

Wine fit for a celebration

Jancis Robinson selects 60 great-value reds that are perfect for the Christmas table, whatever your budget. A selection of whites to follow next week

Below are my favourite reds available in the UK by the single bottle from thousands tasted over the past three months.

Ch Le Fregne 2005 Bordeaux

£5.49 Majestic
Great freshness and still some chew but, at the two-bottle price of £4.99, this knocks spots off many a house claret. 14%

Ch Capelle 2005 Ste-Foy-Bordeaux
£5.50 SVS
Excellent value Merlot, not yet quite ready. 13%

Tesco Finest Médoc 2005
£5.98 selected Tesco
Ordinary label belies the quality, and potential, here from Yvon Mau. 13%

Finca Filchman, Gestos Malbec 2006 Mendoza
£5.99 Majestic
Lots of beef here and an attractive savoury finish, from Andean vineyards. 13.5%

Verhaeghe, Heritage du Cèdre 2005 Cahors

£6.11 Caves de Pyrène
A second wine from Ch du Cèdre. Lighter than most but good value. 13%

Agramont Crianza 2004 Navarra

£6.24 Majestic
Cabernet and Tempranillo combine to produce a dense cocktail of fully ripe fruit. Odd price. 13.5%

Dom Joel Delaunay, Gamay 2005 Touraine

£6.50 Jeroboams
Positively jumping up and down with freshness and fruit. Absolutely delicious. 12%

Mas Carlot Rouge, Grenache/Syrah 2006 Vin de Pays d'Oc

£6.65 Jeroboams
Terrific value as usual from this producer. Characterful, balanced and fresh. Good value. Juicy but not simple. 13.5%

Dom des Bacchantes 2006 Côtes du Rhône

£6.95 SVS
BIG! Sweet, funky, not remotely industrial. 14%

Ch du Monthy 2003 Médoc

£6.99 Majestic
Price down to £5.99 if two bottles are bought – and why not? The lesser 2008s can make great drinking already. 12.5%

Porcupine Ridge Syrah/Viognier 2006 Western Cape

£6.99 Majestic
Succulent mouthful of flattering fruit designed to be drunk this minute. Peppery Syrah rather than New World Shiraz. 14%

Dourthe Barrel Select 2005 St-Emilion

£7.49 (until 11 Dec usually £9.99)
Waitrose, £8.99 Tesco
Exceptional value for a St-Emilion from this blessed vintage. Some delicacy but no shortage of ripe Merlot. 13%

Santa Duc, Les Plains 2004 Vin de Pays de Vaucluse

£7.50 Vinoteca of London EC1
Really authentic wine from one of the powerhouses of Gigondas that is already great fun to drink. 13.5%

Pasolini dall'Onda 2005 Chianti

£7.65 C&B
Real tang and life. A wine that cries out for food. 12.5%

Willunga 100 Grenache 2005 McLaren Vale

£7.99 selected Sainsbury
No shy retiring violet but a sweet, juicy yet chewy southern hemisphere rendition of the Châteauneuf grape. Underpriced in my view, and I don't often write that. 14.5%

Montsant Old Vine Garnacha 2004 Montsant

£7.99 M&S
Dense, dry, uncompromising wine that truly represents the traditional character of century-old Grenache vines here on the outskirts of fashionable Priorat. Tesco's version at £6.99 is tamer. Laurona (£16.95 at BBR) seriously fine. 14%

Wrattontully Vineyards Tempranillo 2006 Wrattontully

£7.99 M&S
Very mellow and interesting from north of Coonawarra. Big impact even if not very strongly Tempranillo. 14%

Jean-Luc Colombo 2006 Crozes-Hermitage

£7.99 (from £11.99) until 11 Dec Waitrose
Excellent full-on northern Rhône at the special price. 13%

Ceiller des Dauphins, Cru des Côtes du Rhône 2005 Vinsobres

£7.99 Sainsbury
Pretty ordinary label but real guts and masses of true southern Rhône spicy herby character. 14%

