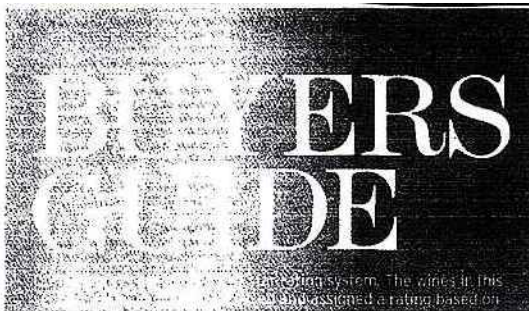


Exceptional quality. Simply superlative ★★★★★
 Very good example with solid style and character ★★★★
 Good wine, well worth trying ★★★
 Drinkable wine, with sound commercial qualities ★★
 Poor or substandard wine, best avoided ★
 Represents a half mark ½

Michael Botner (MB)
 Lindsay Groves (LG)
 Vic Harradine (VH)
 Rod Phillips (RP)
 Daenna Van Mulligen (DVM)
 Christopher Waters (CW)



Cadillac



Vina Seña 2008 Arboleda Sauvignon Blanc Leyda, Casablanca Valley \$15.95

This is outstanding. Focused and pungent aromas jump from the glass with mineral, nettles and lemongrass to the fore. The flavours are vibrant and luscious with gooseberry, tangy lemon-lime and sweet ripe pineapple predominant. It's medium-bodied, nicely textured and refreshing on the well-balanced finish. There's enough residual sugar to pair this perfectly with spicy Asian cuisine or an asparagus quiche. (VH)

Vina Tabali 2006 Reserva Especial Limari Valley \$21.95 (107540)

The Limari Valley is currently Chile's northernmost wine-producing region. A blend of 50 percent Cabernet Sauvignon, 35 percent Shiraz and 15 percent Merlot, the Reserva Especial is matured for 18 months in French and American oak. Almost opaque purple-black in colour, this is complex and mysterious. Blackberry, cassis, tar, smoke, mineral and gamey/meaty aromas lead to a pronounced and full-bodied palate. The tannins are fine and silky, with the flavours lasting well onto the finish. (LG)

Vina Tabali 2007 Reserva Cabernet Sauvignon Limari Valley \$14.95 (058446)

Aromas of cherry, mulberry, black plum and toasty oak - 12 months in French and American - roll from this earthy, rich red. There's a gusher of expressive dark chalky fruit flavour with bramble berry and bergamot orange to the fore along with tar and aromatic bitters. It delivers a medium-bodied frame from approachable tannin, a generous texture and an extremely well-balanced finish. This offers good value and pairs well with marinated and grilled flank steak. (VH)

FRANCE

Château Courrière-Rongières 2005 Lussac Saint-Emilion \$19.95 (125492)

This is beautiful 100 percent Merlot that's just entered the drinking phase of its evolutionary curve. The tannins are sweet and firm, the way many people like them, and with medium-rare roast or grilled red meat, they will soften nicely. The wine presents well-layered sweet fruit flavours that are complemented and lifted by a broad seam of acidity. Lovely stuff, and a great price. (RP)

Château L'Argenteyre 2005 Médoc, Bordeaux \$24.95 (117655)

This rich and flavourful blend of Merlot with Cabernet Sauvignon (40 percent) and Petit Verdot (10 percent) shows the power of Bordeaux's 2005

vintage. Produced from a 36-acre estate run by the Reich family, Château L'Argenteyre offers impressive complexity on the nose, with an aroma suggesting cocoa, mint and dark fruit. Good concentration, firm structure and a nice finish all point to a classic-styled wine that has potential to mature nicely over the next four to six years. Its price makes it even more attractive. liffordwineagency.com (CW)

Bouchard Père & Fils 2007 Pouilly Fuissé Burgundy, France \$27.90 (056580)

The price point makes this bottle a splurge item, but it's rare to find white Burgundy for less than \$30 that truly delivers. This crisp, clean, mineral wine seems perfectly suited for the onset of Spring, its lively acidity and lemony/green apple flavours make this medium-bodied Chardonnay extremely refreshing and enjoyable. (CW)

Château Cherchy-Desqueyroux 2005 Graves \$23.95 (125516)

This blend of Merlot (60 percent) and Cabernet Sauvignon delivers well-defined flavours that are solid throughout the palate, with a broad spine of acidity that contributes a juicy texture. The tannins are supple and drying, and this is a good choice for red meats or for well-seasoned roast chicken or pork. (RP)

Château Courrèges 2005**Côtes de Bordeaux \$24.95 (117606)**

This fuller bodied, rustic red hails from the Premières Côtes de Blaye, the largest and most north of the region's appellations, overlooking the Garonne River, near the city of Bordeaux. Its Merlot-dominant blend, with small portions of Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc and Malbec, is typical of the region. Appealingly earthy, mineral, black olive and licorice are revealed on the nose and palate, while its texture is remarkably round and balanced. This needs to be served with food for best enjoyment - it would work well with firm cheeses like Chevre Noir or Manchego. liffordwineagency.com (CW)

Jean Olivier S.C.A. 2008 Château D'Aqueris Tavel Rosé Tavel \$19.95 (319368)

Tavel is said to be the King of rosés and was a favourite at the papal court in neighbouring Avignon. Very pale ruby-pink in colour, it's hard to resist the sweet, almost candied aromas of red berries, cherry, strawberry and fragrant floral notes. Dry and medium-bodied, there's a cool breeze of acidity to moderate the warm fruit flavours and 13.5 percent alcohol, leading to a medium length finish. What could be better than to sip a lovely Tavel along with some mussels Provençale? (LG)