

Four French For Forty



Just because a wine is from France does not mean that it is necessarily expensive. There are some amazing values to be had if you know where to look.

I have hand selected four wines that represent a phenomenal value for French wine – and all of them have two things in common: First, they are all forty dollars. Second, they all drink like wines that cost twice the price.

Here are four amazing wines that provide great finesse and ageability for forty dollars.

The Burgundy region is the king of Pinot Noir. The **2008 Champy Gevrey-Chambertin Vieilles Vignes from Burgundy** is pure and smooth. This red has a sinewy underpinning courtesy of its present, cohesive tannins, which frames the cherry, tobacco and spice flavors. Lively acidity drives the long finish. Best from 2012 through 2020. **\$40**

Not all delicious Bordeaux wines have to be a classed-growth wine or cost an arm-and-a-leg. The **2006 Clos Les Lunelles Cotes de Castillon from Bordeaux** is a delicious blend of 80% Merlot, 10% Cabernet Sauvignon, and 10% Cabernet Franc. The 2006 vintage was warm and dry and is reflecting in the amazing density in this wine. It exhibits a sweet perfume of creme de cassis, cherry liqueur, licorice, spice box, and crushed rocks. With full body, sweet tannin, admirable purity, and brilliant harmony among its component parts, this full-bodied effort can be enjoyed now and over the next decade. **\$40**

One of my favorite regions in France is the Rhone Valley, and it is home to many great value-oriented wines, like the **2011 Grailot Crozes Hermitage Rouge**. This Big Rhone Red is made from 100 % Syrah and provides a juicy, briary feel undercutting the layers of boysenberry, fig and raspberry fruit, while singed alder, juniper and bay fill in the background. It displays lots of range and solid depth. Drink now through 2020. **\$40**

The Loire Valley is not normally associate with brilliant red wines, but it should be. The **2010 Germain Domaine Des Roches Neuves Terres Chaudes Rouge** from the Loire Valley is a brilliant low-yield bottling of pure Cabernet Franc, fermented in large oak casks and then aged for 12-14 months in 1 year old French oak barrels. It offers stimulating aromas of ripe mulberry, salted meats, and black pepper. Undeniably palate-staining, powerful, suggesting wet stones, salt, and bitter-sweet black fruits. Again, drink it now or hold on to it for another 5-10 years. **\$40**