Dom Charles Joguet, Les Petites Roches 2006 Chinon

£8.35 Waitrose
Super soft and fruity Cabernet Franc showing off the Loire quality revolution – and climate change. 13.6%

SAAM Helderig Pinotage/Viognier 2006 Paarl

£8.95 Bibendum and The Vineyard of Bury
The superior red bottling from a new South African producer that seems to be doing everything right. 14%

Churchill Estates 2005 Douro

£8.99 Majestic
Very dark, thick and fiery – one of the better Douro table wines from a port house. Good balance and not too sweet – real claret build. 13.5%

Pirie South Pinot Noir 2005 Tasmania

£9.95 Jeroboams
Sweet, slightly toffeed red fruit on the nose but deliciously fresh on the palate. Silky fine and fresh. 13.5%

Mas du Soleilla, Les Chailles 2005 La Clape, Coteaux du Languedoc

£9.95 SVS
From a newish producer making a big impact. Very easy and rewarding yet clean. Like daube in a bottle. 14%

Ch Sénéjac 1999 Haut Médoc

£9.99 Majestic
A really great buy for classic claret lovers – a cru bourgeois at the peak of its (relatively modest) powers. Much better value than Majestic's Ducru Beaucaillou 1999 at £55. 12.5%

Marananga Dam 2005 Barossa Valley

£9.99 M&S
Another of Britain's wine bargains, in quite a different idiom. Rich, characterful Rhône blend from Torbreck's cache of ancient Barossa vine stumps. M&S also have a little of The Factor at £65 but it needs ages yet. 14.5%

Montes Alpha Syrah 2005 Colchagua

£9.99 selected Tesco, £12.87 Christopher Piper Wines
Satisfying wine that tastes as though it was matured in sweet burgundy barrels but with a lovely dry, refreshing finish. 14.5%

Syrah 2005 Central Coast

£11 M&S
Screw-capped Rhône blend from the first Rhône Ranger Randall Graham of Bonny Doon. Dark, supple and succulent, well assembled. 13.5%

Cape Mentelle Cabernet/Merlot 2005 Margaret River

£11.99 Tesco Fine Wine
A Western Australian classic at a very fair price that will only improve in bottle. 14%

Fattoria Casaloste 2004 Chianti Classico

£12.85 Jeroboams
Spicy and smoky black cherry. Very pure Tuscan fruit. Classy. 13.5%

Moulin d'Angludet 2004 Margaux

£12.99 until 12 Dec (from £17.99) Waitrose

The second wine of Ch d'Angludet. Good value at the reduced price. 13%

Tesco Finest Yarra Valley Pinot Noir 2006 Yarra Valley

£12.99 selected Tesco
Very superior Australian answer to red burgundy, made by someone who has made his fair share of the former. 13.4%

d'Arenberg Derelict Vineyard Grenache 2004 McLaren Vale, South Australia

£12.99 Bibendum, The Sampler of London NI and Australian Wines Online
100% Grenache. Sweet and round and juicy. Minerally. Some freshness too. 15%

Cline Cellars, Ancient Vine Mourvèdre 2005 Contra Costa, California

£13.50 Tanners
Mid crimson, pretty ripe and voluptuous. Easy to like. Not OTT. Good spicy cocktail. 14.5%

Altair, Sideral 2003 Cachapoal, Chile

£13.95 SVS
Rich and very lively blend of Cabernet, Merlot and Syrah from this joint venture between the Dassaults of St-Emilion and Viña San Pedro of Chile, at a better price than it used to be. 14.5%

Qupé Syrah 2004 Central Coast

£13.95 The Wright Wine Company, £14.99 Whole Foods
Sweet undertow but very approachable. 13.5%

L'Esprit du Chevalier 2003 Pessac-Léognan

£13.99 Majestic
Lively, fresh and lovely. The more delicate sort of red bordeaux but ethereally harmonious and appetising. To be served with relatively plain food – roast chicken? 13%

