



PHOTO: ISTOCK.COM/JACKF

Jim Bryant's Value Red Wines

KEEP THIS LIST FOR YOUR WINE SHOPPING!

CONTINUING FROM my last Quintessential Barrington article (July/August 2021) which focused on white and rosé wines, less than \$25, this focuses on red wines at the same price point. These are an awesome number of wines which meet many peoples' specifications in this price range, but I am listing only those wines which meet my personal demands. I am going to list non-Costco wines which are available from many retailers, as well as Costco (Kirkland) private branded wines which are available only at Costco.

NON-COSTCO WINES

Black Stallion Cabernet Sauvignon, Napa Valley, \$21. This is an outstanding Quality Price Ratio (QPR) and one of Napa's best wine values. Full-bodied, well balanced with overtones of black cherry, blackberry, and spices.

Seghesio Zinfandel, Sonoma Valley, \$18. Outstanding QPR. With abundant blackberry and raspberry fruit, this wine is well balanced and a great match for Oriental, Indian, and Mexican cuisine, and is perfect with barbecue and a reasonable substitute for Chianti. Red zinfandel is the perfect

choice for people who think they want a sweet red, although it is not sweet, but overflowing with abundant fruit overtones.

Vinos Familia Gil Juan Gil Monastrell, Spain, \$12. Explosive aromas of ripe currant, red berries, and smoked notes with a rich, powerful cream de cassis and spicy finish. This is an unbeatable QPR from one of my favorite grapes and countries.

Amancaya Argentina, \$15. An outstanding QPR from the joint venture of Lafite Rothschild and Catena (called Caro). This is a 70% blend Malbec and 30% Cabernet Sauvignon. This well-balanced wine is juicy and complex, with hints of clove and other spices, and is elegant as well.

Catena Malbec Argentina, \$14. This entry level wine from the greatest producer of Malbec is an excellent QPR. It is rich and concentrated in the mouth with flavors of blueberries and blackberries, a touch of cinnamon and leather. The long finish shows well-integrated tannins, bright acidity, and notes of flinty mineral.

Pecchenino Dolcetto San Luigi Piedmont, Italy, \$14. An excellent QPR, this Dolcetto comes

from my favorite region for this grape, Dogliani. This wine is fruit forward with notes of currants, raspberries, blackberries, and prunes. Offering a balance between sweet tannins and good acidity, this grape is my favorite with my beloved eggplant.

de Restia Temperanillo Crianza, Spain, \$14. One of my favorite wines with a very high QPR. Produced by the de Restia family since the 13th century in Ribera del Duero, Spain. Temperanillo is my favorite grape with rotisserie chicken and goes exceptionally well with most chicken, pork, and vegetarian dishes, as well as lamb. This wine is perfectly balanced with fresh, ripe black fruit flavors, with wood, mineral, an spicy overtones.

Bodegas Volver, Tarima Hill, Monastrell, Jumilla, Spain, \$12. This is another outstanding QPR from this indigenous Monastrell grape (50 to 90 years old). This wine shows intense fruit notes of raspberries, black cherries, red plums, as well as licorice with light toast, and pairs well with red meat, game, roasted meat, and cheese.

COSTCO WINES

Barolo Piedmont, Italy, \$22. As someone who had had a 50-year affair with the Nebbiolo grape and is a favorite, I was apprehensive buying a Barolo under \$40. I should have trusted Costco more. Having imported Barolo, and accumulated and drank the very highest rated and most expensive such wines from the 1971 to current vintages of same, I consider this grape to be one of my best areas of expertise. I was stunned when I tried the first vintage (2015). It was more than I could have imagined. The telltale notes of leather, bramble, rose petal, licorice, mushroom, and earth combine with the nose of raspberry, cherry, tar, and white truffles. This is beyond awesome as a QPR.

