than remain distinct, raspberry, strawberry, red cherry, rhubarb, mild citrus element, touch of cocoa and vanilla, then a briny pickled blast, the fruit occupies more space as it warms near room temperature. Full-bodied, solid tannic structure to it, dry and with above average grip, ripeness above sweetness. There is a certain bitterness in the white grapefruit, orange citrus, particularly during mouth entry. Raspberry, blackberry, cherry fruit here, closer to red wine than rosé. Loses a lot of the chocolate and related flavors, increases a gentle earthiness. Could be brighter and livelier, however, if you needed a heavier rosé to pair with certain food, stays in the conversation. 79% Syrah, 16% Zinfandel, 5% Mondeuse. (Composite Cork) 88

FRANCE RED

Métras, Yvon
Beaujolais, Fleurie
Gamay Noir

2012, \$45.99, 12.5%

A mild filminess helps cement the glow in the mostly ruby red, and violet tinged, core, stays fairly consistent through the well-hued rims, but by no means is there what you'd consider real "saturation." There is a barnyard funk initially to the nose, however, the

richness of the raspberry, cranberry, rhubarb fruit tends to compensate, mixed white citrus, a little brine, more than than any flowers, incipient leather and damp earth. In the mouth it is medium-bodied in terms of weight but has volume, fills up the mouth. Loaded with stones, stones and more stones, can't shake that briny quality, tart sort of smokiness. The white grapefruit, orange citrus on the sour side. The acidity more like being smacked with a blunt instrument than cut by a knife, probably makes the red cherry, raspberry, cranberry fruit in turn more sour and slightly truncates. It's a very nice wine, perhaps too chunky to be called "transparent" and certain that many would aver a wine which only show its best with many a year on it. 89

Arretxea, Maison
Southwest France, Irouléguay
Blend
2010, \$27.99, 12.0%

Even with excellent clarity the purple core has sufficient black to edge into brooding territory, the rims display a burnt crimson cast, youthful in its own fashion but likely to take on all kinds of other colors with age. The nose comes up with a good deal of tobacco ash, tar and white grapefruit, supported by equal burst of green pepper and rose petals, no weakness in the cherry, dark berry fruit scents but they do get lost in the shuffle. Medium-bodied, it feels like the tannin has been actively managed yet it still packs plenty of punch. The sour grapefruit, orange citrus and high toned floral notes frame the attack. More poor dirt and stones here than gooey tar. Black tea leaves, bell pepper, cigar ash and iodine. Dry enough that the cherry, plum, blackberry fruit struggles to find length. Good wine, guileless, not overwrought. Just not great. 66% Tannat, 17% Cabernet Franc, 17% Cabernet Sauvignon. 88

Nalys, Domaine de
Rhône, Châteauneuf-du-Pape
Blend
2010, \$34.99, 14.5%

Blackish purple core, mostly opaque, thick orange to red brick rims, above average saturation, pools deeply. The nose is fluffy and big, all sweet plum, blackberry, raspberry fruit with a floral perfume and cinnamon spice, orange juice, some wooly qualities, on the mute side without much activity. Medium-bodied, full cheek to cheek, more tannic than expected, still it leads with cocoa, orange peel, crushed wildflowers and some caramel notes. Full range of fruit, from plum and cherry to green apple, while almost nothing but that fruit it is also sort of stern and unyielding. It's alright, just that, probably an early term drinker. 50% Grenache, 30% Syrah, 20% blend of Mourvèdre, Cinsaut, Vaccarèse, Terret Noir, Counoise. 87

FRANCE WHITE

Bellivière, Domaine de
Loire, Jasnières, Les Rosiers
Chenin Blanc
2012, \$39.99, 12.0%

Solid golden color with just a touch of bronze, not especially clear nor shiny, however, enjoyable for how it visually fills the glass. Powdered stones and dried lime, grapefruit pulp appear first in the nose, roses and lilacs, the fruit scents are full but lack separation, more a blending of pear, yellow apple, peach scents, too relaxed to be tropical, ends with a powerful burst of black licorice. Full-bodied, enough so that it starts to layer on the tongue before the acidity gets revved up. Impressive given that said acidity kicks like a mule. Savory with garden herb, saline and iron fleck notes, here the grapefruit, lime gets super tangy too. While there is that "apple juice" softness the fruit also ranges into pineapple, papaya, nectarine, star fruit territory. Licorice and anise continue to play a featured role. Its density extends the finish quite a bit. Benefits both from aeration as well as getting closer to room temperature. Yeasty, doughy after images at the very end. 92

