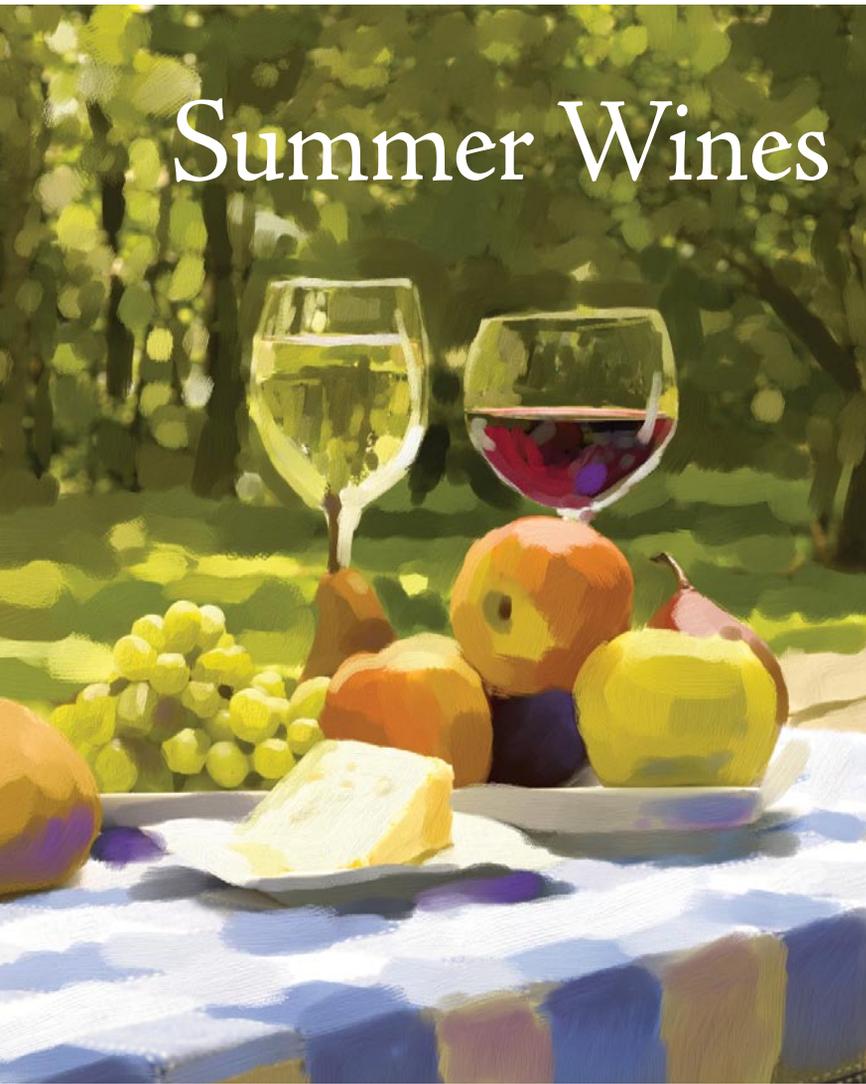


Summer Wines



by Jim Lauderdale

A summer picnic used to be a loaf of bread, a jug of wine, and thou. Today you can add fine cheeses, fruits, gourmet meats, and more delicacies. Of all that, the trickiest part of the list is choosing the right wine. Jim Lauderdale, the Wine and Spirits Manager for Sentry Metcalfe's in Madison, offers some of his picks to help ease your way.

Picking a wine

One of the most important things about picking out a wine, whether it be summer, winter, brunch, or dinner, is to just pick out a wine you enjoy drinking. If you want a heavy, dry Cabernet on a summer day, have it. If you want a Chardonnay with your juicy, red steak, have it. All the rules out there can always be broken. You are the final judge on what you want to drink.



Penfolds Thomas Hyland Riesling 2007

Even though this wine is a Riesling, it is not a sweet wine. Australian Rieslings are more commonly a dry or off-dry wine. This gives the wine a nice crisp freshness that really complements summer and warm weather. The Thomas Hyland Riesling tastes of a little lemony citrus, Granny Smith apples and speaks lightly of peaches and nectarines, which makes this a great wine to enjoy while the stone fruits are in season. Another great benefit of this bottle of wine is the screw cap top. There is no need for a cork screw so it is easily opened while out on the picnic blanket enjoying a summer concert in the park.

Price: \$12.99



Boutari Moschofilero 2006

The Moschofilero is a well-balanced Greek white wine. It is a slightly dry white wine that is still light enough to make it easy to drink, especially while sitting out on the deck waiting for the fish or chicken on the grill to finish cooking. As soon as the bottle is opened, you can smell the flowers as it hits your nose. In the glass you can also pick up hints of citrus and melons; these two smells also transfer into a great taste for a summer wine.

Price: \$13.99



Badger Mountain Organic Chardonnay 2006

The Badger Mountain Organic Chardonnay from Washington state is made from organically grown grapes and is made using a completely organic process. This means that there are no sulfites added to the wine, only the ones that occur naturally through the fermentation process are in the bottle. The wine itself is lightly oaked which gives a subdued buttery vanilla flavor. Having a little less oak flavor than some other Chardonnays gives the other flavors of kiwi, golden delicious apples, and a hidden mineral a real chance to come through. This bottle of wine does have a screw cap which helps make a great summertime wine.

Price: \$10.99



Botham Big Stuff Red

Botham's Big Stuff Red is made at the Botham Vineyards in Barneveld, Wisconsin. Big Stuff is a red wine that falls on the sweeter side of the semidry wine scale. It's a red wine that can be enjoyed chilled, perfect for the hot summer days when you still want to drink a red wine. Big Stuff Red is extremely fruit forward, so much so that it has a lot of juice-like qualities. It is slightly tart, has a hint of purple in its color, and is very easy to drink. This wine would go great with a fruit salad but also work well with a nice piece of grilled tenderloin.

Price: \$8.99



Menage A Trois Rosé 2006

When many people think of a rosé, a sweeter pink-colored wine such as a white zinfandel comes to mind. Putting the Menage A Trois Rosé into this same thought would be like saying Granny Smith apples are comparable to golden delicious apples, but that is where the comparisons stop. This wine is a blend of Gewürztraminer, Syrah, and Merlot. The Gewürztraminer gives the wine a hint of sweetness on the very first breath, but as the wine finishes, the Syrah and Merlot take over and dry it out. There is no oak here so all you get is a great fruit flavor that is extremely food friendly and warm weather friendly.

Price: \$10.99

This is just a sampling of the wines that would make a great picnic even better. There are many, many more out there. Remember, the best part of finding your favorite wine is all the great wines you get to taste along the way.

• IF YOU GO •

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