Tasting Notes

The $300 value box - The “It’s been a tough year and I’m treating myself” box.

Argyle Brut, Oregon. This is an outstanding sparkling wine from this Oregon legend. You could spend a whole lot more on some sparkling wines and still not get the quality you get from Argyle.

Frog’s Leap Estate Cabernet Sauvignon, Napa Valley. This is why Cabernet is grown in Napa Valley. A very traditional style of Cabernet from the famous Rutherford Bench. Black fruit flavors and a velvety texture.

Duckhorn Sauvignon Blanc, Napa Valley. A benchmark for Napa Valley Sauvignon Blanc the wine has a good bit of the Semillon grape blended in to accentuate the acidity of the Sauvignon Blanc with body and richness.

Marietta Christo Rhone Style Blend, Sonoma. Fourth generation family owned Marietta Cellars relies on their Italian heritage to produce this big, bold Syrah based wine. The Petit Sirah from the famous McDowell Vineyards adds lots of backbone to the wine.

Klinker Brick Old Vine Zinfandel, Lodi. Lodi means warm climate wine and that means intense inky, dark wines with full bodied “plummy” and jammy flavors. For those of you that eschew subtlety for power.

Portlandia Pinot Gris, Oregon. Pinot Gris with irony. The irony being that three consecutive 90+ reviews from the Wine Enthusiast prove that the wine should be taken seriously.

Stag’s Leap Chardonnay, Napa Valley. A classic style of California Chardonnay with tropical fruit and citrus notes and underlying minerality. There is just enough oak to provide complexity but not overwhelm.

Tinto Rey Tempranillo, California. Here’s an interesting wine. Tempranillo is the grape of Rioja the great wine region of Spain. This California version is full bodied and instantly likeable. Grilling steaks for Christmas? This wine is perfect for that meal.

Ringbolt Cabernet Sauvignon, Margaret River, Australia. Cabernet from far away. Grown near Perth this is the most remotely grown Cabernet on the planet. But we don’t drink it for the novelty. We drink it for the unique flavor profile that the winery calls mulberries. Whatever they call it it’s delicious wine.

Casa Lapostolle Cuvee Alexander Carmenere, Chile. Every once in awhile we have to include a wine like this to make you take a grape like Carmenere seriously. This is a dense, dark wine from old vines that shows how complex the grape can be in the right conditions.

Studio Rose by Mirival, Provence, France. This winery in a project owned by Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie. They probably won’t show up for the holidays but who wants to be unprepared just in case?

Argiolas Costamolino, Sardinia, Italy. Made from the grape Vermentino that is native to Sardinia this is one of those wines that make you think “Why haven’t I heard of this before?” Particularly when you get those aromas of mint and pine in the nose and citrus on the palate. This is great seafood wine.

The $200 value box - The “Is it daylight savings time or is cocktail hour getting earlier and earlier?”

Vidigal Vinho Verde, Portugal. Who saw the popularity of this coming? Not me? A very light and dry white wine with just a light touch of spritz. The perfect “appetizers with your bubble” wine.
Morgadio Albarino, Spain. There are more grapes in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy. A dry Spanish white that is surprisingly full bodied without any oak.

Wither Hills Sauvignon Blanc, New Zealand. New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc has grown in popularity for many years and why not? It is crisp and lean and has that delightful nose of grapefruit.

Vitiano Rosso, Italy. Here’s a real gem. A blend of equal parts of Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Sangiovese this is a complex wine with notes of dried black cherries, anise and just a little bit of leather.

Lageder Riff Pinot Grigio, Italy. When in Rome do as the Romans do. If you are going to be drinking Pinot Grigio why not an Italian one? Very dry and crisp with citrus and green apples in the nose and on the palate.

Guigal Cotes du Rhone Rouge, France. This is the classic Syrah, Grenache and Mourvedre blend by one of the great winemakers in France. A wonderful full bodied and flavorful red for those looking for something with a little guts.

La Vieille Ferme Brut Rose Reserve, France. A sparkling pink wine for those wanting to celebrate the season with a little something special. Dry with notes of berries and spice the wine pares well with appetizers or lighter dinner preparations.

Arsonist Chardonnay, California. The style of Chardonnay that everyone likes. Big and rich with lots of toasty oak to compliment the green apple, vanilla and stone fruit flavors.

Stag’s Leap Cabernet Sauvignon, Napa. Incredibly approachable and pleasing upon release, this wine is sure to dazzle.

Milbrand Family Vineyards Rose, Washington. The pink train is rolling and is waiting for you to come on board.

19 Crimes Red Blend, Australia. Why are red blends so popular? Here’s a good example. A fruit forward and “juicy” wine this perfect for a socially distanced crowd. Be safe but drink good wine while you do.

The $100 value “You HAVE been good this year” three pack-

Veuve-Fourney Brut Champagne, France. A small Champagne producer imported by a particularly discriminating company this is a dry Champagne with lots of citrus notes.

Markham The Altruist Red Blend, Napa Valley. Is there a better blend for this year? A Merlot specialist from Napa Valley makes a Bordeaux style blend that is very drinkable and just waiting for the roast to come out of the oven.

Honig Sauvignon Blanc, Napa Valley. This is an elegant and understated style of Sauvignon Blanc with flavors of peaches and stone fruit balanced with crisp acidity.