Salvard, Domaine du
Loire, Cheverny
Blend
2013, \$12.99, 12.0%

Bright, if pale, white green straw hued liquid, transparent, for all its lack of color has a strong presence in the glass. Ripe tangerine to white grapefruit in the nose, sparkly presence, chalk dust and stone, begins to turn strongly herbaceous but prefers to stay on the sweet side, does have a bell to chili pepper edge though, fully ripened pear, green apple, apricot fruit as well, has good push to it as well as overall length. In the mouth it's medium-bodied, lots of acidity, dusty mouth feel most of the time with a peppery sting as well. Almost something like vanilla or cinnamon sprinkled on the apricot, peach, pear, apple fruit, the mid-palate is as sweet as can be given the acidity. Lime, tangerine, grapefruit take up most of the ground through the finish. As in the nose, the palate maintains a certain level of herbaceousness but could never be accused of being green. Clean finish with a spicy splash. Can easily be sipped on its own but may be best with food which would take the edge off. 85% Sauvignon Blanc, 15% Chardonnay. (Composite Cork) 88

FRANCE ROSE

Lauverjat, Karine
Loire, Sancerre, Rosé
Pinot Noir
2013, \$15.99, 12.5%

While light and fully transparent, the pink coloration has great brightness and positively sparkles in the glass, barely fades at the rims too. Rose petals, orange and white grapefruit peels, and stone dust create the first impressions in the nose then there's a powerful blast of bubblegum, kind of hard to recover from, even some banana in there too, cloaks the strawberry, watermelon, red cherry scents. In the mouth it's medium-bodied, while it has pretty gosh darn good acidity its weight tends to make it lurch good-naturedly now and then. Touch more purity to the strawberry, raspberry, watermelon, green apple fruit and not unduly sweet. The citrus pulls back, somehow you actually get an increase in stoniness. That bubblegum stuff wafts in and out, hard to predict. Overall, more fun than worth the investment of time analyzing. 87

FRANCE SPARKLING

Savès, Camille
Champagne, Grand Cru Brut Cuvée Rosé
Blend
NV, \$41.99, 12.0%

Pours a huge frothy, head which eventually simmers down to a solid quarter inch coating across the surface, inside the glass is a whirlwind storm of bubbles, like more bubbles than liquid. That liquid itself is a pale salmon pink with a light orange tint, holds credibly through the rims. Fruity nose of strawberry, watermelon, red cherry fruit, orange purée, light and clean stony character yet a minimal presence, hint of vanilla, engaging and agreeable. Medium-bodied, luckily all that fizz does not translate into a too bubblicious mouth feel, just nice scrubbing sensation in support of greater chalkiness and a nicely dry finish. Before that, though, drips with strawberry, raspberry, apricot, cherry fruit and a good amount of white grapefruit, lemon citrus as well as mint. It's not a "sucking on stones" experience so those who prefer that will be disappointed. 60% Chardonnay, 40% Pinot Noir. (L9408) 91

Penet, Alexandre
Champagne, Extra Brut
Blend
NV, \$39.99, 12.0%

Has a deep almost brownish straw coloration, looks mature, strong pétillance, the glass center fills with fat bubbles. The nose is firm yet agreeable, dried honey,

orange peel, licorice, brioche, not that minerally, the fruit mostly apple, pear and apricot but not a major factor, benefits from cleanliness and weight more than diversity of scents. Medium-bodied, clearly on the dry side but lacks precision and cut, this not necessarily a flaw. Lands squarely on the tongue, the acidity level is good plus, not a distracting force. The toastiness is low, here you get a greater amount of chalkiness. Likewise, richer bread notes to go along with dried flowers and anise. The show stealer is the orange, white grapefruit citrus, really struts its stuff. As in the nose, the apple, apricot, pineapple fruit mainly an afterthought. Nice enough, nothing remarkable, though. 40% Chardonnay, 30% Pinot Noir, 30% Pinot Meunier. 87

