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Wine list: A nice selection of reds



By PEG MELNIK THE PRESS DEMOCRAT

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Press Democrat wine writer Peg Melnik scopes out restaurant wine lists around the North Bay, looking for good value and the occasional splurge. This week's picks (prices are retail; restaurant markup varies):

Bonterra, 2007 Mendocino County Syrah, 14.5 percent, \$18. An approachable syrah that's a good quaffer. Aromas and flavors of red raspberry, herbs and spice. Hint of rhubarb. Crisp acidity. Balanced.

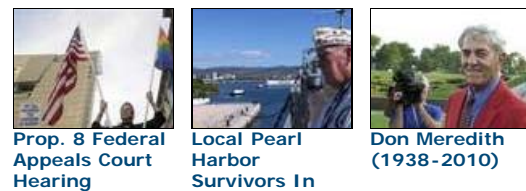
Raymond, 2007 Napa Valley Merlot, 14.2 percent, \$30. A seamless merlot with depth. Aroma and flavors of blackberry, red raspberry, herbs, cassis and spice. Tangy red fruit makes it interesting. Balanced. Good length.

Franciscan Magnificat, 2006 Napa Valley Red Wine, 14.5 percent, \$50. A bright blend of fruit with notes of cherry, rhubarb and cranberry. Spicy undercurrent. Crisp acidity.

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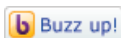
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Duckhorn, 2007 Napa Valley Merlot, 14.5 percent, \$52. A bright merlot with good acid and crisp red fruit flavors. Notes of dried cherry, black cherry, anise and black pepper. Balanced. Hint of rhubarb. Lingering finish.

Patz & Hall, 2008 Burnside Vineyard, Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir, 14.2 percent, \$70. A remarkable pinot. Complex, with layered flavors of cherry, herbs and spice. Great use of oak, with a hint of vanilla and caramel. Not to be missed.

Want to share a current wine on your favorite restaurant's list? E-mail peg.melnik@pressdemocrat.com or check out her Tasting Room blog at pressdemocrat.com.



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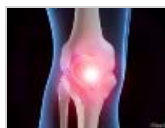
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