



Southbury Package Store

Uncorked



As we move past the Labor Day holiday weekend, Summer will soon end, and we'll be forced to embrace the cooler temperatures, earlier nights, and crisp mornings. I've always thought of September as a last chance to cement those summer experiences as a warm memory; be it a family BBQ, a trip to the beach or the last-ditch effort at a weekend getaway. To aid us in creating those cozy feelings we have a few selections to help you say goodbye to summer and welcome autumn with open arms.

It is Still Summer Weather!

Days are still warm, I mean who drinks wine at 7:30 in the morning, right? Please don't judge me. For those sunny mid-eighty-degree days that still come about in September, we've got a couple of whites for that early tailgate party or the "hey, it's still warm in the sun" poolside beverage. Of all the wine growing regions in the southern hemisphere, the country of South Africa likely has the most misunderstood climate. To begin with south and Africa are two terms most associated with a hot climate. Contrary to that statement South Africa, especially the coast, has growing conditions that are far cooler than you might expect. These conditions produce white wines that are crisp, lively, and have an energetic presence in the glass. The Myburgh Brothers have been producing wines at Joostenberg for five generations and their **Little J White 2020 (\$9.98)**, a fresh blend of Chenin Blanc, Viognier, Roussanne and Muscat d'Alexandrie, is a fantastic introduction to this area of the wine world. A dry and spirited offering with aromas of pineapple, guava, lichi and melon dance on your palate while the crunchy acidity makes you want another sip! Give this baby an ice bath and let it kick off your warm, sunny afternoon picnic. By the way, did we mention it is made with organically farmed grapes? A value and a half.

Occasionally I will get asked about a wine that I have never seen or heard of and after doing some research (sometimes extensive), I find out that the queried wine is "just a label." This is not always the result of investment opportunities or greed. Sometimes it is due to long standing relationships in the industry, which just so happens to be the case for **Sandy Cove Sauvignon Blanc 2022 (\$16.98)**. Bowler, a boutique wines and spirits importer in New York requested that Allan Scott produce them a Sauvignon Blanc from New Zealand. Made in the classic NZ style with loads of charm and fruit, you just might need sunglasses to drink this easy sipper due to the brilliance of the acidity. A CAN'T MISS FOR NZ SB DRINKERS!

Pinot Noir is a very fickle grape varietal to grow and preferring a cool climate, it only makes classically styled wine in a few growing regions in the world. We literally went to the ends of the earth to find this next selection (actually, it came to us). Patagonia, Argentina is one of the southernmost wine growing areas (Antarctica is literally its neighbor). It is here where Duncan Killiner sources the fruit for his **Jelu Estate Pinot Noir 2018 (\$14.98)**. Very often at this price point, I tend to find Pinot Noir falling into one of two categories. Either the wine tastes like Pinot Noir and is so manipulated that one cannot figure out where the grapes end, and the additives begin and, in our opinion, this is not how wine is supposed to be. The other category is much easier to describe. The wine taste terrible with absolutely no resemblance of the actual grape! Neither of these options are acceptable. Jelu belies these characterizations. A tidy, medium-bodied offering of fresh Pinot fruit, loaded with cherry and plum with a dollop of toasty wood. Do I hear that last-ditch BBQ calling?

Speaking of last-ditch BBQs, we have a cheerful little wine for you. In the most northerly areas of California grape growing, you will find Mendocino County. Here Rich Parducci and his merry band of wine lovers produce the wines of McNab Ridge Winery. Within that line of wine is what they affectionately call "The Fun Bunch." **Fred's Red NV (\$14.98)** is a fun, easy going red blend (just like Fred, the original dog of Alexander McNab) comprised of Touriga Nacional, Zinfandel, and others. Think super-ripe blackberries and friendly oak within a rigid structure. Delicious, but not too serious that it is not possible to have a little fun pairing it with that last summer burger. A can't miss for the fire pit either, tough to drink just one glass.

WHAT'S ON TAP?

