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#BINGEWORTHY

Let's Cheers: California Wines Worth Trying in 2017

- BY JESSICA VACCO JANUARY 16, 2017

#BINGEWINEWEEK#BINGEWORTHYFEATUREDFOOD & DRINKPRODUCT RECOMMENDATION

A new year brings opportunity for new challenges, goals, and celebrations. This shouldn't be limited to birthdays, holidays and achievements, in fact, you should continue to challenge yourself to enjoy small moments in life as often as possible. What better way to enjoy a day than with a beautifully delicious bottle of wine?

Step out of your comfort zone and stock up on these California wines for the new year. We're pointing you in the right direction to take your tastebuds to the next level this year!

January:

Inman Family Wines Russian River Valley OGV Estate Brut Rosé (\$68)

There is no better way to begin the New Year than with some bubbles. Owner and winemaker Kathleen Inman's Brut Rosé comes from organically farmed Pinot Noir grapes from her estate vineyard in the Russian River Valley. Always a favorite in the tasting room (and a favorite of Kathleen's!). We see this not only as an aperitif, but as a serious food wine.



February:

Star Lane Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon (\$50)

Although most people think of Cabernet Sauvignon from Napa Valley, Star Lane Vineyard is a pioneering producer of Cabernet Sauvignon from California's Santa Barbara County. This wine is extremely food friendly—it's less tannic and fruit driven than Napa Cabernets, making it ideal for pairing with the hearty stews we crave during the heart of winter.



March:

Pfendler Rosé of Pinot Noir, Sonoma Coast (\$18)

With the first official day of Spring on March 20, welcome the season with a longtime favored spring wine—Rosé. The Pfendler Rosé has notes of strawberries, grapefruit and honeydew melon and it spends 5 months in neutral French oak unlike other rosés that are barreled in stainless steel.



April:

Ehlers Estate Merlot, St. Helena, Napa Valley (\$55)

With Earth Day on April 22, why not try a wine that is planted on the very best vineyard parcels of the contiguous, CCOF certified organic estate? The tannins of the Ehlers Estate Merlot are at once fine and chewy, and the bold, juicy structure of this wine is what has always made this Merlot one of the best of the Napa Valley.



May:

FEL Savoy Vineyard Pinot Noir, Anderson Valley (\$65)

Founder Cliff Lede purchased Anderson Valley-based winery Breggo Cellars in 2009, and re-launched it as “FEL” in 2014 as a tribute to his mother Florence Elsie Lede (FEL stands for her initials). With Mother’s Day this month, what better than a wine that pays tribute to a mother? Crafted by Winemaker Ryan Hodgins, this Pinot Noir is distinct and represents the greatest love of all—the love between a mother and child.



June:

Dolin Estate Chardonnay, Malibu Coast (\$39)

Welcome summer with a Chardonnay from Malibu-based Dolin Estate, a winery acclaimed for making some of Malibu’s best wines. The crisp, refreshing nature of this wine will transport anyone to the shores of Malibu.



July:

Gamble Vineyard Sauvignon Blanc (\$25)

The unbearable heat of summer calls for a crisp, acid-driven white wine, like the Gamble Vineyard Sauvignon Blanc. A blend of two different Sauvignon Blanc clones from the Gamble Vineyard in Yountville, this wine is super complex and simultaneously extremely refreshing. Perfect for sipping by the pool or for pairing with fresh ceviche or oysters.



August:

Sidebar Kerner, Mokelumne River, Lodi (\$25)

Sidebar is well-known winemaker David Ramey's second label. Kerner is a cross between Riesling and Trollinger (a red German/Italian wine grape) with origins in Germany. It makes for an excellent end of summer wine with floral, crisp notes. This wine is particularly special because the Sidebar Kerner comes from the only planting in California.



September:

Donelan Family Wines Cuvée Christine Syrah (\$48)

Syrah is perhaps one of California's most underrated varietals. This sometimes savory, full-bodied, complex varietal is ideal for enjoying as the weather begins to cool. Donelan's Cuvée Christine Syrah is a 100% Syrah bottling which is made from a blend of fruit from various small, cool-climate vineyard sites located throughout Sonoma County. This bottling pairs well with a variety of rich foods which will warm you from the inside out.



October:

Priest Ranch Grenache Blanc (\$22)

Although most people turn to red wines this time of year, Grenache Blanc is the ideal white wine to drink in the fall. Priest Ranch is the only producer of estate-grown Grenache Blanc from the Napa Valley. This aromatic white Rhône varietal is full-bodied and has stone fruit flavors which are ideal for pairing with the flavors of fall.



November:

Frank Family Vineyards Napa Valley Zinfandel (\$37)

This bold Zinfandel is always a fan favorite for Thanksgiving. Zinfandel is the all-American grape, and this bottling from Frank Family is low in tannin and fruit forward, making it a perfect companion for turkey. Winemaker Todd Graff added a small percentage of Petite Sirah grapes to the final blend which gives this wine vibrancy, and notes of red raspberries and dark berries.



December:

Cain Five, Spring Mountain, Napa Valley (\$125)

Cain is most known for its estate Cain Five bottling, which is a blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Petit Verdot and Malbec. Every vintage since 2000, Cain has committed to holding back a certain portion of wine for 10 years for a future “library” release. They release their library edition in the Fall, making this an ideal gift for the wine collector during the holiday season.