Ch Musar 2000 Bekaa Valley

£13.99 selected Tesco and Sainsbury, £15.99 Harrogate Fine Wines
No shortage of comfort from this particularly fresh vintage of an old favourite from the Lebanon. 13.5%

Bois du Pied Redon 2006 Châteauneuf-du-Pape Rouge

£13.99 M&S
Extraordinarily succulent and already enjoyable for such a young wine. Organic. Well done, Ogier. M&S's Dom des Sénéchaux 2006 at £17 is rich and even more satisfying. 14.5%

Tenuta di Castiglioni 2005 IGT Toscana

£13.99 Tesco Fine Wine
Luscious, complete Supertuscan blend of Cabernet and Sangiovese from Frescobaldi. 13.5%

Ch Lagrave-Martillac 2004 Pessac-Léognan

£14.50 (£29.95 a magnum) SVS
Round, sleek and not expensive. Could already be drunk though better to keep it. 12.5%

Dom Chevalier, Clou d'Orge 2005 Ladoix-Serrigny Premier Cru

£14.99 Majestic
Good value Côte d'Or red from a useful, organically cultivated domaine in an unfashionable commune that tends to fall in the centrefold between Côtes de Nuits and Beaune. The village Ladoix is also a good buy at £11.99. 13%

Dom Pierre Gonon 2004 St-Joseph Rouge

£15.50 Vine Trail
Brilliant crimson and lovely pure northern Rhône Syrah scent. Very fine tannins and a refreshing expression of this grape in its homeland already very approachable. A roast chicken red. 13%

Les Terrasses 2005 Alvaro Palacios, Priorat

£15.85 C&B (2004 is £17.99 at big Waitrose branches)
The (relatively) easy-drinking wine from the young king of Priorat. More refined than it used to be. 14%

Frankland Estate, Olmo's Reward 2003 Frankland River, Western Australia

£16.75 BBR
Quite thick and sweet and dense. Well balanced with some evolution. Complete. No eucalyptus. Screwcap. 14%

Dom Alain Maume, Les Terrasses de Montmirail 2005 Gigondas

£16.99 (comes down to £11.33 in their 3 for 2 offer) Wine Rack
Dark and smoky, classic southern Rhône – good slug of Syrah in here. 14.5%

Hawksburn Terrace Pinot Noir 2006 Central Otago, New Zealand

£17.49 Bibendum, Source Food Stores, The Vineyard of Bury, £18.99 Whole Foods
Made by Matt Douglas, ex Bibendum

business manager now at Mt Difficulty. Sweet and juicy, impossible to dislike. Slightly dry end. 14.5%

Ridge, York Creek Zinfandel 2003 Santa Cruz

£17.99 D Byrne & Co, £19.99 Noble Green Wines
Spiced by 16% Petite Sirah. Full bodied and marvellously eloquent somehow. Very lively. 14%

Ch Moullinet 2004 Pomerol

£18 selected M&S
Ripe, velvety and slightly dusty Pomerol for traditionalists at a good price. 13%

Rémi Rollin, Fichots Premier Cru 2004 Pernand-Vergelesses

£18.50 Tanners
Pale, very slightly grey. Quite intense and pure. Very fresh. Good with food now. Real lift though slightly severe. Refined rather than opulent. 13%

Dom Vincent Paris, Granit 30° 2005 Cornas

£18.95 Jeroboams
Dense dark smoky fruit. Ripe but fresh. Terrific fruit freshness and concentration. Just delicious. 13%

Dom du Ferrand 2004 Châteauneuf-du-Pape Rouge

£18.95 Vine Trail
Big and beefy but with a good core of fruit. Ideally wait a year or two for the tannins to subside, or perhaps enjoy now with a bison steak. 14.5%



Le Cupole di Trinoro 2004 IGT Toscana

£18.95 C&B
Merlot-dominated Bordeaux blend for early drinking from a protected valley 700 m up in southern Tuscany. No shortage of character. 14%

