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exploring wine with tim fish

Buy These Value Zins While You Can

Few bargains as the 2010 and 2011 vintages come on the market

Posted: May 30, 2012 10:00am ET



Zinfandel has gotten more expensive in recent years, there's no arguing that. Zin vines will crank out buckets of wishy-washy juice if you let them, but it takes effort and time and money to make great Zin.

That's particularly true with the 2010 and 2011 vintages, in which Zin makers faced every plague but locust. Good Zins from those vintages selling for less than \$15 or \$20 a bottle will be few and far. In my annual report, "Zinfandel Elegance" in the June 30 issue of *Wine Spectator*, I was so concerned about the challenges and quality of those vintages that I didn't give readers enough good advice on value.

Consider this the makeup test.

Consumers are lucky because there are still plenty of tasty 2009 bargains on the shelves and a few 2010 values are arriving. Only providence knows what the next year will bring with the 2011s.

Here are 10 of my favorite values from the past year. I'm sure I missed a few. Any suggestions? I selected wines that had good availability and cost less than \$20. *Wine Spectator* members can read the full reviews by clicking on the links.

Ancient Peaks Zinfandel Paso Robles 2009 (88 points, \$17)

Artezin Zinfandel Mendocino County 2010 (90, \$18)

Cline Zinfandel California Ancient Vines 2010 (87, \$16)

De Loach Zinfandel Russian River Valley 2010 (88, \$18)

Easton Zinfandel Amador County 2010 (90, \$18)

Edmeades Zinfandel Mendocino County 2009 (88, \$20)

Kenwood Zinfandel Sonoma County 2009 (87, \$14)

Kunde Estate Zinfandel Sonoma Valley 2009 (90, \$18)



Tim Fish

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Mark O Goodson — Baton Rouge, LA — May 30, 2012 3:10pm ET

I would throw the 2010 Novy Russian River Valley Zin in there as well. Thanks for the recommendations!

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Dave Reuther — Deerfield, Illinois — May 30, 2012 3:47pm ET

I am currently enjoying a case of the 2010 Arzezin Zin. Also I was able to buy the 2009 Seghesio Sonoma County for under \$20 as well as the 2009 Quivira Dry Creek Valley and 2009 Buehler Napa Valley. All of them enjoyable Zins.

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Denny Kleber — Charlotte NC — May 30, 2012 5:22pm ET

Costco has the 2010 Seghesio Sonoma Zin (90 points) for \$17.99 where I live. Great bargain. Also, try The Predator. I love it for \$15.

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Tim Fish — Santa Rosa, CA — May 30, 2012 5:50pm ET

Good recommendations. Thanks for contributing.

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Ted Keyser — Dripping Springs, Tx — May 30, 2012 8:37pm ET

Absolutely agree re '09 Quivira ~ a steal for under \$20. '09 Bogle for under \$10 as well. '09 Klinker Brick very well balanced and 'Best in Class under \$20' SF Chronicle Wine Competition. But fav right now has to be '09 Ridge Paso Robles - it JAMS (pun intended) and I found it for less than \$25 :-). Thanks for the heads up on that Tim !!!

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Troy Peterson — Burbank, CA — May 31, 2012 10:39am ET

I love me some Tobin James Zins! I've been drinking them for the past 10 years and have rarely been disappointed. They're only a good value if you belong to their wine club (coming in around \$20/bottle), but it's not an expensive club to join and the wines are consistently good enough to serve at most parties.

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Ryan Sherman — Lodi, CA USA — May 31, 2012 4:58pm ET

Tim - just curious, not a single Lodi AVA wine made the lineup? Your readership should know about some of the great wines coming out of the Lodi Region, from some of the great newer artisinal producers..the wines consistently over deliver and under charge.

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