

A TOAST TO THE WORLD

Come join us on our global tour as we sample top drops from the US, France, Spain & NZ that punch above their weight for price.

WORDS BY CAMERON DOUGLAS



When looking for some wine inspiration on the shelves at your local liquor outlet, sometimes you find yourself selecting wine purely on price point or label design (maybe both). There is nothing wrong with this approach – I’ve done this many times – as price point is often an indicator of quality. Yet it also depends on two important factors: the wine producer and the shop where you buy. Moderate to high volume producers have the stock for chain stores, in particular price bands and with varieties and labels that catch the eye. These are called anchor brands: well-known labels with the price point that makes them easy to reach for. This is a successful and well-practised store strategy. Specialist stores may have some of the same wines, but also stock labels that might have higher price points and producer names you may not know – so a store sommelier to help with advice on what to choose should be on hand.

We are lucky in New Zealand that the demand for wines from around the world is increasing, giving us the opportunity to explore varieties and wine styles from beyond our borders and at price points that don’t require a second mortgage to enjoy them. The challenge is knowing you are buying something enjoyable and not a dud. This month’s selection takes some of that challenge away and leads us on a journey around the globe, including our own NZ, to wines that punch above their weight for price and may just inspire the next social gathering pours. There’s a vermouth (fortified red wine) in the mix, which is excellent over ice as an apéritif and for the adventurous among readers, a food wine. 🍷

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CHAMPAGNE VAUVERSIN ‘ORPAIR’ 2015 BLANC DE BLANCS GRAND CRU

Oger, France

A totally delicious Champagne, bold, rich, and distinctive. Aromas and flavours of white peach and white strawberry, there’s a fullness from the lees and mineral salty seashell quality. Full-bodied and rich in texture and flavours. Best drinking from day of purchase and through 2028. RRP from \$94.95.



PACIFICANA BARREL FERMENED CHARDONNAY 2020

California, USA

Aromas and flavours of fresh yellow apple, pear and stone fruits. After 2 minutes in glass, a grapefruit vanilla custard suggestion emerges. Nice weight and silkiness as wine touches the palate. Flavours of stone and apple along with baking spice and balanced use of oak. Ready to drink from 2022 through 2026. RRP \$20.99.



RADBURN CHARDONNAY 2020

Hawke’s Bay

Fantastic bouquet, complex and new, a core of ripe yellow and white fleshed orchard fruit, grapefruit and lemon then layers of leesy and French oak scents. A silky-cream texture touches the palate first then a core of myriad fruit flavours that reflect the bouquet. Lengthy complex finish. Fantastic wine, ready from late 2022 through 2030+. RRP from \$84.99.

