

Fine Wine Selection

Everyone needs special treats for Christmas, to drink with the best efforts in the kitchen and enjoy with good company. Here is our pick of the wines which have really impressed us over the last months, all with 10% off six bottles of the same wine.

Note: some of these wines are only available in limited quantities, so order early to avoid disappointment.

White

Antoine and Laurent Robin, Chablis, France, 2021, 12.5%

Bottle £20.95 6 bottles with 10% off £113.13 Code ROB221
From vines averaging 45 years old (the earliest planted in 1954), on a vineyard facing the 1er Cru de Vaillons. We are fortunate to have found the Robins and for the moment remain their sole importer.

The Robin's village Chablis is immediately attractive: from a pretty nose (hawthorn blossom?) to a limpidly marine palate with associations of salinity and citrus. Transparent, delicious - and could only be Chablis. Now-2025

Domaine Vendôme, Crozes Hermitage Blanc, Les Bruclas, France, 2021, 13%

Bottle £22.95 6 bottles with 10% off £123.93 Code VEN821
This organic white was a stand-out at our recent Rhône tasting. It's from 70% Marsanne and 30% Roussanne grown on loess soils, given 9 months on the lees and just 10% aged in 500 litre oak demi-muids.

Generous burst of fruit – apricots and chirimoya. Splendid weight and fat. Such a good example of the appellation, an interesting and vibrant mouthful. Drink with chicken or simple pork dishes. Now-2025

SA Prum, Wehlen Trocken Riesling, Mosel, Germany, 2017, 12.5%

Bottle £29.50 6 bottles with 10% off £159.30 Code PRU117
The Prum family have been making wine in the Mosel since 1156 and SA Prum set up this privately owned 17 hectare estate in the middle of the 19th century. This is from old vines on the steep slopes of grey Devonian slate.

Bright flavours of green apple, lime and quince; both dry and intensely fruity. We don't overuse the word complex here, but this fits that adjective: fascinating wine. Now-2025



Agnès Paquet, Auxey-Duresses, Les Hoz, France, 2020, 13%

Bottle £32.50 6 bottles with 10% off £175.50 Code PAQ220
Most of Agnès Paquet's vines lie in the Auxey-Duresses appellation, and it is here that she is carving a reputation for consistently producing wine of value and quality. The house style here is to let the wine express itself without too much intervention in the cellar: whole bunch pressing and no lees stirring in order to achieve wines with a linear structure.

From the oldest plot of vines on the estate, averaging 85 years of age. Matured in oak for 12 months, 15% new. Lovely floral perfume with stone fruit. Fresh and balanced – moderate alcohol. Appealing green melon tone. Rounded and complete – and those old vines really deliver texture. A banker every year. Now-2026

Domaine Verzier, Condrieu, Authentic, France, 2020, 13.5%

Bottle £45.50 6 bottles with 10% off £245.70 Code VER620
Condrieu is unquestionably one of the world's greatest white wines. This comes from a terraced plot named Chante-Perdrix (the singing partridge), "très granitique" as Maxime Verzier said, between 200m. and 330m. on the Izeras hillside.

There's nothing like Condrieu – in no other Viognier does one see the tension between pure apricot flavours and that dry minerality. One is barely aware of the oak – there's just a subtle creaminess. Honeyed and appealingly viscous. Now-2024

"Deep, rich and ripe with a focussed peach nose. Textured, creamy and yet fresh with telling acidity ensuring overall poise. Convincing finish too. Lovely! 93/100", 2022 Decanter World Wine Awards



Red



French Classics

From the southern and northern Rhône, Bordeaux and Burgundy

René Lequin-Colin, Bourgogne Pinot Noir, 2020, 12.5%

Bottle £19.50 6 bottles with 10% off £105.30 Code LEQ620

In a region subject to dramatic inflation, this remains a sure fire value, an organic wine (certified, but no mention on the label) from various plots around the village of Santenay. All the wine goes into barrel, but only 10% new.

A year in bottle has just rounded this out nicely. Deep ruby red hue. Juicily black-fruited, with lots of energy and excellent concentration for a generic Bourgogne. Classic example with sappy freshness, light tannins and a little structure. Showing so well now, perfect for simple roast chicken or partridge. Now-2026

Domaine des Espiers, Gigondas, Les Grames, 2021, 14.5%

Bottle £25.95 6 bottles with 10% off £140.13 Code ESP321

Philippe Cartoux at Espiers makes an enviable range of svelte, organic southern Rhônes. This is named after the vineyard, 3/4 Grenache and 1/4 Syrah, given eight months in large 600l. demi-muids.