Dry Creek Vineyard, Somers Ranch Zinfandel 2004 Dry Creek Valley, Sonoma

£18.99 Bibendum, Bacchanalia, Whole Foods
98% Zinfandel and 2% Petite Sirah from a Zinfandel hotspot. Real power but none of that hot berry/jammy flavour. 13.5%

Dom Frédéric Magnien, Vieilles Vignes 2004 Chambolle-Musigny

£19.85 Domaine Direct of London NI
Lovely mature, sensuous Chambolle nose, heady and truffley, and beautiful delicacy on the palate. 13%

Dom Robert Arnoux 2005 Nuits St Georges

£19.99 Majestic, £26 Howard Ripley
Great to find real burgundy from a top domaine in a wine warehouse. 13%

Pago de Carravajas Crianza 2004 Ribera del Duero

£19.99 Majestic
A little Cabernet and Merlot in this black, thick sweet but well balanced lively and punchy blend from a reliable address. 13%

Dom Drouhin Pinot Noir 2005 Willamette Valley, Oregon

£19.99 Noble Green Wines, Upton Wines
Lovely subtlety, ready, long. 13.5%

Mount Edward Pinot Noir 2005 Central Otago

£21 Jeroboams
Lightly smoked and spiced with delicate but ripe red fruit underneath. Smart, classy

Pinot. 13.5%

H Brunier et Fils, Dom du Vieux Télégraphe 2003 Châteauneuf-du-Pape

£21.70 Tanners
Very luscious, curranty, not too dry. 14.5%

Les Tourelles de Longueville 2003 Pauillac

£21.95 Bentalls, Caviste, Bibendum, £23.99 Whole Foods
Very, very ripe and fleshy. Well disguised dry tannins. Fresh. The second wine of Ch Pichon Longueville. 13%

Craiglee Shiraz 2004 Victoria

£22 BBR
A really individual Australian. Sweet and thick and dense. Succulent and toasty with a proven track record for ageing beautifully. 14.5%

Napanook 2000 Napa Valley

£22.99 C&B
Profit from the weak dollar and enjoy Christian Moueix's second wine of Dominus. Full sweet scented, very easy. Seamless with slightly dusty notes. 14%

Jorge Moreira, Poira 2004 Douro

£24 Butlers Wine Cellar, Harrods
Full, rich, heady, ambitious. 14.5%

Georges Roumier 2004 Chambolle-Musigny

£25.90 Tanners
Pale rose colour. Intense, lots of acid, very fresh and correct. Could drink now. 13%

Dom de la Vougeraie, Les Petits Noizons 2005 Pommard

£31 Waitrose
From an over-performing domaine. This will continue to improve in bottle. 13.65%

C&B = Corney & Barrow

M&S = Marks & Spencer

SVS = Stone, Vine & Sun

BBR = Berry Bros

For many more recommendations see www.jancisrobinson.com

Stockists

Australianwinesonline.com
Bacchanalia of Cambridge
tel: +44 (0)1223-576292
BBR.com;
bentalls.co.uk;
bibendum-wine.co.uk;
butlers-winecellar.co.uk;
corneyandbarrow.com
Caves de Pyrène
lescaves.co.uk;

caviste.co.uk;
christopherpiperwines.co.uk
dbyrne-finewines.co.uk
domainedirect.co.uk;
fiveasonswine.co.uk;
greenandbluewines.com
harrogatefinewinecompany.com
howardripley.com;
jeroboams.co.uk;

marksandspencer.com;
majestic.co.uk
noblegreenwines.co.uk;
sainsburys.co.uk;
sourcefood.co.uk
stonevine.co.uk
tanners-wines.co.uk;
tesco.com;
thesampler.co.uk
Upton Wines

tel: +44 (0)1684-592 668
The Vineyard of Bury
tel: +44 (0)1706-822 213
The Wright Wine Company
Tel +44 (0) 1756-700 886
wineandwhisky.co.uk;
vinetrail.co.uk;
vinoteca.co.uk;
waitrose.com;
wholefoodsmarket.com