ITALY RED

Grasso, Silvio
Piedmont, Langhe
Dolcetto
2012, \$10.99, 13.5%

Unblemished and semi-transparent in spite of the deepness of the purple core, equally vivid red-ruby rims and fair girth. The nose is light of touch with a sour profile based in cherry, blackberry, cranberry fruit, dried flowers, earth and grass, slight citric bite, any cocoa accent is minimal, most pleasant for its airy and open nature. Light-bodied, the acidity takes charge from the first sip, gives things a "red fruit" character like raspberry, cranberry, red cherry. All plays up flowers, sweet garden herbs, pine and sour orange to white grapefruit citrus, finishes with a leathery quality which firms up the mouth feel. Moderate astringency at the end. You can always feel it's there but if you choose to look elsewhere it won't request your attention. In this manner it speaks to the general "purpose" of Dolcetto, a humble and guileless red to accompany food. Mission accomplished. 89

Pecchenino, Fratelli
Piedmont, Dolcetto di Dogliani, San Luigi
Dolcetto
2012, \$13.99, 13.5%

Spotless liquid, while the core is a darker purple it remains as close to transparent as possible, more of a reddish magenta further towards the rims, brightly saturated and lively. Sour cherries and plums infuse the nose, straw, grass and dried wildflowers, mild smattering of cocoa, lightly stony as well, pleasingly simple and not overdone, trails off rather than keep forcing itself on you. Light to medium-bodied, good supporting tannin, drying so that the overall sweetness is kept in check. Sour orange and grapefruit citrus, florality and a mild chocolate powder breathe life into the blackberry, cherry, plum fruit which might

otherwise come off as evanescent. Smooth and fluid, only the tannin adds any rougher texture. There is a sort of “modern” feel to it, however, its general restraint is definitely in its favor. (Composite Cork: Diam5) 88

GERMANY WHITE

Borell-Diehl, Weingut
Pfalz, Kabinett AP #43
Gewürztraminer
2012, \$10.99, 11.0%

Rich golden hue, sits solidly in the glass, color holds credibly to the rims, glassy surface, looks “full” in an anticipatory manner, as if it will taste the same. The nose is light on the honey, the apricot, peach, melon fruit scents more ripe than concentrated, the biggest part is the floral dew, after that lychee nut and orange to lemon citrus, for its weight and lengthy follow-through it’s also nimble and fresh. In the mouth the acidity is quite active, lively entry. Teases out mango, pineapple, kiwi alongside the base of apricot and peach. Sugary, sweet lime and pink grapefruit, tangelo citrus, really ups its game here. Rose petals, heavy floral lift. Blanched nuts, more lychee, molasses sprinkle goodness on the tongue. Were it not for the acidity, the sweetness might be too much. Melts creamily through the finish. (Screwcap) 89

SPAIN RED

Moro, Bodegas Emilio
Ribera del Duero, Finca Resalso
Tempranillo
2012, \$12.99, 13.5%

Saturated glow in the black-purple core, the rims are a thick dark magenta, while youthful also looks “serious” and crafted for effect. The nose betrays a measure of peanut shell, cocoa, toasted bread, cedar and then licorice and sweet cooking herbs before finally calling forth blackberry, boysenberry, black cherry scents, mild floral lift, on the whole hard to say it’s complex but has girth and a genial softness in the nostrils. Medium-bodied, the oak prevalent through the attack with vanilla, mocha, cedar, hard butterscotch candy notes as well as potpourri and a ripe but more dusty than wet plum, cherry, blueberry fruit array. Hard to call it naturally tannic or acidic but the dryness does start to clump up by the finish, not flowing all that easily. The finish is on the short side and close to bitter. The wine is not flawed, however, it comes across as the primary material lacks the inherent strength to be shaped according to winemaker intent. Would do it a pinch and your average wino would have few if any complaints. 86

SPAIN DESSERT

Lustau, Emilio
Jerez-Xérès-Sherry, Moscatel Emilín Solera Reserva
Sherry
Muscatel
NV, \$23.99, 17.0%

The core is brown with a slightly reddish tinge, the rims a pure and clear yellow, overall has a good vibrancy and brightness to it. The nose has a pleasingly subdued nature to it, fig, date, white grape, green apple fruit scents, cinnamon spice, orange peel, candied nuts, layer of dried honey, no discernible alcoholic burn, gentle dissolve. Medium-bodied, sure it is sweet but it has acidity and structure and stands erectly from start to finish. More flor, dough notes here and the honey, molasses element takes it up a couple of notches. Tangy orange marmalade, then ginger, cinnamon spice, some potpourri as well, sort of musky mid-palate. The fruit ranges from fresher apricot, apple, pear to dried fig, date, golden raisin. Balanced and consistent without undue force. Perfect for sipping and can pair with a variety of desserts without overwhelming any. 91