

Argentina

88 Secreto Patagonico Cabernet Sauvignon 2012, Patagonia (\$18.95)

Here is a straight up, unpretentious steak wine with masses of dark fruit, cocoa, clove, earth and tobacco smoke. There is very good length, supple tannins and some heat, so put a slight chill to it before diving into that medium rare cut. (ES)

White

91 Tawse Winery Quarry Road Gewürztraminer 2013, Vinemount Ridge (\$24.95)

Without a doubt, this is a brilliant off-dry Gewurz! It serves up peach, honey, rose water, cardamom, ginger, cold cream, lychee and pineapple. The palate is thick with soft acidity, 12% alcohol and a super satisfying finale. Drink until 2016 to take full advantage of its exuberance. Pair with foie gras or Thai food. (ES)

90 Redstone Winery Chardonnay 2012, Niagara Peninsula (\$18.95)

This wine is unofficially known as the “Bistro” Chardonnay and is only sold at restaurants. □ Barrel fermented and aged for 12 months, the wine exudes ripe pear, apple, peach, honey, spice, white flower, vanilla, cream and toast. It is medium bodied with excellent length and refreshing acidity. Lobster ravioli in a beurre noisette sauce or filet of halibut are well suited for this wine. (ES)

88 Bachelder Chardonnay 2012, Niagara (\$29.95)

This wine has graduated to the LCBO Vintages Essentials program. Rather easy going, this Chardonnay features moderate aromatics in the form of peach, toast, apple, pineapple and anise. It is a carbon copy on the palate with minerals and a slight nuttiness. Very good length and ready to drink. (ES)

Red

92 Bachelder Pinot Noir Lowrey Vineyard 2012, St. David's Bench (\$44.95)

Back in 1993, Inniskillin partnered with the Burgundy house of Jaffelin to produce Alliance, Ontario's first premium Pinot Noir. That wine and partnership have long ago given up the ghost, but those old vines have now been scooped up by Thomas Bachelder for his Niagara project. The pale colour might make you think that this is a timid wine- but don't be fooled. The bouquet of cherry, plum, toast and earth meets up with spice and sage on the palate. Excellent length. Drink until 2020. (ES)

91 Reif Estate Winery Meritage 2012, Niagara River (\$34.95)

For the number lovers, this is a blend of 47% Cabernet Sauvignon, 43% Merlot and 10% Cabernet Franc. For the wine lovers, this is a full bodied red with a complex bouquet of sweet vanilla, cassis, violets, raspberry, cocoa and mint. Length is fabulous with tannic structure to ensure a decade of aging. (ES)

90 Reif Estate Winery Merlot Reserve 2012, Niagara River (\$25.95)

There is almost a port like quality with all the over ripe plum, blackberry and cherry qualities. Add in the spice, cocoa and earth, as well as a rich texture and great length and you have one fine bottle of Merlot which will age gracefully over the next 5 years. (ES)

90 Château des Charmes Merlot St. David's Bench Vineyard, St. David's Bench (\$29.95)

This is one serious Merlot which has benefited from the heat of the 2012 vintage. Full bodied, it hits the senses with plum, blackberry, vanilla, cocoa, vanilla, anise and dried herbs. Concentrated, there is a long finale and gritty tannins which require some more bottle age to sort themselves out. Drink from 2016 to 2021. (ES)

89 Redstone Winery Pinot Noir Limestone Vineyard 2012, Twenty Mile Bench (\$29.95)

Even though this Pinot comes from the warm 2012 vintage, it displays poise and elegance. The brilliant ruby colour heralds the plum, raspberry, cherry, earth, cocoa and spice. The acid is fresh and the tannins are supple, so drink now over next two to three years. Pair with charcuterie or ahi tuna steak. (ES)

89 Rockway Vineyards Meritage 2012, Twenty Mile Bench (\$19.95)

This wine proves why we blend Cab Sauv, Franc and Merlot together - each varietal compliments the others! This rich and velvety red doles out the dark fruits, mocha, vanilla, anise, coconut, mint and violets. It is stylish with excellent length. Drink over the next 8 years.

89 Rockway Vineyards Small Lot Block 11-140 Cabernet Franc, Twenty Mile Bench (\$24.95)

With 18 months of barrel aging under its belt, this medium to full bodied Franc shows off raspberry, coconut, herbs, cassis, violets and vanilla qualities. There is very good length as well as some unresolved tannin which suggests aging until the end of 2015 and then drink until 2022. (ES)

89 Rockway Vineyards Small Lot Block Blend Merlot, Twenty Mile Bench (\$21.95)

The deep ruby colour heralds the plum, cherry, vanilla, mocha, herbs and graphite. The palate is a combination of richness and tannin, which will allow for 5 years of aging ahead. Duck confit or a bison burger are perfect partners for this rock solid Merlot. (ES)

88 Rockway Vineyards Small Lot Block Cabernet Sauvignon 12-120, Twenty Mile Bench (\$22.95)

This Cabernet Sauvignon reveals a combination of fruit and savoury. Cassis, vanilla, Indian spice, coconut, mint and herbs are supported by some solid tannin. Hold until 2016 and then drink until 2023. Rack of lamb was made for this red. (ES)

88 Henry of Pelham Family Tree 2012, Niagara (\$18.95)

This delicious blend of 48% Shiraz, 23% Cabernet Franc, 20% Cabernet Sauvignon and 9% Merlot offers enticing flavours of black pepper, plum, cassis, roasted peanuts, cocoa, roasted herbs, vanilla and incense. There is richness on the palate before the juicy acid and round tannins fill in the finale. Very versatile as a food wine! (ES)

88 Redstone Winery Cabernet 2012, Niagara (\$19.95)

This blend of 70% Cabernet Franc and 30% Cabernet Sauvignon is the red “Bistro” companion for the Chardonnay. Mid weight, a perfume of raspberry, cassis, smoke, tobacco leaf, violets and herbs carries over to the palate. Very good length and ready to go with steak frites. (ES)

USA

92 Bachelder Pinot Noir Johnson Vineyard 2012, Yamhill-Carlton District (\$55)

Two thousand twelve was a great vintage in Oregon. The combination of low yields and constant warmth throughout the growing season, with little rain, produced ripe and elegant wines. This medium bodied organic Pinot typifies said style. It starts off with cherry, cranberry, iron and toast qualities; then the plum, cocoa, earth, red flowers and spice chime in on the long finale. Tannins are suave, allowing for five years of cellaring.
(ES)