To keep up with the hustle and bustle of everyday life, we here at SPS have purchased a Cruvinet (wine preservation) system to keep a perpetual wine tasting going. We will update our social media accounts whenever something new is tapped, so make sure you like, subscribe, and follow us!



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Bring on the Pumpkin Spice!

For those of you who yearn for the break in the heat, we have a few nice selections for those crisp evenings and chilly sunsets. If you steer away from Oregon wines, you do not know what you're missing. Oregon wine is hot right now, and it is more than just Pinot Noir and Riesling. We present you **Brooks Pinot Blanc 2021 (\$21.98)**. Since 1998, this winery has been working holistically, biodynamically, and naturally since its inception. Jimi Brooks received an extensive background in wine making and on hands training in Europe before he returned to Oregon and opening his own winery. Biodynamic farming was so important to Jimi that Brooks Winery received Demeter certification in 2012 after his passing as a testament to his way of producing clean wine. This Pinot Blanc is absolutely gorgeous! Vivid acidity and sheets of tropical, citrus, and stone fruits assemble on your palate with a long, briny finish. Pour yourself a glass of this with your next batch of pumpkin ravioli. A remarkably complex white wine and a new favorite at SPS.

Finding everyday value in Burgundy has been difficult over the last 20 years. I spoke earlier about Pinot Noir and the challenges in finding wines that exude varietal typicity while not breaking the pocketbook, Chardonnay specifically from the Burgundy region in France shares these challenges. **Le Meurger Bourgogne Chardonnay 2020 (\$19.98)** hails from the Côte Chalonnaise and is sustainably farmed, 100% Chardonnay and worth it. Hints of light toast and vanilla, accompany aromas of citrus and white flowers followed by a robust mouthfeel. It is quite fleshy for a Bourgogne appellation with good acidity and structure, and a fruity but balanced character. Enjoyable now with some ageing potential, but I doubt you will keep it that long. With the price of Burgundy wine steadily escalating, the Côte Chalonnaise developed a reputation for consistent quality for lower cost than some of the more well-known villages of Burgundy. A deal for less than \$20.

Saint Pourçain is an appellation in the Touraine in the Loire Valley comprising of the surrounding nineteen villages. The **Gaspard Cabernet Franc 2019 (\$21.98)** is harvested by hand from 50-year-old vines. Wines stemming from old vine can sometimes be luscious and dark especially with such a massive grape like Cab Franc. You can do a 180 on that front with the Gaspard. Light and fun, this wine dances like Fred Astaire. Fresh berry and herb notes, with tingly acid and insane racy vibrancy. One of those cool natural wines that

you do not need to think too much about! You can thank us later.

I bet you thought I would write an entire newsletter and not put an Italian wine in it. I tried, really, I did, but I just had to mention a little red from Piedmont. A Barolo producer first, the Principiano family has produced outstanding Nebbiolo for decades, but sometimes the ordinary is what grabs our attention. **Ferdinando Principiano Dosset Vino Rosso 2020 (\$17.98)** made from 100% Dolcetto and shows vibrant fruit notes of cherry, forest berries, and red current. Upon first opening the bottle it comes across as light and "weak," but this wine will open up with some air, so give it a chance. If we test our patience, the fruit fades into the background as floral tones become more and more obvious as darker fruits make their way into the arena finally followed by some baking spice. This wine would be great with a slight chill, but just allow Mother Nature to take care of that part. Happy Autumn!

LIFE IS SHORT.... DRINK BETTER!

SPS WINE SCHOOL

Fall Semester

October 5th - Navigating Wine

So many choices. How to make it good.

November 9th - Clean Wine. **Green Wine.**

Organic, natural, biodynamic: what's the difference and does it matter?

December 7th - Sensory Evaluation

That's right! We are going in blind. Put your eyes, nose, and mouth on full alert!

Reservations Required.

Classes to be held at:
Heritage Hotel and Convention Center
522 Heritage Road
Southbury, CT 06488