

Herb's Half Case Wine Club October 2011
Decatur Package Store ~ 1220 Clairmont Rd ~ Decatur GA 30030 ~ 404-633-5250
decaturplepackagestore.com

I'd like to reintroduce all of you to a long lost friend you might not have seen since spring...Hello, I'm your back porch and I've missed you. I don't know about you, but summer melted this Yankee. I've increased the number of reds to correspond to the change of seasons and have adjusted some of the food pairings as well. Enjoy!

Cheers, Herb

Saturday, November 5th 1PM-4PM – the 10th annual Decatur Wine Tasting Festival. Tickets are available at my store or www.DecaturWineFestival.org.

My non-Wine Club selection for the month is the **2008 Gilbert Cellars Left Bank Red**. After perusing my previous choices, I found I haven't recommended a "normal-ish" wine in a long time. This Cabernet-based blend from Washington is the perfect answer to the change of seasons. It has big aromas of black fruit, big flavors on the palate of brambly fruit, and big, ripe tannins. It's a wine that's big enough for these cooler nights.

2010 Domaine de Regusse Aligoté (France)

Tasting Notes: Geeky Wine Factoid: The recommended wine to make a Kir (still, white wine with a splash of crème de cassis) is Aligoté. Aligoté is grown primarily in Burgundy, but also grows well in southeast France. This example has a lovely aroma of melon, mineral, and crisp lime as well. It has an exciting mix of flavors on the palate: passion fruit, peach, melon, and citrus. It's not bone dry, but has just enough acidity to balance the mélange of flavors. The finish is refreshing with peach and chalk notes. Quite an enjoyable white!

Food Pairing: Aside from making a Kir, I would serve this by itself as a starter wine. This will also pair well with light, white fish dishes and lightly, spicy foods.

2010 Colomé Torrontés (Salta, Argentina)

Tasting Notes: The Salta region in northern Argentina has some of the highest elevation vineyards in the world and is producing outstanding Torrontés. This example has a pretty aroma of citrus, honeysuckle, and light perfume notes. It's clean and flavorful with a pleasant roundness on the palate. This white shows flavors of citrus, lichee, and white flowers with good acid balance. The finish is lengthy with peach and honeysuckle. The fruit component of this Torrontés is superb and a perfect reflection of the winemaking skill of the folks at Colomé.

Food Pairing: Torrontés has such an expressive flavor profile I would just enjoy this one by itself. The fruit is too good to hide behind food.

2008 Red Knot Cabernet (South Australia)

Tasting Notes: First, a note on closures. The official name of this wine's enclosure is the ZORK. As crazy as it looks, I must admit, it works very well and eliminates all cork taint. Now back to business...this Cabernet has a splash of Shiraz (10%) and sees a surprising nine months of oak aging. This helps to produce an easy drinking red with fresh picked berry fruit aromas and flavors. It has plenty of acid to tame this luscious fruit and provide structure. The finish is quite expressive with raspberry and cherry fruit. It's a solid everyday, drinking red.

Food Pairing: This is a very versatile food wine. It's not too heavy-bodied, so it could pair with poultry, and it's heavy enough for pork.

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2006 Montevina Zinfandel (Amador County, California)

Tasting Notes: This Zinfandel really intrigued me. It's a more subdued version of this expressive varietal and that's a good thing. From the aroma, I found dark berry fruits and a hint of spice. It's smooth on the palate with darker, berry fruit, vanilla, and light underbrush notes. It has good acidity and a bit of grip to provide structure to the fruit. The finish is soft with ripe berry/strawberry fruit and a hint of spice. It's a very well-balanced Zinfandel.

Food Pairing: I'm a big fan of Zinfandel with chili, pizza, and pasta. Chili and Zin, it sounds almost as good as beans and rice.

2008 Domaine de Nizas Le Mas (France)

Tasting Notes: The south of France produces so many good varietals at great prices. The Le Mas or "little farm" is an estate blend of 50% Cabernet, 40% Syrah, and 10% Petite Verdot. It has *terroir* driven aromas of dark berries and cherries with spice and mineral notes. This red blend shows juicy, ripe, slightly roasted, darker berry fruit and hints of spice that expand with aeration. The mid-palate shows good acidity, and the finish is lengthy with soft berry fruit and good tannic structure. This is a great example of the quality of the region.

Food Pairing: I love this style of wine (solid berry fruit and dried herbs) with almost anything off the grill. Especially something with an herb rub. The smoke and herbs from the grill pair perfectly with this wine.

2009 Ellena Dolcetto d'Alba (Piedmont, Italy)

Tasting Notes: I love to find obscure varietals for the Wine Club. I love it even more when they pass the taste test! Dolcetto is grown in the Piedmont region in northwest Italy and is often overshadowed by the big three varietals of the region; Nebbiolo (Barolo and Barbaresco), Barbera, and Moscato/Muscat. This Dolcetto has aromas of dark fruit and dried herbs. It has a rich fruit component with flavors of liqueur-like black fruits. There are hints of tobacco and dried herbs as well. This is an elegant offering with excellent fruit, secondary flavors, and balance. Dolcetto can be inherently astringent, but this example is near perfect. The finish has good length with "blue" fruits and a touch of earth.

Food Pairing: This is a big, rich wine. I would suggest pairing this with something equally big, like beef or lamb. There's enough tannin and acid to soak up the richness of the meat.