Budget Bordeaux

Bordeaux's 2016 reds offer a lot to be excited about. These superb wines feature ripe fruit and robust structure, and become quality was widespread, there are many fine values. Here are some of the highlights.

CHÂTEAU D'AGUIRRE Castillon Côtes de Bordeaux 2016 ($31, $50) Lognanberry, black currant, bay leaf, tobacco, violet, fresh, juicy
CLOS MARSAILLETTE Pessac-Leognan 2016 ($36, $46) Elegant, silky, red currant, plum, cedar, tobacco, earthy, warm, iron
CHÂTEAU LABRIVAS Haut-Médoc 2016 ($91, $180) Plum, red currant, blackberry compote, licorice, currant, bramble, tobacco; fresh, focused
CHÂTEAU LILIAN LADOUYS St-Estèphe 2016 ($91, $223) Cassis, plum paste, cherry preserves, floral, mineral, toast
CHÂTEAU MALESCASSE Haut-Médoc 2016 ($91, $180) Dark currant, blackberry compote, tobacco, cigar box, earthy, solid
CHÂTEAU MAURAS Francs Côtes de Bordeaux 2016 ($91, $213) Racy, black currant, blackberry confiture, anise, chalk
CHÂTEAU LA VIEILLE CURE Fransac 2016 ($91, $235) Warm fruitcake, ripe plum, boysenberry preserves, balsamic, ripe, flattering
CHÂTEAU BELLE-VUE Haut-Médoc 2016 ($91, $235) Dark, juicy, stewed currant, blackberry fruit, vanilla, tobacco
CHÂTEAU CAP DE FAUGÈRES Castillon Côtes de Bordeaux 2016 ($91, $177) Lognanberry, red currant, coals, tobacco, iron, new
CHÂTEAU PUYGUERAUDO Francs Côtes de Bordeaux 2016 ($91, $177) Mouthwatering, savory, red currant, damson plum, tobacco

Italy 101

The following producers are probably familiar to many wine lovers, most likely for their high-end offerings. Yet this group of entry-level reds, carrying much lower price tags, are all crafted with the same care. They provide the perfect introduction to Italy.

FRAVELLE REVELLO Barbera d’Alba 2017 ($30, $50) Denne, fluid, blackberry, black cherry
PAOLO SCACINO Vino da Tavola-Piedmont Red NV ($92, $15) Black currant, violet, musk, elegant, succulent
AZZALI Nebbiolo Langhe 2015 ($91, $233) Rich, spicy, cherry, plum, licorice, earthy, chalk, story
BRANCACIA Toscana Tre 2016 ($91, $233) Black cherry, iron, earth, tobacco, coffee, dense

CORDERO DI MONTEZEMOLO Barbiera d’Alba 2017 ($91, $244) Round, supple, black currant, blackberry, violet, earth, Full

The Americas

These New World reds deliver a lot of bang for the buck. All of them are signature varieties from their regions, with the exception of the Sparkman, which is an eclectic blend of Syrah, Tempranillo, Grenache, Petite Sirah, Syrah and Touriga Nacional.

ALEXANDER NICOLE Synch Horse Heaven Hills Jet Black Destiny Riesling Vineyard 2016 ($93, $230) Retained, focused, blackberry, bay leaf, papaya
AMIDO Malbec Salta 2017 ($92, $220) Dark plum, boysenberry, macerated cherry, mineral, pure
SPARKMAN Wilderness Columbia Valley 2015 ($92, $220) currant, licorice, tar, espresso, pepper, balanced, focused, polished
BODEGA GARZON Tannat Uruguay Reserve 2017 ($91, $220) Raspberry, red plum, pepper, slate, mineral, juicy, crunchy
BROOKS Pinot Noir Willamette Valley Runaway Hill 2017 ($92, $233) Plump, vibrant; raspberry, speckled cinnamon

White Light

From the heart of Europe to the far reaches of the Southern Hemisphere, these exquisite whites are sure to relieve the winter blues.

GREYWACKE Sauvignon Blanc Marlborough 2016 ($92, $233) Pineapple, mango, orange zest, green apple peel; vibrant
NIGL Grüner Veltliner Niederösterreich Frühstuhl 2017 ($91, $191) Exuberant, savory; peach, tarragon, cardamom, mineral
BERNHARD OTT Niederösterreich Am Berg 2017 ($91, $191) Peach, pineapple, hay, rose, vanilla, coconut; firm, dense
HIDDLER Grüner Veltliner Niederösterreich Litsch 2017 ($91, $191) Peach, tobacco, light, dense
NOCTON Chardonnay Tasmania 2018 ($91, $235) Crisp, succulent, honey, melon, floral, passion fruit
LA TUNELLA Sauvignon Friuli Colli Orientali 2017 ($91, $222) White peach, pink grapefruit palate de fruit, tarragon, mineral; lively
AUGUST KESSLER Steinleing Kabinett R Fm R 2016 ($90, $191) Harmonic, expressive; mirabelle plum, smoke, vanilla
KOMO Sauvignon Blanc Marlborough 2018 ($90, $144) Key lime, lemon sherbet, lemon verbena; intense, focused

—Bruce Sanderson
90  Cecchi  Sangiovese Toscana 2016  $13  Round and juicy, boasting cherry, plum, earth and iron flavors. Finishes firm and lean, with balance overall. Fine length. Best from 2020 through 2028. 7,000 cases made.—B.S.