

Herb's Half Case Wine Club – August 2020 V1 & V2
www.DecaturPackageStore.com 1220 Clairmont Rd. Decatur

Summer is finally here and I've included choices guaranteed to bring a chill – literally and figuratively – to your household! It's an interesting mix of familiar and unique varietals – Gruner Veltliner or Pais anyone? Enjoy!

Cheers,

Herb

P.S. - My non-Wine Club selection for the month is the [2018 Domaine Tinel-Blondelet Pouilly Fume](#). This is the perfect antidote for summer! 100% Sauvignon Blanc from 35 yr. old vines. It's aromatic with soft citrus fruits, yet smooth and balanced on the palate with citrusy lemon, hints of hay and nice minerality - take that Sancerre! This white has body, depth and elegance – superb!

- Please feel free to visit us at 1220 Clairmont Road in Decatur (in between North Decatur Rd. and Scott Blvd., 2 doors down from the YMCA).
- If you would like to be added to or, heaven forbid, removed from my e-mail list or to learn more about Herb's Half Case Wine Club please e-mail me at Herb@DecaturPackageStore.com or call me at 404-633-5250.
- Wine appreciation is about getting people excited about wine, so feel free to forward this newsletter as you wish.
- Your satisfaction is 100% guaranteed. If you are unhappy with a wine return at least 75% of the unused portion and I will be more than happy to replace the wine.
- As always, any defective bottles (i.e. corked, oxidized, etc.) will be replaced with bottles of the same type.

If you have any questions or concerns please let me know.

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Herb's Half Case Wine Club – August 2020 Version 1

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2019 Protocolo Blanco (Vino de la Tierra de Castilla, Spain)

Tasting Notes: This Spanish white is a blend of Airen and Macabeo and offers very pleasing summer drinking. It has a softer aroma with banana notes and light citrus. It's clean on the palate with slightly bright melon and banana flavors. The mid-palate has a bit of roundness to mellow the acidity. The finish has a nice hint of mineral and riper citrus fruits. This white is fresh, clean and balanced with a terrific fruit profile.

Food Pairing: This is a refreshing white to enjoy by itself or as a starter wine. Otherwise, I'd pair it with lighter chicken or fish dishes or light salads.

2019 Oyster Bay Pinot Gris (Hawkes Bay, New Zealand)

Tasting Notes: Sometimes you get so set in your wine drinking ways, like the only white from New Zealand is Sauvignon Blanc, you ignore other potentially great wines from that region. I present Pinot Gris from New Zealand! It has a medium bright aroma of crisp melon fruit with a nice mineral note. On the palate, I found clean, medium-ripe melon flavors. I really like the minerality here, which adds a nice touch of complexity. The finish has crisp apple fruit and nice length. This is a great alternative to Calif. and Italian PG's. It's not too ripe or too lean. Great fruit profile here.

Food Pairing: This is a nice everyday white that can pair with a multitude of foods since it has fruit and acidity. Nothing too heavy though.

2014 Schweiger Vineyards Spring Mountain Chardonnay (Napa Valley, California)

Tasting Notes: Hi, I'm Herb and I secretly enjoy, every now and then, hedonistic Napa Valley Chardonnay with a bit of bottle age. And when I find one, like this treat from the Spring Mountain appellation in Napa Valley, at a Wine Club price, I'm all in! I like that it has some bottle age because that really helps integrate the wine and tame the voluptuous fruit. This Chardonnay has a beautiful aroma with creamy pineapple and baking spices. It's ripe with a slightly round texture on the palate and has plenty of ripe pear and mellow spice flavors. It's luxurious on the palate, but has enough acidity for balance. The finish shows ripe apple fruit, oak spice and nice length. Outstanding Napa Chardonnay!

Food Pairing: This can certainly be enjoyed by itself – there's a lot going on in this wine to contemplate. Otherwise, pair with medium-bodied dishes like poultry and pork.

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2018 Yllera Nuevemeses Red (Castilla y Leon, Spain)

Tasting Notes: This is 100% Tempranillo from 20-30 year old vines in Spain's Ribera del Duero and Toro regions and is aged nine months (Nueve Meses in Spanish. I love truth in advertising!) in American oak. This red is a killer value. It has a solid aroma with berry and raspberry fruits. This red is VERY flavorful on the palate with rich and complex dark and red berry fruits, hints of vanilla and a touch of spice. The finish is quite lengthy with tons of dark berry fruit and medium tannins. This is an expensive tasting wine disguised with an everyday price!

Food Pairing: I'm not messing with tradition here – Spanish interior reds go very well with grilled meats and lamb.

2017 Cavaliere D'Oro Rosso (Sicily, Italy)

Tasting Notes: If Tuscany can have a Super Tuscan (Sangiovese, blended with non-indigenous grapes) why can't Sicily? Hello Super Sicilian! This example is a blend of Nero D'Avola, Sicily's oldest indigenous red varietal, with two New World grapes, Merlot and Cabernet. The result is a stellar red! It has a nicely complex aroma with baked berry fruits, earth and spice notes. It's ripe on the palate with dark blue fruits, which are almost jammy, and light spice flavors. This red has a good mouthfeel – rich, yet not overdone – and black-ish fruits on the mid-palate. The finish has baked, dark berry fruits, vanilla, violet, medium tannins and nice length. Well done!

