

Extra-Budget Wines for the New Year

Written by Jacqueline Coleman, BT Contributor
January 2018

Red, white, and you: Agreeable wine for \$12 or less

N



ew Year, New You, they say. However, I think most of us would agree that the more accurate phrase would be “New Year, Poor You” after the busy holiday and event season.

January 2018 is here already, but I bet you’ll still be writing “2017,” at least until March, on those checks you need to sign.

Usually this time of year is full of resolutions and self-promises like eat healthier, quit smoking, join the gym, stop drinking.... Wait, what?

Here at Vino, we don’t think you should make such a drastic resolution as that, but we do understand that you may be strapped for the cash, at least until you make all those holiday present returns. Knowing that you’re probably on a “New Year, New Budget” this month, we want to offer some suggestions for wines that are *extra* economical.

Extra-Budget Wines for the New Year

Written by Jacqueline Coleman, BT Contributor
January 2018

The great news is that inexpensive wine doesn't always equate with poor-quality wine. We've found for seven extra-budget wines for different types of wine drinkers. From Argentina to Australia, here are some to try as you get your 2018 off to a great start.

If you're a Côtes du Rhône lover, you know the struggle in finding a decently priced red Rhône that still gives you that top-quality French wine taste. Try the **2015 Les Dauphins Côtes du Rhône Reserve** next time you're craving the bright cherry and subtle earthy spice of a Rhône Valley blend. This one has a nice structure for a lower-priced wine, with some spice and mild tannins on the palate. Strong acidity means it's good for some light food pairing, too.

Looking for a bold new wine? Then you must try the **2016 19 Crimes Red Blend** from Australia. Before you open the bottle, download the app and use it to scan the label and hear the real stories of the criminals pictured on it through a neat augmented-reality technology. The men on the label actually come to life! This interesting red wine has a big flavor, with ripe red fruits, chocolate undertones, and vanilla spice on the palate. Very low tannins provide for a pleasantly robust, fruit-forward wine from Down Under.

Nero d'Avola is a great varietal to serve if you want to impress a typical Chianti drinker with a new Italian varietal. The **2016 Caleo Nero d'Avola** out of Sicily is a much softer red wine, with a light fruit and earth balance on the palate. There's not much complexity here, which makes it a decent option for sipping and relaxing.

From Portugal comes the **2015 Cais da Ribeira Vinha do Douro** red wine, which is also on the softer side. With Old World earth-forward flavor on the nose, this wine also has a bit of a red fruit and "cheesy" taste on the palate. Named for one of the most renowned streets in the town of Porto, it may be a perfect table wine addition to your Port-and-cheese night.

For the boldest of the economical reds, try the **2015 Smoking Loon Cabernet Sauvignon** from California. Smokey chocolatey blackberry notes engulf the nose and linger a bit on the palate. With mild tannins and a medium body, this Cabernet is a smooth drinker for a budget wine.

Extra-Budget Wines for the New Year

Written by Jacqueline Coleman, BT Contributor
January 2018

On the white side, we have a couple crisp options. Out of South Africa is the **2016 Releaf Chenin Blanc**

This wine is fresh, with honeysuckle and tropical melon dancing on the nose, and a tropical citrus flavor filling the palate. A wine with decent acidity and full flavor means this is a wonderful alternative for Chardonnay to Riesling lovers alike.

The **2016 Amalaya Torrontés/Riesling** blend from Salta, Argentina, is absolutely a must-buy for anyone who enjoys a beautifully aromatic wine. The 15 percent Riesling steals the show on the nose, with sticky sweet floral notes floating above the glass, but dive a little deeper into the palate, and the 85 percent Torrontés takes over to balance it out. Great acidity contributed by both varietals means this is a perfect food-pairing wine. Lots of peach nectar and stone fruit flavors, combined with the wonderful complexity that these two varietals create together, make the Amalaya the winner of the budget wine lottery.

Feedback: letters@biscaynetimes.com