

# April Wine Bargains

## Red Wines:

### **Wild Oats Pinot Noir, 2013, Edna Valley, California** **\$13**

Robert Oatley, the iconic Australian winemaker who founded the famous and widely popular Hunter Valley-based Rosemount Estate wine company, is the man behind Wild Oats. Using purchased fruit — as he did for years at Rosemount — his team has produced a value-packed California Pinot Noir. Not an overwrought deep fruit bomb, this mid-weight wine conveys the delicacy of Pinot Noir, indicating a talented winemaking team is at work. Sufficient non-fruity elements balance the bright strawberry-like notes. Mild tannins and bright acidity provide enough structure so it's not flabby or sweet. It's perfect for roast chicken. Don't miss it.

### **Regaleali Nero d'Avola, 2012, Sicily, Italy** **\$14**

Nero d'Avola Regaleali is a huge success considering its modest price tag. It reveals plenty of dark cherries, raspberries, currants, and a sweet earthiness in its perfumed fruit. Sweet mint and floral overtones reappear on the finish, adding freshness and balance. This is without question one of the most enjoyable wines you'll find in this price range.

### **Delas Ventoux Rouge, 2013, Rhone Valley, France** **\$14**

This "Best Value" from the Wine Spectator is "A racy, juicy version, offering mouthwatering damson plum, loganberry and red licorice notes, studded with hints of pepper and tobacco. A briary hint adds range on the finish."

### **The Rook "Mastermind" Shiraz, 2012, South Australia** **\$11**

This wine has a deep ruby/purple color in addition to a big, earthy, leathery, black fruit-scented nose, and dense, chewy cassis and plum flavors with considerable spice as well as depth. There is a bit of tannin but this is a big, fruit and earth-driven red to consume over the next 5-6 years.

### **Ixeia Red, 2013, Somontano, Spain Cabernet/ Merlot/ Tempranillo** **\$14**

From the foothills of the Pyrenees on the edge of the Basque country comes this utterly unexpected (and stupidly delicious) Cabernet, Merlot, and Tempranillo blend. Grown on limestone soil, the wine opens with aromas of dark, dusty slate balanced with ripe plums and blackberries. No oak to speak of here, just clean, ripe flavors of juicy berries, and bright acidity to clean it all up. What's really surprising here for a wine at this super affordable price is that sophisticated, slate-y minerality, that carries through to the finish. A delicious value!

As warm weather approaches, this is the perfect red to have on hand for a cookout or outdoor party. There's plenty of dark, ripe fruit and heft, but no heavy oak to overwhelm lighter dishes. Wines like this are why we keep returning to Spain again and again for great red wine values!

**Truvée Red Blend, 2013, Central Coast, California** **\$11**

This kitchen sink blend of Syrah, Grenache, Merlot, Zinfandel, Cabernet Sauvignon, Tempranillo and Petite Sirah is a weighty, seriously-endowed wine with a dark purple color, as well as a super nose of cherries, black currants, pepper, spice, and loamy soil notes. Full-bodied and richly-extracted, with copious quantities of berry fruit, excellent purity, and an expansive, silky-textured finish, this wine can be drunk now as well as cellared for 2-3 years.

**Oveja Negra Cabernet Franc / Carmenere, 2013, Maule Valley, Chile** **\$12**

Translated literally as "Black Sheep," Oveja Negra wines intend to stand out from the flock. Aromas of red and black fruits such as cassis, plum, blueberry, and fig with black pepper and a bit of spice nicely blended with a light touch of oak.

## **Sparkling, White & Rosé Wines:**

**Tarrida Cava Brut, Penedes, Spain** *Organic!* **\$14**

This organically farmed Cava is a blend of the traditional Macabeo, Xarel-lo, and Parellada made in a Brut (low dosage) style. Biscuit, mineral, and white fruit aromas and flavors set the stage for a dry, crisp, bright, well-balanced sparkling that is amazingly sophisticated for its humble price. Drink this excellent value over the next 12-18 months.

**Nicolas Sauvignon Blanc, 2013, Cotes de Gascogne, France** **\$11**

This could easily be described as the poor person's Sancerre. The expressive, perfumed, honeyed, citrusy, herb, fig, and melony nose is followed by a fruit-filled wine with light to medium body, vibrant acidity, and an elegant, clean finish. Drink it over the next year. This is an outstanding bargain.

**Fortant Muscat, 2013, Languedoc, France** **\$11**

From vineyards right along the Mediterranean Sea, this DRY Muscat is such a fun wine to drink. It has deliciously fragrant orange blossom, lemon oil, mint, and pineapple notes that are oh, so fruity, flowery, crisp, and pure. It is dry, intense, and medium-bodied, with copious amounts of fruit. It's spectacular with fresh fish and mango salsa.

**J Lohr Riverstone Chardonnay, 2013, Monterey, California** **\$13**

The beauty of Chardonnay from Monterey is its ability to be rich, ripe and full bodied but also balanced. The cool climate helps to retain acidity in the grapes/wine. It exhibits excellent orange rind, leesy, smoky, tropical fruit aromas, as well as a honeyed, medium-bodied texture with sweet apple/pineapple fruit flavors. Pure and ripe, with a subtle dosage of wood, it should drink well for 1-2 years.

**Domain La Croix Belle "Craingole" Rosé, 2014, Languedoc, France** **\$14**

This beautiful rose offers up a smashing perfumed nose of jammy strawberries and flowers. With terrific fruit, medium body, and a surprisingly long, dry finish, this rosé's body and flavor are not from residual sugar, but from flavor extraction. A lovely rosé for summertime quaffing, it should last for 12-18 months but it won't possibly last that long on our wine rack.