Chianti Reserva (produced by Villa Cafaggio Estate), Tuscany, Italy, \$8. Years ago, I picked the Villa Cafaggio Reserve Chianti Reserva as one of my five greatest red wine value at \$15. Based on that article and the distributor's suggestion of Villa Cafaggio producing a Kirkland label, this has been one of our favorite wines. It delivers a wine worth at least 3–5 times its cost, making it an outstanding QPR. Customers buy it in multiple case lots more than any other. I know of no close second to this best value for a pasta/pizza wine which also goes well with lightly flavored meats. It has classic cherry/balsamic notes and ages well for several years.

FRENCH COUNTRYSIDE BARGE CRUISE

Champagne

October 10 - 16, 2021

**Cruise The Champagne Countryside of France
With Chicagoland Wine Expert, Jim Bryant**



Each morning, your luxury hotel barge gets underway for the day's cruise. As it navigates the frequent locks on the canal, it is easy to step directly ashore for a leisurely stroll.

During the day, you are invited to join an excursion via private motorcoach to a nearby point of special interest. Each itinerary has been selected to include a varied sampling of the region...romantic castles, historic towns, and renowned vineyards for wine tasting. At certain châteaux and estates, your tour will be conducted by the owner, whose family has been in residence for generations.

For more information, please contact Dee Dee Werner at (847) 519-4795 or deew@travelexinternational.com.

**FINE DINING. HISTORIC AMBIANCE.
NOW OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.**




**RESERVATIONS REQUIRED. PLEASE VISIT THEANVILCLUB.NET
TO VIEW OUR UPDATED MENU, HOURS OF OPERATION, AND DRESS CODE POLICIES.**

**The
ANVIL CLUB**
SINCE 1956



**309 MEIER STREET | EAST DUNDEE, ILLINOIS | 847 426 7710
THEANVILCLUB.NET**



Let's start talking about living.

Right at Home[®]
In Home Care & Assistance

847-380-3370



Châteauuneaf-du-Pape, Rhône, France, \$22. Until 2015, this wine was made for Costco by Château de Nalys. Although it was a decent value, it is now made by Guillaume Gonnet who is doing an outstanding job with this Grenache, Syrah, and Mouvedre blend. I regularly drink many of the highest rated Châteauuneaf-du-Pape wines and this is a great value and an outstanding QPR. I believe one must pay at least double to come close to this quality in a Châteauuneaf-du-Pape.

Gigondas, Rhône, France, \$16. This is another wine made for Costco by Guillaume Gonnet. This is an outstanding QPR and continues to amaze me by its value. I spend a lot of time in Gigondas and drink a lot of the best from this appellation and am amazed to find such value. Great, bold nose of dark fruit excellently balanced with acidity. A great match with barbecue, grilled pork, and hamburger, etc.

Old Vine Zinfandel, Sonoma, California, \$10. This is a great QPR and drinks at a level twice its price. Zinfandel is for people who are looking for a sweet wine but can be confused with the fruitiness of this grape which is technically dry. A great match for Oriental, Indian, Southwestern, or barbecue food. This wine should be consumed within 3-4 years of vintage.

Cabernet Sauvignon Signature Series, e.g., Rutherford Stags Leap District, and Columbia Valley, \$17 to \$24. These wines are produced in small volumes for Costco by great winemakers often named on the back labels. They offer excellent examples of AVAs which generally cost many times the price. They arrive once per year and sell out very quickly.

Tawny Port 10 Year, Portugal, \$20. This port is made for Costco by Fonseca, one of the greatest port producers. It arrives only once a year at the Thanksgiving/Christmas seasons. It is very smooth and has an excellent balance of sweetness and acidity. Great with Dark chocolate and walnuts. A Votre Santé! 

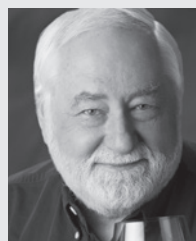


PHOTO: THOMAS BALSAMO

Barrington resident Jim Bryant is pursuing his passion and love of wine as an international wine consultant. This follows a 30-year career in senior financial and general management positions at two Fortune 100 companies. He is the owner of James R. Bryant L.L.C.; contact him at profwino@comcast.net.