



SOUTHBURY PACKAGE STORE

UNCORKED

The holiday season is a time for entertaining, and for any host that means hours spent planning, shopping, cooking and of course decorating the house. Please allow us to help you during this holiday season and take away any potential stress when it comes to choosing the beverages for your occasion. This edition of *Uncorked* will help you select the perfect bottle for your family get together, holiday celebration or quiet evening at home in front of the fire. Remember to take some time for yourself and unwind after what has been an unprecedented year. Happy Holidays from Southbury Package Store!

STEPHEN'S RUMINATIONS

For the Thanksgiving holiday, I have a saying: "You can't drink all day if you don't start in the morning." Every year my wife bakes cream cheese-frosted pumpkin square treats and I pair a bottle of bubbly for breakfast. This year, it is going to be **Canteen Elvio Tintero's Rosato NV (\$12.98)**. Crisp and refreshing, low in alcohol (11.5%) with flavors of wild red berry fruits and sweet citrus, all while showing off just enough fizz dancing on your palate. It is perfect with Judy's pumpkin squares and a great start!

During the Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade, just prior to the arrival of Santa, the parade of hors d'oeuvres begins. Everything from shrimp cocktail, to artichoke dip and cheese trays make their way to our festive table. The **J&H Selbach Bernkasteler Kurfürstlay Riesling 2018 (\$14.98)** is my choice to sip on while partaking in the appetizers. I like it for a couple of reasons: it is low in alcohol (10%) and adequately fruity, while not being overdone and cloying. It is an excellent introduction to a drier style with a delicate aroma of stone fruits and cut flowers. It has a presence of tropical fruit, citrus and honeysuckle on the palate. A great way to keep the festivities going!

Pairing wine with food can be tricky even when a meal is simple. On a holiday like Thanksgiving, when plates are packed with a cornucopia of side dishes to accompany the turkey, selecting an appropriate wine can feel overwhelming. For the traditional Thanksgiving holiday try to pair wines that complement a wide variety of foods rather than trying to match wines to individual flavors or dishes. The **Jean-Marc Pillot Bourgogne Rouge 'Les**

Grandes Terres' 2018 (\$34.98) is my choice for Thanksgiving this year. The Pillot family are typically well known for their white wines, but this red is a standout and should not be overlooked. Made from sixty-year-old vines, it is rustic and filled with tart wild berries that give it a bundle of energy that you feel with each sip.

Thanksgiving desserts like apple pie, pumpkin pie, and the occasional pecan pie are mainstays in the tradition of the holiday and the **Broadbent Reserva 5 Year (\$25.99)** should be their partner! Aromas of figs, dried dates and chocolate make this an outstanding option. It also goes well with snoring uncles and late-night football. Oh, and in case you were wondering, Southbury Package Store will be opening at noon the day after Thanksgiving for some recovery time.

Just like Santa, my wife Judy always finds it easier to stay organized when she makes a to do list. In her great wisdom, I am offering you a list of wines to aid you for the winter holiday season.

- *Perfect white wine for the Feast of the Seven Fishes: Clos Ste. Magdeleine Cassis Blanc 2019 (\$34.98)*. An uncommon blend of Marsanne, Ugni Blanc, Clairette and Bourboulenc; it shows notes of Provençal herbs, anise, white peach, and white acacia. Fleshy on the palate with a fresh peach-like acidity. It is not from Italy, but it's pretty close.
- *A gift for the "wine expert" and doesn't cost more than \$50: Chateau Garraud Lalande de Pomerol 2010 (\$42.98)*. Ready to go! This decade old wine is drinking terrific. It has an intense ruby color that evolves towards a deep blood orange hue. The nose is dominated by red fruits and smooth oak. On the palate it is fleshy, velvety, and lush with a long finish.
- *We're going to dinner at a friend's house who loves Cabernet and we want to bring something different and good: Pied à Terre Cabernet Sauvignon 2015 (\$34.98)*. High quality, soulful and balanced, this effort from Richard Luftig, Clay Mauritsen and Emma Kudritzki is sure to wow the host and make them want more, so bring two bottles.

- *We're doing a grab bag at work and I want to make it look like I spent more than \$20:* **Livon 'Braide Grande' Pinot Grigio 2018 (\$19.98)**. Pinot Grigio is often overlooked and judged as an ordinary white varietal. Not this one. Estate grown, hand harvested, 1,100 cases produced per year, what more can I say? It is intense, rich, elegant with copious minerality and a hint of white flowers. Delicious. Cross your fingers and hope you get your own gift.
- *I need a special bottle for Christmas Day:* **Produttori del Barbaresco Reserva 'Rio Sordo' 2015 (\$69.98)**. This wine encompasses a lot about what I love in Italian wine, drink now or hold on for a while. The light limestone soil of Rio Sordo with relatively low calcium content produces wines where tannins are never dominant, instead they show a silky quality on the palate which makes them appealing and tempting for another sip. Behind the elegance, lies a core of structure and very well-balanced tannins. Ho! Ho! Ho!

