

wines: sipping on a budget

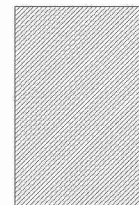
FIFTEEN wines

for
under
\$15

Even if you can afford expensive, complex wines for a special dinner or party, it's great to find bargain bottles that are delicious for relaxing after work or enjoying with a bowl of pasta.

Here are fifteen to try that cost \$15 or under (some as low as \$8!) – a combo of whites, reds and rosés – that show a good diversity of grape varieties, growing regions and winemaking styles.

Pour a glass and enjoy! —ROGER MORRIS



**2013
 Dashwood
 Marlborough
 Sauvignon
 Blanc**

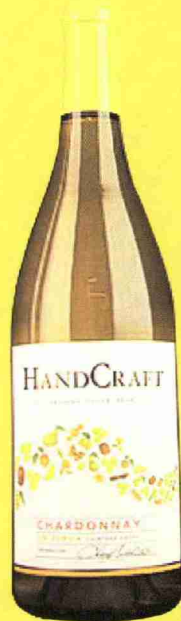


**2013
 Robert
 Mondavi
 "Private
 Selection"
 Central Coast
 Sauvignon
 Blanc**

\$8

This sauvignon has a touch more creaminess, but shares the same typical grassy flavors, tartness and skin tannins as the Marlborough wine.

**2012
 Hand Craft
 California
 Chardonnay**



**2013
 Belle
 Ambiance
 California
 Pinot Grigio**

\$9

A juicy, lively, peachy quaff, it is nevertheless basically dry with a light touch of spritz.

**2013
 Russian Rive
 Pinot Gris**



\$12

This New Zealander is very crisp and tart, yet is pleasantly herbal and spicy with good green fruits and a pleasing, prickly note of skin tannins.



\$10

This a "tweener" chard that is neither big nor crisp, but rather is a touch sweet with figgy and tropical fruits and a hint of spritz.



\$14

Affordably elegant with lemony flavor, a touch of creaminess and a pleasant bitter finish.

**2013
Aia Vecchia
 Toscana
 Vermentino**



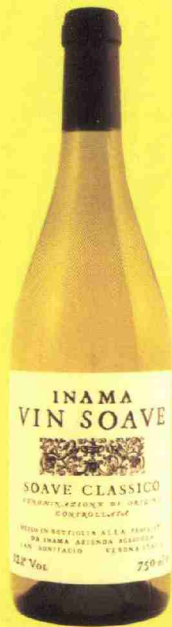
\$12

Vermentino, much-planted along Tuscany's Maremma Coast, is gaining in popularity, and no wonder; witness this crisp wine with green fruits such as kiwi and gooseberries. Think of it as Sauvignon Blanc without the lime.

**2012
 Inama
 Soave
 Classico**

\$15

A very nice drink-it-now wine from the Verona region, it has notes of peach and apricot skins with a nice minerality.



**2013
 Domaine
 les Hautes
 Cances
 Cairanne
 Rosé**



\$15

This delightful sipper from the Côtes du Rhone is rich and tangy with pleasant notes of orange peel and apricot skins.

**2013 Macari
 North Fork of
 Long Island
 Rosé**

\$15

A complex wine, it has all sorts of elements vying for attention – a light prickliness, gamey notes, ripe strawberries and white pepper.



**2010
 Baron de Luze
 Bordeaux**



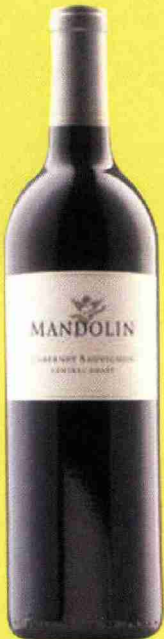
\$14

Red Bordeaux are known as great food wines, and this one fits that bill – tart blackberry flavors with a lean, bacon-flecked finish that pairs well with red meat.

**2012
Mandolin
Central Coast
Cabernet
Sauvignon**

\$12

A colleague of mine recently remarked that California has difficulty in making reds under \$20 a bottle. This one beats that by \$8, with its creamy cherry flavors, good balance and moderate, pleasant tannins.



**2012
Gnarly Head
Mendoza
Malbec**



\$10

Great for grilled meats, this wine has excellent ripe-fruit intensity blended with a garrigue-like savory spiciness and a gamey, sour-cream note in the finish.

**2012
Hand Craft
California
Petite Sirah**



If you've never quite understood Petite Sirah, this bottle can educate you. It's a very generous, fruit-forward, well-structured wine with flavors of purple fruits and black truffles.



**2010
Garofoli
"Piancarda"
Conero Rosso**



\$13

From Italy's Marche region, it is made from Montepulciano grapes – ripe and rich with dark fruits, a creamy texture and a granular, tannic finish.

**2010
Cune
RiojaCrianza**



From Spain's classic red-wine region, this wine is warm and generous with dark cherry flavors that are a little fruit-forward for a Rioja but with good balance and a lean finish.

