



Speaking of **wine**

By Russ Disotell

Everyone has seen the lists that pop up from time to time, of music and books one would want if stranded on a deserted island. Consider this a wine equivalent, with the caveat that the “island” is your back yard, patio or deck, there’s a barbecue and you’re expecting family and friends to visit periodically. Keep these six wines on hand and you’ll have a quality wine to cover most occasions. Let’s start with whites.

Pelee Island Chardonnay Reserve 2014 (CSPC# 216044, \$13.45) is a crisp, light to medium-bodied Chardonnay that brings finesse and versatility to your table. Expect a creamy smooth texture with melon, pear and citrus fruit, a dash of herbaceous spice and a lengthy, complex, flavourful finish. It makes for a worry-free match for white meat dishes, such as chicken, pork and all manner of seafood.

Sprucewood Shores Pinot Grigio 2015 (CSPC# 426577, \$14.95) is a full-flavoured, rich Pinot Grigio that stands out from the run of the mill crowd. Pineapple, citrus, mango and green apple fruit flavours are readily apparent.

Perennial favourite, Italy’s Soave Bolla 2014 (CSPC# 438945, \$12.90) is a nearly perfect summer white. Think zesty, racy acidity, effortlessly balanced by fresh forward fruit and ending with a bracing, invigorating finish. Peach, pear, green apple and tropical fruit dominate the medium weight palate. Chill and serve as an aperitif or as a partner for chicken, fish and seafood dishes.

Now to the reds. Chateau Des Charmes Estate Bottled Cabernet Franc 2013, \$13.95) shows this signature Ontario grape at its finest. Look for a velvety soft palate with plenty of complexity, deep flavours and a spectacular aftertaste. Cassis, cranberry and black cherry fruit are balanced nicely by soft tannins and crisp food-friendly acidity. It will match superbly with steak, lamb, burgers, meaty mushrooms, chops and duck.

Argentina is famous for their beef, with grilling a national obsession. So let’s follow their lead and have on hand a bottle or two of Malbec, their choice of wine for the grill. Trivento Fair Trade Malbec 2013 (CSPC# 160994, \$11.95) and Graffigna Centenario Reserva Malbec (CSPC# 230474,

\$13.95) will fill the bill nicely. Both exhibit the full-bodied richness and deep flavours associated with the grape.

Trivento has upfront plum and cherry fruit with just a touch of vanilla, balanced by plenty of food friendly acidity. Perfect for matching spicy sausage and tomato based barbecue sauce. Graffigna has a shade more complexity, generous black berry fruit with a pleasant black pepper spiciness that would partner wonderfully with your best steak. Enjoy! **LH**

Russ Disotell enjoyed a twelve-year career with the LCBO. He spent the last four years as Product Advisor in Vintages purchasing where he was a member of the buying panel and endured the arduous task of tasting products every week! Since leaving the Board he has written columns and articles on wine, helped develop wine lists and conducted wine tastings.