

Memorial Day Marks the Beginning of Summer White Wine Season



While the June 21st solstice may mark the **official** start of summer, Memorial Day kicks off the **psychological** beginning of the season.

And while we're no longer a slave to fashion and restricted to wearing just white shorts, white pants or white dresses after Memorial Day, neither are we forced to drink just white wines once Monday comes along.

But then again, no one has to force me to drink white wine anytime. And the arrival of the summer season just gives me a great excuse to pretend to be vogue.

So, if you're firing up the barbeque and looking for some fun white wines to share with family, friends and neighbors this weekend, here are a couple of really delicious and affordable versions to consider.

Torrontés is one of my favorite summertime heat busters. Traditionally grown in Argentina, it is usually produced in stainless steel tanks to preserve the fresh fruit flavors. The **2013 Andeluna Torrontés** from the Mendoza region of Argentina is produced in collaboration with world-renowned winemaking consultant Michel Rolland. It has lovely aromas of acacia flowers, jasmine, peach and grapefruit. Abundant acidity keeps the bright flavors of tropical fruits, nectarine and citrus fresh and the finish crisp. **\$13**

D'Arenberg is certainly one of the most recognized wineries in Southern Australia. The company was established back in 1912 by Joseph Osborn after he purchased land in what has now become the McLaren Vale. Four generations later, the **2013 d'Arenberg Hermit Crab Marsanne Viognier** is still keeping Aussies cool. This wine, a blend of Viognier and Marsanne, is both refreshing and luscious at the same time. The aromatic scents of acacia and white peach and apricot are very conspicuous on the fragrant bouquet and on the palate. Lingering hints of apple and pear on the finish provide a layer of depth to the wine while spicy acidity gives it freshness and focus. **\$16**

Of course, no list of summer white wines would be complete without including a Sauvignon Blanc, and my pick this season is the **2013 Domaine de la Chezatte Sancerre** from the Loire Valley of France. The clay and limestone terroir gives this Sauvignon Blanc a particularly light and bright crisp quality paired with intense minerality. Flavors of fresh grapefruit, pineapple and guava are supported by lively acidity throughout the palate. This is a wine in search of seafood, especially fresh shellfish. **\$20**

Oregon's Willamette Valley is famous for their fruit-driven pinot noir wines, but winemaker Mimi Casteel has figured out how to put sunshine in a bottle with her **2014 Bethel Heights Pinot Blanc**. It is an excellent example of how brightly pinot blanc can shine in this region. It is a lighter-style version that features a fragrant bouquet of citrus, apple blossom and Asian pear scents. Flavors of green melon, pear and apricot shine through on the core of the palate while notes of smokey undercurrents combine with nice acidity that leaves a lasting impression on the finish. **\$22**