Food Pairing: This is an interesting pairing opportunity. This is a fuller-flavored red, so I'd go with grilled medium-bodied dishes like BBQ chicken or pork ribs.

2018 Renacer Punto Final Malbec (Argentina)

Tasting Notes: I'm continually impressed with the everyday-drinking Malbecs from Argentina. In general, they still offer tremendous price to quality ratios versus their New World brethren. The Punto Final was a bit closed at first, so definitely aerate it before serving. After opening a bit, I found rich boysenberry aromas. There are thick, rich and balanced flavors on the palate with black and boysenberry fruits and enough acidity for balance. The fruit really improves and expands with aeration. The finish is medium-dry with juicy, boysenberry fruit and nice length.

Food Pairing: I'd pair this with grilled meats, Argentine-style, or just about anything from the grill.

Herb's Half Case Wine Club – August 2020 Version 2

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2018 Laurenz V. Singing Gruner Veltliner (Austria)

Tasting Notes: Gruner Veltliner is the unsung hero of white wines. Who knows, if it was easier to pronounce, it could have been as popular as Pinot Grigio. Singing is the entry level Gruner from Laurenz and offers a fresh and easy-drinking expression of the varietal. The aroma is filled with peach and tropical fruits. There's a hint of spritz on the palate with exotic tropical fruits – mango, guava and passionfruit. The fruit is near perfect – not too bright or too soft. The mid-palate is lively with a hint of mineral. The finish has peach, stone fruits and nice length. Great summer sipper!

Food Pairing: This is a versatile food wine because it has plenty of flavor and acidity. Anything from light salads to heavier poultry dishes would pair with this white. Also, Gruner goes very well with spicy Thai, Chinese or Indian dishes.

2019 Band of Roses Rosé (Washington State)

Tasting Notes: This is another superb value from Charles Smith Wines. It's a slightly drier Rosé, which is a style I particularly enjoy. The 2019 has a strawberry and raspberry aroma with a nice hint of minerality. It has good palate weight with crisp red berry fruits and minerals. The mid-palate has a softer texture and nice bright, berry fruits. The finish has ripe rhubarb flavors and good length.

Food Pairing: This white can be paired with many everyday dishes that are light to medium-bodied. Rosé also works very well with fried foods because the acidity cuts through the fat.

2019 Torresella Pinot Grigio (Venezia, Italy)

Tasting Notes: I'm finding more Pinot Grigios that have decent flavor or in layman's terms, PG's that are more than just cold, lemon water. The Torresella has an aroma of crisp lime with notes of melon and white flowers. It has nice palate weight, heavier than I expected, with lemon/lime fruit that softens to ripe-ish and rounder apple flavors on the mid-palate. The finish is a nice blend of melon and lemongrass with medium length.

Food Pairing: This white has enough flavor and balance to serve by itself. Otherwise, I'd pair with lighter bodied summer dishes.

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2019 Vina Maitia Aupa Pipeno (Maule, Chile)

Tasting Notes: This is my version of the perfect everyday red. I found it to be rich yet balanced, ripe yet restrained and most importantly, thoroughly enjoyable! It's 80% Pais and 20% Carignan and has a youthful berry aroma. It really shines on the palate with dark red fruits that are perfectly ripe. It has just enough notes of rustic *terroir* that fill the palate with balanced lushness. The finish shows a hint of spice and lengthy dark berry fruit. Robert Parker gave this wine 92 points and I wholeheartedly agree!

Food Pairing: This would be a good wine for everyday meals and lighter meats off the grill because it has plenty of fruit and acid with a touch of complexity

2018 Scarpetta Frico Rosso (Tuscany, Italy)

Tasting Notes: This is a less dry Tuscan red. It's mostly Sangiovese (90%) with the rest being indigenous Tuscan varieties – Caniaolo, Ciliegiolo and Colorino. It's aged in a combination of stainless steel, cement and oak and offers superb summer drinking. It has a crisp cherry aroma with lightly creamy vanilla notes. There's a lot of flavor on the palate with round berry/cherry fruit and hints of spice and vanilla. It has nice balance with a rounder texture up-front, then balancing acidity on the mid-palate. The finish has juicy berry fruits, light tannins and medium length.

Food Pairing: I'd pair this with light to medium-bodied meats or anything with red sauce.

2017 Higher Ground Pinot Noir (Central Coast, California)

Tasting Notes: This Pinot Noir gave me two pleasant surprises – 1.) It has 26% Valdigue, whose flavors are similar to Beaujolais and 2.) It sees 10 months in new oak. The Valdigue shows itself in the fruit profile and the oak smooths it all out! I found dark red fruits in the aroma with a nice spice note. It's nicely balanced on the palate with ripe red fruits – cherry & raspberry – and good acidity. This PN becomes richer and rounder with aeration. The finish has dried red fruits, light earth & spice and medium length.

Food Pairing: I'm always a big fan of Pinot Noir and salmon. This has enough body to pair with slightly heavier dishes. Don't overdo it though.