

100 BEST WINES UNDER \$30 (2018)

Monday, January 21, 2019

Putting together a best-value list is in some sense totally subjective. It is not as simple as finding all the affordable wines out of the more than 22,000 we rated this year and ordering them by score. Nor can price be the only factor in this kind of comparison, even if we used the industry standard of WineSearcher. When a one- or two-point difference is worth the extra money is always going to be personal preference. And the whole exercise assumes that pricing follows a regular pattern around the world — which it often doesn't.

Nevertheless, in compiling our first ever top 100 best-value list (a similar [article published in 2016](#) only included 50 wines), our collective view was to prioritize score. All the wines in this selection can be picked up at \$30 or less at least somewhere in the world. But given the choice between a \$20 93-pointer and a \$30 95-pointer, we favored the latter, especially for wines with really high scores. In other words, our price/quality scale wasn't linear; or, as James's mantra goes, "Life is too short to drink anything but great wine."

However, our list below is not just an exercise in pseudoscientific number crunching. We also took into consideration availability, diversity and what we personally enjoy drinking every day. A great value bottle should be a really exciting household staple, so the names below are all wines James and I as well as Stuart and Nick regularly consume (or would like to!) at home.

One thing we didn't do was give more leniency to wines from better-known regions. A 95-point chardonnay at \$15 from Argentina can offer exactly the same value experience as a \$15 95-point white Burgundy. Unfortunately, and unsurprisingly, there aren't any such wines from Burgundy, and the region, along with California, doesn't make it onto this list.

83 CLETO CHIARLI LAMBRUSCO DI SORBARA VECCHIA MODENA PREMIUM VINO FRIZZANTE SECCO 2017

84 TENUTA SETTE PONTI TOSCANA CROGNOLO 2016

85 ESCARPMENT PINOT NOIR MARTINBOROUGH KIWA 2016

86 CHÂTEAU LA CROIX MONTLABERT ST.-EMILION 2015

87 PIEROPAN SOAVE CLASSICO LA ROCCA 2016

88 LA POSTA MALBEC MENDOZA PIZZELLA 2017

89 VINOSIA TAURASI SANTANDREA 2014

90 COMPAÑIA DE VINOS TELMO RODRIGUEZ MENCIA VALDEORRAS GABA DO XIL 2015

91 CHÂTEAU HAUT-BRISSON ST.-EMILION 2015