

**Herb's Half Case Wine Club April 2010**  
**Decatur Package Store ~ 1220 Clairmont Rd ~ Decatur GA 30030 ~ 404-633-5250**  
[decaturopackagestore.com](http://decaturopackagestore.com)

My non-Wine Club selection for the month is a **2007 Carr Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir**. I chose this Pinot Noir because it's from the up-and-coming Sonoma Coast area and it's great with a variety of foods. This example has light earth and smoke aromas that lead to supple, dark berry fruit on the palate. The fruit is perfectly ripe with just enough acidity and the finish is expressive with complex, ripe, red berry fruit. It's a great example of the quality and versatility of this varietal.

**2008 Falernia Reserva Pedro Ximenez (Elqui Valley, Chile)**

**Tasting Notes:** My salesperson had me at Pedro Ximenez. This grape is typically used in Spanish sherry and this is the first I've seen labeled as a single varietal. Aromas of limes and tropical fruits emerged from the glass. This white is pleasing on the palate with slightly bright, citrus and ripe, melon flavors. There's even a floral note, too. I like the melding of ripe and bright flavors in this wine – crisp, citrus flavors balanced with riper, tropical fruit flavors. The finish shows even more floral notes with lime and almond as well. An overwhelmingly enjoyable wine and a perfect choice for spring!

**Food Pairing:** This one is fresh, clean, and easy-drinking, so it's perfect as a back porch sipper or as a starter wine for your next gathering.

**2005 J. Moreau & Fils Chablis (Burgundy, France)**

**Tasting Notes:** If you've been in the store recently you'll have seen that I'm on a big Chablis kick. I know it's not as famous or desirable as Chardonnay from Beaune or Nuits, but I think it's a very tasty second. This example from the stellar 2005 vintage has a ripe apple aroma with hints of almond. This wine has a lovely mouthfeel that's soft and round with light lemon fruit flavors. It brightens up on the mid-palate with citrus and mineral notes. The finish is dry with a unique combination of citrus and tropical flavors. This is an elegant, multilayered Chardonnay.

**Food Pairing:** This is a perfect white for the holiday meal if you're serving ham or turkey. No oak and plenty of acidity make this one a great match for these dishes.  
FYI: Don't serve this one straight from the fridge or else you'll lose all of the subtleties.

**2008 Lucky Star Pinot Noir (California)**

**Tasting Notes:** The bar for under-\$10 Pinot Noir has been set at: "Will I feel guilty serving this to my in-laws?" In other words, it's not set very high. This example clears the bar and then some. It's a **TREMENDOUS** value! Light cranberry and earth aromas lead to smooth flavors of juicy, berry fruit, light spice, and hints of humus on the palate. This wine has complexity, structure, and balance! It even gets better with aeration. Trust me, this one is a winner.

**Food Pairing:** This Pinot Noir can be a dual-purpose choice. It's light enough to serve with apps and it's heavy enough to pair with the white above for your turkey or ham. Also Pinot Noir works well with the diverse flavors of the holiday side dishes.

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**2006 Aia della Macina Morellino di Scansano (Tuscany, Italy)**

**Tasting Notes:** Morellino di Scansano is both a region (in the Maremma sub-region in the southernmost part of Tuscany) and a grape variety (a clone of Sangiovese). Morellino is the bridge between rustic, "Old World" and fruit forward, "New World" styles. This example has a juicy, dark berry aroma. It's quite smooth and elegant on the palate with a lovely fruit component – lots of berry and cherry fruit. It's clean on the palate (versus the more rustic Chianti) with good acidity and body. As this wine opens the flavors become richer and heavier with a pleasant hint of spice as well. The finish shows strawberry and red berry fruit and good length. Nice everyday red.

**Food Pairing:** Here's the pizza/pasta red for the month. Medium-bodied with lots of flavor helps this one pair with many foods.

**2007 Bogle Cabernet Sauvignon (California)**

**Tasting Notes:** This is an excellent example of the "rising tide" effect of a great vintage (i.e. a great vintage lifts all wines/grapes). 2007 has been hailed as a classic vintage for Cabernet in California, and, after tasting many, I agree. What this means to you is higher quality grapes at all levels – from everyday quaffers to cellar worthy masterpieces. This example, filed in the quaffer category, is a surprisingly complex offering with gobs of cherry, vanilla, cedar, and spice flavors. It shows perfect ripeness and acidity. This is a VERY well-balanced wine (something the 2007's have in spades over the over-hyped 1997's). The finish is full-flavored with great length and plenty of dark berry fruit.

**Food Pairing:** This one is the choice if you're serving beef or lamb for the holiday. It's full-bodied enough to serve with heavier foods as well as having excellent structure.

**2007 Hook & Ladder The Tillerman Red (Russian River Valley, Sonoma County)**

**Tasting Notes:** I would classify this red blend as an Italian Bordeaux – 51% Cabernet Sauvignon, 24% Cabernet Franc, 15% Merlot, and 10% Sangiovese. Regardless of moniker, it works. It has a dark berry aroma with hints of bell pepper. It's quite smooth on the palate with an interesting fruit component. This blend has subdued flavors of freshly picked red berry fruit that isn't overwhelming. There's an inherent dryness in this wine making it a great partner with food. As it opens though, the fruit expands and the acidity diminishes. The finish shows nice concentration of black raspberry fruit with solid tannins and good length.

**Food Pairing:** This one's a "tweener" red. It's heavy enough to stand up to beef and lamb, but not too heavy for pork dishes. Your corresponding food choices are more diverse as well.

Cheers, Herb