Dark and glossy. Gorgeous raspberry and damson flavours, bright, fresh and youthful. Mildest rasp of tannins. Powerful, artisanal, and with years to go. Now-2028

Château Du Glana, Saint-Julien, Cru Bourgeois, 2016, 13.5%

Bottle £33.50 6 bottles with 10% off £180.90 Code GLA116

From a tip-top Bordeaux vintage, and already delivering enormous pleasure: 56% Cabernet Sauvignon and 44% Merlot, given 12 months in oak, 40% new.

So smooth and elegant – already so appealing. "Bright crimson. Plump, ripe, purple-fruit nose. Very flattering. Easy peasy. Super-round and bright. 16.5/20", Jancis Robinson, MW, jancisrobinson.com, 2nd April 2017. Now-2028

Domaine des Garriguettes, Châteauneuf-du-Pape, La Borne, 2020, 14.5%

Bottle £33.50 6 bottles with 10% off £180.90 Code GAR420

From old vines of Grenache with Mourvèdre, farmed organically (in conversion): a wonderful winter wine.

Deep tone. Intense, cooked fruit aromas. Compôte of black fruit, tinged with Christmas cake notes of spice and dried fruit. Terrific mass and concentration of flavour. Very long. Ready. Now-2028

Domaine Verzier, Saint-Joseph, La Madone, 2020, 13%

Bottle £35.00 6 bottles with 10% off £189.00 Code VER420

A bio-dynamic (Demeter) Syrah from 50 year old vines around the cellar near a stature of the Madonna. 18 months in demi-muids, 20% new.

Absolutely sensational in every way: depth of colour; pure black fruit perfume; energetic briary mid-palate, juicy and alive; satisfying flesh; and fine-grained tannins. Already so enjoyable but will keep well. Now-2029

Huber-Verdereau, Pommard 1er Cru, Les Bertins, 2019, 13%

Bottle £61.50 6 bottles with 10% off £332.10 Code HUB919

Thiebault Huber's wines may not be well-known in this country - we are his sole importer and we struggle to get enough wine out of him - but let's recall that Jancis Robinson made him her winemaker of the year for the 2017 vintage. His biodynamically farmed vines deliver reds of beautiful fruit and texture which are perfectly approachable soon after bottling.

From vines planted in 1955 by his grandfather in this 1er Cru below Rugiens on the Volnay side of Pommard. Explosive fruit - like raspberry cordial. Fresh and life-enhancing, but also with svelte tannins that should ensure longevity. Perfectly poised and delicious. Now-2030

Italian Classics

Reds from Tuscany, the Veneto and Piedmont

I Fabbri, Chianti Classico, Terra di Lamole, 2018, 13%

Bottle £25.50 6 bottles with 10% off £137.70 Code IFA218

Susanna Grassi continues to produce exemplary high-altitude Chianti Classico at I Fabbri, which has been in her family for 11 generations. In the Lamole subzone of Greve, it's one of the highest in Chianti Classico: here about 450-680m. of altitude brings genuine freshness to the wines. Organic for years.

90% Sangiovese, 10% Canaiolo, part in cement and part in French oak. Crunchy black cherries with substance and svelte tannins. Dense and lightly smoky. This has taken on substance and is now drinking beautifully. Now-2026

Boasso, Barolo Gabutti, 2018, 15%

Bottle £37.50 6 bottles with 10% off £202.50 Code BOA418

From the Gabutti vineyard below the cellar near Serralunga, a south-east facing site on calcareous marl at about 330m of altitude. 100% Nebbiolo aged in a mix of traditional large Slavonian oak vats and smaller French oak. So reasonably priced for the quality.

Very open, perfumed with ripe red berries and quinine. Very powerful and opulent, with spice and leather aromatics dancing around the red fruit core. Silky tannins give correct underlying structure. Now-2031

"The colour is a concentrated ruby and the wine displays complex and vibrant aromas of wild dark fruits, cherry, mint and balsamic depth. The attack is dense, full bodied with ripe tannins, maybe less marked on the mid-palate yet austere on the finish, which is dusty and tarry. It seems to be from another vintage, such is its richness. 94/100", *Aldo Fiordelli, Decanter.com, tasted January 2022.*

Begali, Amarone della Valpolicella Classico, Monte Ca'Bianca, 2015, 16.5%

Bottle £52.50 6 bottles with 10% off £283.50 Code BEF515

The family's amazing top Amarone: a blend of Corvina, Corvinone and Rondinella, all grown in the single Monte Ca' Bianca vineyard, and aged in French barriques, 1/3 new. Because of Amarone's high alcohol we tend to drink it with cheese at the end of a meal – but the locals wouldn't necessarily. An Amarone drinks pretty well with a grilled steak!

