

Sweet Treats for Your Wine Glass

Written by Jacqueline Coleman, BT Contributor
October 2018

Red, white, and you: Agreeable wine for \$15 or less

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What's not to love about October? It's when football season shakes out to be either just what we expected or totally wacky, but either way, we're into the heart of it. The semester's halfway through, and kids are picking out pumpkins and deciding on costumes. Then there are lucky people everywhere but here emerging refreshed after summer's oppressive heat to don colorful scarves, leggings, and boots. What a wonderful time of year!

Perhaps October's biggest event is the one that happens on the last day of the month. Trick-or-treaters give parents everywhere real-life frights as they dart in and out of houses (and traffic), looking for their favorite sweets. With all the commotion that night and in the weeks leading up to Halloween, I think it's safe to say we'll all need a glass of wine.

The beauty of wine is that not only are there different grape varieties to choose from, but there can also be a diverse range of styles for each grape, from bone dry to super sweet. This October it's not just the kids who get to enjoy something sugary -- parents can indulge a bit, too. From semi-sweet to full-blown dessert in a glass, join me as we discover these sweeter wine

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treats.

I'll start with the driest wine of the bunch to ease you into the residual sugar, especially for those who aren't used to drinking off-dry wines. The **2016 Domaine Zinck Gewurtraminer** from Alsace is a treat. An excellent food-pairing wine, it is slightly mineral-ly on the nose and fragrant with light flowers, and still maintains decent body. I found that the acidity in this wine holds the balance throughout your palate, and exotic fruit flavors guide you to a lovely off-dry finish.

For something a little different, try the **2016 Biltmore Estates Riesling**, from its winery in Asheville, North Carolina. Smooth and light, it offers a strong dried apricot on the nose and a hint of honey on the palate. It's also a tad bolder than your typical German Riesling, but that's to be expected from an American wine. I'd take this crisp and semi-sweet treat with me this Halloween.

Admittedly, I'm not a regular sweet wine drinker, but I've decided that the **Castello del Poggio Moscato** is my favorite bottle of this grape. With a little bit of fizz, Castello del Poggio welcomes you to Moscato with a beautiful honeysuckle nose. Delicate white flowers and audacious peach flavors mingle with the honey on your tongue for a truly enjoyable drinking experience.

Who said we must put away the rosé for the year? Try the **Bell'Agio Rosé Dolce** for a pink sweet. Big red strawberries and raspberries hit you in a good way. I found this wine to be *très* sweet but balanced and incredibly pleasant. It would be hard not to pour a second glass of this Lambrusco rosé from Italy, which is a great fall wine addition for us in South Florida, where it's still hot.

Red wine drinkers aren't left out with the **Rivata Casa Rossa**. A sweet red wine, this slightly effervescent red cherry fruit bomb shows up smooth on the palate. It is not your typical full-bodied red, so I would recommend trying this wine with a light lunch salad accompanied with strawberries or a soft white cheese for a fruity complement.

Now we get to the drinkable desserts. I really enjoyed the next two wines on their own or with a bit of blue cheese following a meal. They are the two dessert wines that follow. Both are sold as

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splits (half-bottles), so calculate that into your pricing. The **2016 Château Miselle Sauternes** from Bordeaux is an excellent value for the cost. Full-bodied and bursting with sweet apricot and honey thickness, this economical Sauternes coats your palate in its dewy gold color.

Though I enjoyed the Sauternes, I have to say that the dessert wine prize goes to the **2016 Vistamar Moscatel** out of the Limari Valley in Chile. This is a late-harvest Moscatel that wows with big intensity in a little bottle. With citrus-honey, dried apricot, and peach on the nose, I liked the range of flavors in this sticky-sweet libation. Balanced and bold, it holds up just fine with a savory cheese complement or an equally sweet treat.

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