

**Herb's Half Case Wine Club August 2011**  
**Decatur Package Store ~ 1220 Clairmont Rd ~ Decatur GA 30030 ~ 404-633-5250**  
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We're in the waning days of summer before final vacations are taken and kids return to school. I think you'll enjoy the whites this month, they provide welcome relief to the dog days of summer. The reds this month are more grilling reds, perfect for almost anything coming off the Weber. Enjoy!  
Cheers, Herb

My non-Wine Club selection for the month is the **NV Epsilon Sparkler** from Italy. There's no better time than the present to enjoy bubbles! This example has a dried apple aroma with a hint of Champagne-like mushrooms. It has good mousse with soft lemon flavors up front and golden delicious apple flavors on the mid-palate. If you want even more glamour, add a splash of Aperol for an Aperol Fizz!

**2009 Paso a Paso Verdejo (La Mancha, Spain)**

**Tasting Notes:** This is a softer style of Verdejo without the heavy citrus component. It has aromas of tropical fruits, even a hint of banana. This white has flavors of litchi, passion fruit, and mango. The mid-palate is pleasantly round and shows lots of flavor. The finish is pleasantly dry with very lengthy, tropical and ripe apple flavors. Nice white.

**Food Pairing:** This style of wine is my go-to back porch sipper – cold and crisp with gobs of clean fruit. It's the perfect relief for a hot day. Otherwise, use this as a starter wine with light appetizers. This would also pair well with chicken salad..

**2008 Zantho Grüner Veltliner (Burgenland, Austria)**

**Tasting Notes:** Gruner Veltliner is the perfect wine for the hot summer months. It's unoaked, clean, refreshing, and pairs with a variety of foods. This example has aromas of honeyed apples and almonds, which lead to medium-ripe apple flavors on the palate. This white was quite expressive, because it was served with just a slight chill, so don't serve this one straight from the fridge. The mid-palate shows medium-bright tangerine flavors with a hint of mineral. The finish is dry with lemon/lime flavors that turn to lemon curd. This is a surprisingly complex wine and a treat for the palate.

**Food Pairing:** Grüner Veltliner is quite versatile. It has enough flavor to stand on its own and can pair nicely with poultry and lighter meats (think German, Austrian food)

**2009 Seaglass Chardonnay (Santa Barbara County, California)**

**Tasting Notes:** This is a very good, lightly oaked Chardonnay. It has an aroma of nutmeg, which leads to subtle pear flavors on the palate. This Chardonnay has good acidity and ripeness with a lovely fruit component. The finish is slightly creamy with poached pear flavors and good length. This represents the style of California Chardonnay I can recommend: lovely fruit, hint of oak, and good acid balance to wrap it all together.

**Food Pairing:** This is an interesting choice because it has some oak, usually a food pairing issue. Luckily, it's a very light use of oak, so try to pair it with medium-bodied foods that have a low fat content. This white doesn't have enough acid to balance richer foods.

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**Pour Favor Red (Campo de Borja, Spain)**

**Tasting Notes:** Confession time – I'm a sucker for clever labels. Not critter labels, those are too easy, but labels that demonstrate some wit. Luckily, this witty label delivers on quality. It's a blend of 70% Garnacha and 30% Syrah and has a vibrant berry aroma with a hint of white pepper. On the palate, it's smooth and lush with perfect ripeness and lovely flavors – raspberry with white pepper notes. There's even enough acid to balance this wonderful fruit. The finish has bright, "blue" fruits and dried herbs. Fresh and juicy with just enough complexity – well done!

**Food Pairing:** This is a good everyday red. It has plenty of flavor to enjoy by itself and enough structure to pair with everyday meals, such as pizza, burgers, pasta, and the like.

**2005 Casa Valduga Reserva Cabernet (Brazil)**

**Tasting Notes:** This is an interesting estate Cabernet from Brazil. It has a very complex aroma with roasted berry, meaty notes, dust, and earth. Stylistically, it's very Bordeaux-like, without the green pepper flavors, and a bit riper fruit component. On the palate you'll find dark berry fruit, forest floor notes, and a hint of cedar. With a year or so of bottle age, the tannins are light and integrated. The finish has good length and flavors of berry fruit and spice box.

**Food Pairing:** This is a more rustic, European styled wine with good body, so I would pair this with some type of meat from the grill. You could even try an herbed rub.

**2007 El Peral Reserva (Tupungato, Mendoza, Argentina)**

**Tasting Notes:** Here's another incredible red from Argentina. It's roughly equal parts Malbec, Cabernet, and Merlot with aromas of brambly, berry fruit, spice, and cedar. It has a pleasantly soft mouthfeel with more "black" fruits and vanilla notes on the palate. The red has excellent structure with good acidity and grip. The finish is dry with very flavorful cherry fruit. A great example of the quality and relative value of Argentine wines.

**Food Pairing:** I'll defer to the locals for this wine – beef from the grill, and plenty of it.