

10 summer value wines

COOKING

By Robert Whitley - creators.com



Nothing too fancy or expensive is necessary, but make sure to pick a wine of quality. Picnic wines should be uncomplicated, not bad. (Bonnie Trafelet/Chicago Tribune/TNS)

It's summertime, and the living's easy. So, too, should be the wines you drink. May they go down easy, and be easy on your wallet as well.

I've selected a handful of superb wines that, in my humble opinion, over deliver for the price. Some of these are perennial favorites, such as the Castello Banfi Brunello di Montalcino, and some are recent discoveries, such as the well-balanced and elegant Stateland Pinot Noir from Santa Barbara County in California's Central Coast.

The common thread in all of these wines is their ability to hold their own when tasted side by side significantly more expensive wines of the same type. For summer entertaining, all of these wines should please even the most discriminating wine enthusiast and make you the host or hostess with the mostest!

Buena Vista 2015 Chardonnay, Carneros (\$20) -- Jean-Charles Boisset immediately set about the renovation of the historic Buena Vista Winery after purchasing the crumbling property several years ago. The result is a thing of beauty. Boisset also went to work on the wines. This vintage of Buena Vista chardonnay is a thing of beauty.