



October 31, 2008

Life »Lifestyle

Sips: Nip into some 'just right' bottles for fall

By Jerry Shriver

USA Today Total Circulation (M-F): 2,293,310

Fall is the season of restless wine drinking. Desire for summer's simple whites and rosés has faded, yet it's not chilly enough to bundle up in those dependable and ponderous Cabernets. Even all-weather Pinot Noirs can seem overly familiar. So you troll the middle ground, where earthiness and elegance intertwine. Or maybe you just want something compatible with that buck you just shot in the back 40. Or a serious token to celebrate the 75th anniversary of Prohibition's repeal, Dec. 5. Whatever the motivation, versatile medium-weight wines are ideal partners for the produce now showing up at markets — squashes, root vegetables, sturdy dark greens and mushrooms — and for the stews, roasts, creamy soups and meat-based pasta dishes showing up on menus.



By Katye Martens, USA TODAY
A selection of Jerry Shriver's wine picks for fall.

Over the years, producers in Australia, France's Rhône Valley, the Rioja area of Spain and the Piedmont and Tuscany regions of Italy have become particularly adept at crafting savory, sturdy, fall-friendly bottles. Australia has worn out its welcome somewhat by flooding this country with too many boring, generic-tasting wines in the \$15-and-under category, but at \$20 and above, the bold, complex flavors that once wooed us often reappear (as well they should).

In the other regions, quality bottles can be found up and down the price scale.

To satisfy your wanderlust and bring harmony to the fall fare on your table, consider some of these currently available imports (retail prices are approximate):

Australia

- 2007 Nine Stones Shiraz, McLaren Vale, \$13
- 2006 Wakefield Shiraz, Clare Valley, \$17
- 2006 Margan Hunter Valley Shiraz, Hunter Valley, \$18
- 2007 Robert Oatley Shiraz, Mudgee, New South Wales, \$20
- 2006 d'Arenberg "The Laughing Magpie" Shiraz-Viognier, McLaren Vale, \$29
- 2006 Yalumba "Hand-Picked" Shiraz-Viognier, Barossa Valley, \$30
- 2006 Groom Shiraz, Barossa Valley, \$38
- 2006 John Duval "Entity" Shiraz, Barossa Valley, \$40
- 2006 Mitchelton "Print" Shiraz, Central Victoria, \$40

Italy

- 2007 Pertinace Dolcetto d'Alba, Piedmont, \$13
- 2007 Il Matane Primitivo, Puglia, \$13
- 2006 Prunotto Dolcetto d'Alba, Piedmont, \$16
- 2006 Vietti Tre Vigne Barbera d'Alba, Piedmont, \$18
- 2005 Masi Campofiorin, Veneto, \$18

- 2006 Castello Banfi Rosso di Montalcino, Tuscany, \$22
- 2005 Castello di Monsanto Riserva, Chianti Classico, Tuscany, \$24
- 2005 Castello di Gabbiano Riserva, Chianti Classico, Tuscany, \$35

Rhône Valley

- 2007 Louis Bernard "Bonus Passus," Côtes du Rhône, France, \$10
- 2006 Chapoutier Belleruche, Côtes du Rhône, \$15
- 2005 Château Beaucastel Coudoulet, Côtes du Rhône, \$25
- 2005 Delas Frères, Domaine des Genets, Vacqueyras, \$25

Spain

- 2004 Vaza Crianza, Rioja, \$18
- 2005 Torres Perpetual-Salmos, Priorat, \$27
- 2003 Luis Alegre Gran Vino Pontac, Rioja, \$70