

Asheville's Dozen Part 2

Seven more choices that prove you don't have to spend a fortune to get a remarkable wine here in Asheville.

by John Kerr
Community contributor

Why should New York have all the fun? Twice a year Eric Asimov, the New York Times wine critic, releases his much anticipated 20 wines for about \$20. But most of these wines are not available in our home town. So we tasted wines from North Carolina distributors to build Asheville's very own dozen wines with quality that exceeds their price of about \$20 or less. Last month, we listed the first five. For those of you who have been waiting, here are the last seven.

Fattoria Rodano Poggialupi 2011

\$15.75

A wine that boasts all the bright fruit and balanced acidity of a fine Chianti, with a rare combination of opulence, freshness and focus. A Super Tuscan that comprises



90 percent Sangiovese and 10 percent Merlot from grapes sourced throughout Chianti Classico. Bring this outstanding partner to your next Italian meal.

Gramona Gran Cuvee 2009

\$21.49

Gramona receives accolades year after year, and is possibly the best Cava on the planet. This sparkler is made using traditional Champagne methods, and is aged longer than other Spanish Bruts. Expect to taste stone fruit, green apple, pear, and citrus along with butter, cream, and vanilla. Pair this versatile sparkler with anything except sweet dishes.

Hook & Ladder Pinot Noir 2012

\$21.99

This is classic Russian River fruit that

shows raspberries, blackberries and cherries with hints of cinnamon spice. The wine is balanced with the right touch of acidity and soft tannins that make it easy to enjoy. A consistent award winner. Serve with grilled chicken or salmon.

Maie Bonarda Reserve 2012

\$17.99

Bonarda is Argentina's other red wine. A rich wine with round and velvety tannins. Expect deep flavors of wild berries and notes of violet lingering throughout the long finish. Enjoy with barbecue and grilled meats.

Raats Original Chenin Blanc 2012

\$16.49

A sip reveals it to be a fresh and delicious wine with a light minerality and excellent flavors of apple, peach and lime. The long finish sports a tangy minerality and flavors of pineapple and orange zest. A Wine and Spirits value selection. This wine pairs effortlessly with spicy prawn dishes, sushi and oysters.

Raats Red Jasper 2011

\$19.50

This uncommon Cabernet Franc-driven Bordeaux blend combines a core of luscious dark berries and plum with substantial notes of mocha, cinnamon and spice. Silky tannins round out the palate while a lovely minerality shines through on the long, supple finish. A Wine and Spirits value selection. Pair with hearty stews or soups, and red meat dishes.

Sant' Evasio Gavi di Gavi 2012

\$14.49

Gavi is the most popular white from Italy's Piedmont region. This wine has a good weight, more than most Gavi, and plenty of fruit to balance out the steely minerality. The creamy texture is highlighted with delicate notes of pineapple and peach followed by a dry stony finish. One customer dropped his favorite \$50 Gavi after tasting this wine. An excellent accompaniment to fish dishes.

— John Kerr is the co-owner of Metro Wines. Find out more at metrowinesasheville.com.



There is plenty of value and quality to be found among the bottles of wine available through North Carolina distributors.

Photos courtesy of John Kerr/hibu