Extraordinary power and intensity of bittersweet black fruit, cut by fine acidity dancing around. "Focused on balsamic notes with a mint-chocolate character and cherry fruit, the texture is grainy yet the tannins are sweet and dense over the palate, with firm acid balancing fruit concentration. Savoury and toasty, it finishes with lingering liquorice and tobacco. Drinking Window 2021-2040. 95/100", Aldo Fiordelli, Decanter, May 2021. Now-2030

Col di Lamo, Brunello di Montalcino Riserva, 2016, 14%

Bottle £61.50 6 bottles with 10% off £332.10 Code CDL416

Why buy this wine? First, 2016 is widely accepted to be a great Brunello vintage, rated by Decanter as 5/5, delivering "structured, ageworthy wines with profound depth, soaring acidity and plenty of drinking pleasure". Second, as a Riserva, it's a selection of Gianna Neri's best barrels of the vintage. Third, this was recently acclaimed as one of the **Bibenda 2024** guide's *Migliori Vini d'Italia*. The Neri family vineyards lie at Torrenieri, just north-east of Montalcino. Soils are sandstone and clay, with some of the alberese, the limestone-rich land which Sangiovese loves. Gianna's wines are always ripe, fleshy and well-textured. Cultivation here has been organic since 2015, with certification to follow for the 2018 vintage.

Soft brickly tone. This opens out spectacularly, flamboyantly ripe cherries with fruitcake accents, hugely powerful and exciting. Decant to show at its best. "... lovely and lively, with fragrant dark soil, sweet garden herbs and a bouquet of flowers greeting the nose. The palate is elegant in its generosity and offers succulent cleansing acidity", Decanter, May 2022.



Spain

El Lagar de Isilla, Ribera Del Duero, Reserva, 2017, %

Bottle £26.50 6 bottles with 10% off £143.10 Code LAH317

From the estate's highest vineyards at 900+ metres, a hugely powerful and intense red. 100% Tempranillo, including some parcels 80-90 years old; in French barrels for 16 months.

Deep core of glossy black fruit, sprinkled by notes of vanilla and mocha notes. The finish is very long with exotic spice joining the dark fruit. Decant and serve with red meats to enjoy this wine at its best. Now-2027



Champagne

Thomas-Hatté, Champagne, Brut, Millésime, 2018, 12%

Bottle £34.50 6 bottles with 10% off £186.30 Code HAT618

We all love Franck Thomas's vintage Champagne and feel we don't feature it enough as we sell so much of his principal cuvée in the main Christmas list. The higher proportion of Chardonnay in this blend gives it more lift and elegance.

50% Chardonnay, 30% Pinot Noir and 20% Pinot Meunier; creamy and classy.

Louis Roederer, Collection 243, Champagne Brut, NV, 12%

Bottle £49.50 6 bottles with 10% off £267.30 Code ROE143

A recent creation from this great house (replacing the Brut Premier): based on 59% from the 2018 vintage with 31% from a solera-like "Perpetual Reserve" and 10% 2012-17 vintage reserve wines aged in oak; 42% Chardonnay, 40% Pinot Noir and 18% Pinot Meunier.

Overtly flavoured - ripe citrus and nuts - but so refined. "Subtle, muted nose promising riches beyond. Many-layered with quite a strong streak of lime. Lively, long and complex. Sophisticated, offering more than just age. Persistence too - in fact it builds on the end like a fine burgundy. 17/20. 2023-2028", Jancis Robinson, MW, jancisrobinson.com, tasted May 2023.

Pol Roger, Champagne, Vintage Brut, 2013, 12.5%

Bottle £85.00 6 bottles with 10% off £459.00 Code POL313

The blend for this famously long-lived vintage wine with its retro black and gold label is traditionally 60% Pinot Noir and 40% Chardonnay from Grand and Premier Cru vineyards.

Classic brioche aromas, fine mousse lead to a richly textured palate. Now-2027

Sweet & Fortified

Château Megyer, Tokaji Aszu 5 Puttonyos, Hungary, 2016, 12%

1/3 bottle £15.95 6 1/3 bottles with 10% off £86.13 Code MEG316

Classic Tokaji is a thrilling wine, with seductive sweetness braced by racy acidity. These little bottles are from 80% Furmint, 14% Zeta and 6% Hárslevelű, picked from late October well into November, and aged in small 220 litre barrels. These delectable minis make terrific stocking fillers!

Vibrant golden colour in the glass. Luscious honey notes are partnered with marmalade and dried apricot. This is deep and intense whilst being balanced by a vein of fine acidity. Exciting. Now-2027

Ramos Pinto, Quinta de Ervamoira, RP10, 10 Year Old Tawny, Portugal, 20%

Bottle £32.50 6 bottles with 10% off £175.50 Code RAP1NV

There's something about an aged tawny port which harks back to a Victorian Christmas! Selected from one of the four farms that make up the Ramos Pinto estate, aged for ten years in large casks, this is lovely and mellow.

Strawberry and hazelnut scents with smooth toffee, caramel and praline flavours. Balanced, complete and persistent. Now-2024

