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JUNE 2014

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6 BIG REDS TO DRINK THIS SUMMER

Don't be swayed by the unofficial rule that hearty reds don't work in warmer months. If a so-called winter bottle has balance and decent acid (which is what makes your mouth water), there's no reason you can't enjoy it year round.



CHILL OUT

No matter the season, a warm bottle of red will cool anyone's mood. To ensure a perfect pour, chill your reds for a few minutes (most are best between 60 and 65°F). And if the label says to serve at "room temperature," remember, that's technically between 68 and 72°F—not 80°F.

Chateau Tanunda 2010 Noble Baron Shiraz (Barossa Valley)
There's a reason visitors to Chateau Tanunda drink this 100% Shiraz while picnicking on the winery's croquet lawn—it works well in the heat. It has luscious, fruit-driven flavors of black cherry and blackberry, with hints of mint and anise, backed up by soft tannins and a vein of mouth-cleansing acidity. It's terrific with spicy seafood.

Terrazas de los Andes 2010 Single Vineyard Las Compuertas Malbec (Luján de Cuyo)
No one does *asado* better than the Argentines, so when you fire up the grill, be sure to have a few bottles of this single-vineyard Malbec on hand. Intense flavors of raspberry, cherry, rose petal and herbs give way to a bright, fruit-filled finish. Its chewy tannins are exactly what you want with your charbroiled chow.

St. Francis 2010 Zinfandel (Sonoma Valley)
This easy-drinking red is rich in cassis, anisette, mocha and freshly ground pepper flavors. And while Zinfandel is a barbecue staple, it's also the perfect foil for salads that have a little kick, like those with arugula or mustard greens. Raw tomato-based dishes, like bruschetta, match well with this Zin, too.

Artadi 2010 Viñas de Gain (Rioja)
A clean, modern-style pour, this Tempranillo packs flavors of ripe berries, especially red cherry and blueberry, with touches of Mediterranean herbs. There's a delicious note of salty caramel corn on the long finish, which makes it the ideal wine to enjoy when you're gathered around a beach bonfire.

Val delle Rose 2010 Riserva (Morellino di Scansano)
Made from 90% Sangiovese, this wine hails from Scansano, a hilltop village with Mediterranean views in coastal Tuscany. A year of barrel aging adds spicy toasted notes, but juicy flavors of raspberry sorbet and cherry—with hints of Chinese five-spice powder—power through to the rewarding, bright finish. This bottle is best for midweek Chinese or Korean takeout.

Louis Bernard 2010 Domaine la Crau des Papes (Châteauneuf-du-Pape)
Bursting with bold flavors of plum and cranberry, this Grenache-based stunner from the southern Rhône Valley has it all: Ample mouthfeel, velvety tannins and a clean, bright finish. While it's good all by its lonesome, don't be afraid to break it out during your morning brunches on the patio.

—Mike DeSimone & Jeff Jensen