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The Top 10 Wines for Winter 2024

September 30, 2023 / Christopher Null (<https://www.drinkhacker.com/author/cnull/>) / No Comments
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Are temperatures starting to dip in your neck of the woods? While winter still seems to be a far-away dream, the days of daily heat advisories and rolling blackouts seem to be behind us for another year. So let's celebrate: With one (or more) of these 10 top bottlings that we've hand-selected as perfectly paired with the cooler weather ahead.

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1. 2019 Ridge Monte Bello (<https://www.drinkhacker.com/2023/05/30/review-wines-of-santa-cruz-mountains-2023-releases/>) – I had the good fortune to taste this wine during a deep dive into the wines of the Santa Cruz mountains earlier this year, and it's stuck with me ever since. You won't find a more opulent expression of California cabernet sauvignon anywhere, with layers of currants and chocolate followed by tobacco and rolling oak. It's probably best for your New Years 2030 celebration, but it's still marvelous today. **\$215**

2. 2021 Baldacci Family Vineyards Fraternity Napa Valley Red Blend (<https://www.drinkhacker.com/2023/07/27/review-wines-of-baldacci-family-vineyards-summer-2023/>) – A construction of 73% Cabernet Sauvignon, 17% Petit Verdot, 9% Syrah, 0.25% Merlot, and 0.75% Cabernet Franc, aged 16 months in French oak. This wine is big and chewy, with a lot of the characteristics that emerge from oak aging (vanilla, spice, pepper) all well represented. It emerges as a red blend that stands above a rather large cohort; this one is for a special occasion with a roaring campfire accompaniment. **\$85 [BUY IT NOW FROM TOTAL WINE (<https://track.flexlinkspro.com/p.ashx?foc=107&fopid=1330977.225825.156052.25EE.913B0DCF436E1BC.116117750-1>)]**

(https://www.drinkhacker.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Pasqua_Wines_Website-Wines-Mai_Dire_Mai_Amarone-Icons.jpg) **3. 2013 Famiglia Pasqua Mai Dire Mai Amarone della Valpolicella DOCG** (<https://www.drinkhacker.com/2023/08/31/review-famiglia-pasqua-mai-dire-mai-2015-valpolicella-and-2013-amarone/>) – Amarone is another one of those hearty wines that do best when poured at cellar temperature and paired with a huge, multi-course Italian feast that lets you sip through the wine all night long. Drinking in its prime today, the tart fruit up top is countered by silky tannins and lingering licorice that evolve over a night of exploration. **\$85**



4. 2019 Gran Moraine Chardonnay Yamhill-Carlton (<https://www.drinkhacker.com/2023/08/14/review-2019-gran-moraine-chardonnay-yamhill-carlton/>) – I hadn't experienced Oregon's Gran Moraine before this year, but its chardonnay is firmly on my radar now. Fruity and lightly tropical, there's a strong floral element here along with ample acidity – and yet the classic New World chardonnay experience, layered with oak and vanilla, is equally represented. Balance is the keyword here: I can't imagine anyone *not* liking this. **\$50**

5. 2019 Stags' Leap Winery Petite Sirah Napa Valley (<https://www.drinkhacker.com/2023/07/13/review-stags-leap-winery-2020-chardonnay-and-2019-petite-sirah/>) – Petite sirah is never my go-to grape, but this Stags' Leap Winery bottling makes a strong argument to change that. Perhaps the most aggressively dense wine on this list, its dark, licorice-laced fruit melds with an equally strong dark chocolate note to create a sultry, sexy experience that is best enjoyed with something sweet, and a slight chill in the air. **\$50 [BUY IT NOW FROM TOTAL WINE (<https://track.flexlinkspro.com/p.ashx?foc=107&fopid=1330977.225825.156052.25EE.B233B038CBD45223.8845750-1>)]**

6. 2021 Three Sticks Chardonnay Origin Durell Vineyard (<https://www.drinkhacker.com/2023/05/29/review-2021-three-sticks-chardonnay-origin-and-pinot-noir-monarch/>) – We've seen a lot of Three Sticks wines over the years, but this chardonnay is shining brightly and should be a go-to selection for your holiday table. A lively mix of citrus fruit, tropical notes, and creamy vanilla give this a gorgeous balance that allows both fruit and barrel to shine, revealing its charms slowly as it warms up in the glass. **\$70**

(<https://www.drinkhacker.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/PH-GM-Vineyard-Pinot.jpg>) **7. 2021 Paul Hobbs Pinot Noir George Menini Estate** (<https://www.drinkhacker.com/2023/08/05/review-2021-paul-hobbs-pinot-noir-george-menini-estate/>) – I drink more pinot noir during the holidays than any other time of year, because it pairs so beautifully with just about everything on a table. For complex feasts, versatility is key, and this complex wine gives you plenty to think about as it journeys through strawberry, cherry, and cranberry notes en route to a slightly citrus-laced conclusion. **\$95**



8. 2019 San Pedro 1865 Selected Vineyards Carmenere (<https://www.drinkhacker.com/2023/06/12/review-2019-san-pedro-1865-selected-vineyards-carmenere/>) – This is the only Chilean wine on the list, and it's an excellent example of Chilean carménère firing on all

cylinders. A big rush of blackberry and cherry eventually settle down for a savory, earthy experience filled with graphite, tobacco leaf, and pepper. One of the better values on this list, and ideal for the colder autumn months. **\$20**

9. 2021 Textbook Paso Robles Cabernet (<https://www.drinkhacker.com/?s=textbook>) – It was delightfully surprising to discover how good this is for its price point. While the winery’s Napa-sourced sibling also provided a quality experience, this Paso Robles bottling gets the nod by just a touch. Lovely, enveloping notes of raspberry and cherry follow up with a finish full of chocolate. This wine may eschew complexity and layers in favor of immediate indulgence, but it all pays off. **\$27 [BUY IT NOW FROM TOTAL WINE** (<https://track.flexlinkspro.com/p.ashx?foc=107&fopid=1330977.225825.156052.25EE.7E356B0AA2F2E8BC.2126227280-1>)]

10. 2021 Ben Rye Passito di Pantelleria (<https://www.drinkhacker.com/2023/04/21/review-wines-of-donnafugata-2023-releases/>) – Donnafugata’s Ben Rye – a *passito* style muscat wine – is wonderful any time of year, but it really shines in colder months as an after-dinner sipper that works with holiday desserts and fireside chats. Filled with notes of orchard fruit and caramelized bananas, it’s one of those wines you can taste from memory, just by thinking about it. A lovely way to cap off a lovely evening – and a top 10 list. **\$50 (375ml) [BUY IT NOW FROM TOTAL WINE** (<https://track.flexlinkspro.com/p.ashx?foc=107&fopid=1330977.225825.156052.25EE.AB62C94C6EA81164.241763375-1>)]

Additional reporting by Rob Theakston.

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Christopher Null is the founder and editor in chief of Drinkhacker. A veteran writer and journalist, he also o

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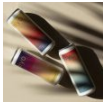
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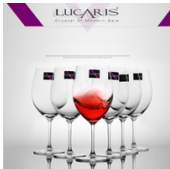
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Drinkhacker was founded in 2007 by Christopher Null, a longtime entertainment, technology, and lifestyle writer, award-winning winemaker, and the finicky proprietor of what has been called "the best home bar in San Francisco".

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