Hope this list helps or at least gives you some forethought on the season to come. Of course, we are here to help. We can put together a volume order of gifts on a budget or meticulously aid in your selection of the perfect bottle. Cheers!

JIM'S REFLECTIONS

I think of Thanksgiving as a quintessential American holiday so I always like to serve American wines at our table. As my friend Steve so succinctly points out, it is a fool's errand to try and pick the perfect pairing for this holiday feast so I fall back on my old rule, 'pick a wine that tastes really good and all the rest will work out.' My preference is red.

For the quintessential American holiday I always serve the quintessential American wine, Zinfandel, the red kind. Among the greatest American wineries, in both terms of longevity as well as quality is Ridge. They make a variety of red wines that feature Zinfandel and I love them all but their recently released **Ridge Geyserville 2018 (\$45.98)** is special and spectacular. It is the most age worthy of all Ridge Zinfandel's but can be magnificent when young. From 130 year old vines combining Zinfandel, Carignane, Petit Sirah and Alicante Bouschet. Big, rich, bursting with multilayered flavors of black plum, blackberry and spice. Superb concentration and rich flavors. Pricy but worth every penny. The 2018 vintage in California was quite excellent for Zinfandel and another fine choice is the **Bedrock Zinfandel Old Vine 2018 (\$27.98)**. Bedrock's

talented winemaker is the son of Joel Peterson, founder of Ravenswood and one of the 'godfathers' of Cali Zin. This is a blend of 85% Zinfandel filled out with small amounts of other old vine varietals. This wine is all about crushed berries, cherry, lively acidity and spices. Lifted, medium-bodied, mouth-filling and versatile with a variety of foods.

Another excellent choice would be a wine that sounds French but is 100% Californian and springs from the mind of winemaker Randall Graham. It goes by the name of **Le Cigare Volant 2018 (\$19.99)** which literally translates to "The Flying Cigar". How it got that name is too involved for here but it is a blend of 52% Grenache, 35% Cinsault and 13% Syrah. Fruity and spicy on the nose with raspberry coulis, a bit of mincemeat, and even clove. The palate is fruity and inviting with a zingy tartness and a hint of tannin on the finish. It will no doubt be a crowd-pleaser. The screwcap makes it easy to open that second or third bottle.

Pinot Noir is another fine choice for your Thanksgiving feast and you might choose from either Oregon or California. The Pinot's from Oregon are often a bit lighter than those from California but neither are heavy and offer wonderful, expansive fruit aromas and tastes that will marry with the meal. **Dusoil Pinot Noir Hirschy Vyd 2019 (\$22.99)** from Yamhill in Oregon is a collaborative effort with French viticulturist/winemaker Bruno Corneaux and vineyard owner Arthur Kalita. Lots of cherry fruit with bits of smoke, floral and mineral notes. Really good texture without being heavy. Long finish. From California, one of the great efforts comes from a new winery, Anthill Farms. The **Anthill Farms Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 2017 (\$32.98)** is absolutely beautiful in this vintage. Inviting aromas of raspberries and red berries which are woven together exotic spice nuanced. On the palate this medium-bodied red is round and silky with excellent focus, precision with notable length on the finish. Classy and sophisticated and delicious.

For the Holiday's let me offer up a short list of wines that I would be thrilled to be gifted, or even better to drink. These offerings are perfect for the fine collector but can and will be appreciated by the most elementary consumer.

From Italy you would be remiss if you didn't try some of the wines from the Piedmontese winery Paitin. Although this long-standing Barbaresco estate is best known for their Nebbiolo, **Paitin's Barbera d'Alba 'Serra' 2018 (\$24.98)** is not to be missed. Juicy, organic, and wildly mineral-driven, the wine oozes with notes of sour cherries, raspberries, and fresh cut

herbs. Perfect for pizza night in! This is quite a good Barbera that is approachable out of the blocks, but like so many wines from this varietal, it will be even better if given a year or two's worth of bottle age.

Who wouldn't be excited to enjoy a wine from Bodegas Lopez de Heredia, one of the most venerable producers in Spain who produces traditional, age-worthy Rioja. Their wines are legendary and still made the way they were when the winery was founded over 130 years ago. Following a tradition that has been passed down through generations, their wines are released at least 5-10 years after harvest, which provides added complexity and elegance. Their **Vina Tondonia Reserva 2006 (\$39.98)** is a classic red Rioja that is distinguished, individual, long-lived and above all, delicious. In a fourteen year old wine, you get something different each bottle you open but you can note vanilla, tobacco, sandalwood, cherry, leather and more in this beautifully crafted wine. Ready to drink now but no need to be in a hurry.

