

# Last-minute wine suggestions for the holidays



**KEN ROSS**

WINE PRESS

**T**HE PAST FEW weeks I have written about all sorts of gift ideas for the wine lovers in your family.

I've suggested various wine books, corkscrews, decanters and other wine-related gifts other than wine.

I've offered recommendations for wines worth splurging on and sparkling wines for the holidays.

But you went to a few stores. They don't have any of these things. It's too late to order them online.

So what should you do now?

Don't worry.

It's not too late.

You can always find a great wine to give to someone special.

So with Christmas less than a week away, here are 12 last-minute wine gift suggestions — some that are easy to find and cost less than \$20 a bottle, along with a few pricier wines worth splurging on.

Let me add that all of the wines recommended this week are red wines.

Hope you enjoy.

## **2019 E. Guigal Cotes Du Rhone (\$12.99 at Table & Vine in West Springfield)**

This is a great, affordable, outstanding French red wine you can find in many wine stores. Don't worry too much about the vintage either. Gui-

gal's Cotes Du Rhone red wine tastes reliably great nearly every year. It's earthy yet smooth, robust yet regal. It's also a surefire hit.

## **2020 Chateau De Mille Saint Lucide Luberon (\$15 Suggested Retail Price)**

Another red wine from France's Southern Rhone region, this delightful, delicate red wine from Luberon illustrates the wide range of wines from this part of France. Here, the flavors are slightly more floral and aromatic, but just as bold and dramatic as many other Rhone wines.

## **2019 Chateau Beaubois Costieres De Nimes Rouge (\$17 SRP)**

Looking for something slightly different from France's Rhone region? Here's another great suggestion from Nimes in the Southern Rhone region. Made with 70% syrah, 20% grenache and 10% marselan, the delicate flavors here include black licorice, blackberry and black pepper.

## **2020 Dona Paula Altitude Series 1350 (\$18 SRP)**

Another blended red wine, this one hails from Argentina's Mendoza region. Made with 50% cabernet franc, 45% malbec and 5% casavecchia grapes grown at 1,350 feet above sea level, the flavors here are intense yet subtle, slightly spicy and floral. Truly delightful.

## **2015 Ramon Bilbao Gran Reserva Rioja (\$37 SRP)**

Another blended red wine (a mix of 90% tempranillo, 7% Graciano and 3% mazelo), this one from Spain's Rioja region has a wonderful array of graceful, bold flavors, including hints of blackberry, roasted cherry and toasted almonds. A great, hearty wine for a cold winter's night.

## **2019 La Vite Lucente Tenuta Luce Toscana (\$30 SRP)**

The first of four Italian red wines recommended this week, this beautiful, bold blended red wine made with equal parts sangiovese and merlot has a deep red color and intense, bright flavors, including hints of plum, cherry and blackberry.

## **2022 Villa Gemma Cerasuolo D'Abruzzo Superiore (\$24 SRP)**

This earthy yet elegant Italian red wine from the Abruzzo region on the eastern coast of Italy strikes just the right tone — powerful yet precise, strong yet subtle. This is wine made for sitting back and relaxing and savoring every sip with family and friends.

## **2018 Duca Di Salaparuta Duca Enrico Nero D'Avola Sicilia DOC (\$80 SRP)**

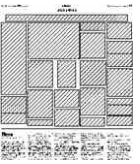
Subtle, nuanced flavors abound in this delightful red wine from the Italian island of Sicily. Made entirely with nero d'avola grapes by one of Sicily's oldest wineries, this distinct, delicate wine has a wonderful, complex array of flavors and aromas, including hints of vanilla and cherry.

## **2019 Ceretto Barolo (\$65 SRP)**

One of the best-known (and best overall) Italian wine regions, Barolo is the "king of wines" — and for good reason. The best Barolos are like fine Italian sportscars — powerful yet elegant, sleek and seductive. Here, the flavors and aromas include blackberry, licorice and leather.

## **2021 Dobbles Family Estate Patricia's Cuvée Pinot Noir (\$65 SRP)**

This outstanding Oregon pinot noir illustrates why this state in the Pacific Northwest



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has become so well known for its rugged yet refined red wines made with this notoriously finicky grape. Flavors here include cherry, licorice, wildflowers and brown sugar.

**2021 Textbook Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon (\$46 SRP)**

Pop quiz: What wine should you get your favorite wine-loving teacher? If you answered this subtle, well-balanced wine, you get a gold star next to your name. The name refers to the wine being a “textbook” example of a great California cabernet sauvignon. I wholeheartedly agree.

**2020 Stags’ Leap The Leap Cabernet Sauvignon (\$120 SRP)**

Stags’ Leap winery in California’s Napa Valley makes many outstanding wines. This wonderful one sparkles and stands out like the North Star.

Flavors and aromas include lavender, cherry, blackberry and dark chocolate. A truly magnificent wine worthy of any special occasion.



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