

Have Wine, Will Tailgate

On the hunt for great wines to take along with you as the start of tailgating season gets underway? Here are four you'll want to pack along with your portable grill and cooler.



NIKOLAIHOF GRÜNER VELTLINER "HEFEABZUG" 2009

Gruener Veltliner, Austria's most planted grape variety, is considered a very food-friendly wine. It'll pair nicely with fish, poultry and white meats as well as dishes that are usually hard on wine, like salads, pesto risottos, and dishes with asparagus, bell peppers and artichokes. In other words, it makes for a versatile addition to any potluck tailgating party.

The importer Terry Theise had a great quote: "This gorgeous 2009 has an amazingly spectral finish that's like washing down the table of elements with a shot of liquefied sea air." Chalky, fruity, tobacco and pepper elements make this dry, medium-bodied wine, which hails from Wachau, Austria's best growing area, a crowd pleaser. Sold in New Jersey by Michael Skurnik Wines, it sells for about \$26.



2009 VAL DE SIL "MONTENOVO"

Don't worry if you're unfamiliar with this grape variety, so was I until I tasted the wine. From the Valdeorras area of the Galicia region of northwest Spain, the Godello (go-day-o) grape variety was first planted in the "Golden Valley" in 1885. While long overshadowed by its cousin Albarino from Rias Biexas, Montenovo deserves to come into its own. Possessing the minerality of a Chablis with the acidity of a Sauvignon Blanc, it boasts delicate aromas of wild flowers, lemon, white peach, ripe pear and almonds.

Be among the first to try Montenovo and enjoy bragging rights among your vino circle for discovering this great find. Sample it with fresh shellfish, grilled chicken, hummus and seafood risotto, and you'll see what I mean. Sold in New Jersey by IPO Wines, it's priced at \$15.99.



2007 WEHLENER SONNENUHR RIESLING KABINETT, S. A. PRUM

Since 1156, the Prum family has owned vineyards in the German region of Mosel, where Sonnenuhr means sundial. Kabinett, in the German wine classification system, can qualify as less ripe than Spatlese but still be considered semi-sweet. It is 100% Riesling with flavors of lemon, peach, apricot and honeysuckle against a mineral backdrop.

Even though Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Kabinett can age for 20 years, it is bottled using a Stelvin closure rather than a cork. This white wine is well matched with salads, seafood and light veal dishes. When I lived in Germany some 45 years ago this was my everyday drinking wine. Available from Fedway Associates, it is priced at \$24.99.



CHATEAU TANUNDA GRAND BAROSSA SHIRAZ 2007

The perfect pour for a fall tailgate party at the new Giants Stadium, this red wine selection goes great with grilled red meats and BBQ offerings (anything from burgers to steaks and lamb chops). Produced in Australia's Barossa Valley, it has aromas of red berry fruit and spice notes in a fragrant bouquet; the wine is a flavorful, full-bodied red, with hints of spice, black pepper and vanilla that settle on the palate for a pleasing finish.

The blend is 95% Shiraz and 5% Cabernet Sauvignon that is matured in French and American oak for 18 months. The chateau is Australia's largest and oldest, dating from the 1860s. Distributed in New Jersey by Allied Beverage Group, it retails at \$19.

Ron Kapon, the "Peripatetic Oenophile," is a regular columnist. Visit at www.ronkapon.com.