It's always exciting to find a great red Burgundy that does not break the bank and **Domaine Gachot-Monot Cotes-du-Nuits Villages 2017 (\$35.98)** is exciting. It has all the lauded attributes of the fine Burgundy; rich color, seductive ripe fruits, immediate charm along with the bones and sinew to age beautifully. Immediately out of the gate the nose offers red raspberry, baking spices, and a Burgundian 'gout de terroir' (earthiness). It is superbly balanced with fine grained tannins and a long finish. This will age very well, if you can keep your hands off it. Truly, one of the great bargains in great Burgundy.

And finally, for the last day of the year or actually any day of the year we offer up some bubbles. **Patrick Bottex Bugey Cerdon (\$22.98)** is ideally located between Savoie, Burgundy, and the Jura, Bugey is one of France's most unique and interesting grape-growing havens. Bottex's one-of-a-kind méthode ancestrale sparkling is comprised of 80% Gamay / 20% Poulsard, grown on high-altitude slopes on clay-limestone soils. Ever so slightly sweet, it makes a delightful aperitif, or party wine. Chuggable, low-alcohol, and delightfully refreshing, you will want to wash down your pumpkin pie or wash away your New Years Day headache with this. For the more traditionally minded you must try **Pol Roger Brut Reserve NV (\$47.99)**. 5th generation family owned. The emphasis here is on quality, not quantity. The favorite Champagne of Sir Winston Churchill. Served at William & Kate's Royal Wedding. A sparkling wine fit for a king or a queen...and you.

FINAL THOUGHTS

After the Christmas festivities and shopping are in the books, most of us barely have a moment to breathe before we're looking at the last celebratory date of the calendar year. The idea of a fresh start is always so appealing, no matter how many times I have come up short on my yearly resolution I have not yet been discouraged to start anew and try again. After 20 plus years in the wine and spirits industry the calmness of the looming New England winters always puts me at ease. To celebrate this fresh start, I'm going to offer you a classic drink recipe that I like for Brunch on New Year's Day and one top notch bottle for New Year's Day dinner.

The Aperol Spritz is a light and refreshing beverage mostly consumed in warmer months. I like to drink it on New Year's Day for a couple of reasons: it is an easy drinking/palate cleansing beverage, and it is super simple to make with a hangover.

- 3 oz - **Adria La Dolce Colline Prosecco (\$14.98)** – a lively offering of Prosecco with citrus and stone fruits on the palate and enough effervescence for a clean finish. It is fruity without being sweet.
- 2 oz - **B. Nardini il Bitter (\$34.99)** – sure we could use Aperol, but we love the texture of the Nardini. It has all the classic flavors of a bitter (orange, rhubarb, and herbs) without being too syrupy. We think you'll agree.
- 1 oz – sparkling water

Combine ingredients in a wine glass over ice and stir. Garnish with an orange.

After the Spritz, the fire has been burning and I have had time to settle into a special bottle to kick off the New Year, and after 2020 who wouldn't be excited to start a fresh year? The **Brovia Barolo 2016 (\$69.98)** is vinified in the classic Barolo style (concrete vat fermentation and Slavonian cask aging) and is a cross section of their cru sites scattered throughout the Barolo region. This wine is balanced in the glass with flavors of dried cherry and cut roses. Make sure you give this a little time in a decanter prior to consuming, your palate will thank you.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Services Offered

We'd like to thank everyone for their support during the pandemic. We will continue to offer a curbside option for the foreseeable future, just give us a call to set up your order.

We have offered delivery since our first day, and we will continue to do so. We deliver to Southbury everyday; Lakeside, the Purchase, Southford, Heritage Village, Georges Hill, etc. If you live in Southbury, we will deliver it to you.

Did you know our delivery service extends beyond Southbury? We're happy and able to deliver to Middlebury, Woodbury, Roxbury and Oxford. Please inquire. We will do our best for our neighbors as well.

For free delivery in town we require a \$75.00 minimum order. Again, thank you.

Wine School Update

Due to the outbreak of COVID-19, we have decided to postpone the SPS Wine School until further notice. If you would like to set up a Zoom tasting with friends, please inquire within and I'm sure we can lead a group tasting through Zoom.

Concierge Wine Service

Given the state of social gatherings and wine tastings being put on hold, we would like to offer a Concierge Wine Service.

This would be a scheduled tasting event in your home for an hour to 90 minutes. We request you limit the invited guests to 10 people. We will come to your home and taste wine with you and your guests in a classroom style manner so that we can maintain a healthy "social distance" between guests. This is a great option if you enjoy trying new wines and are curious about the where, why, who and how of the wine world.

Please contact Steve for scheduling and rates.



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Hours
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10-8

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