



# Speaking of wine

By Russ Disotell

August, and the arrival of the dog days of summer, means hot, sticky, energy sapping heat and humidity. Here are some suggestions for a few excellent value wines, of a different stripe, to combat the heat.

Cabernet Franc is my preferred hot weather summer red. It has outstanding acidity and a vibrancy that helps offset the torrid temperatures. It also benefits from a slight chill, say fifteen minutes or so in the refrigerator and it should be about perfect.

Our selection, Game Changer-The Obstinate Red 2014 (CSPC# 457523, \$14.95), is from Ontario. Over 90% Cabernet Franc, it has a bright plum, raspberry nose with a dusting of spice. You can expect a medium-bodied red, with plenty of food friendly acidity, lower tannin levels and tangy Bing Cherry, dark plum, raspberry and dark currant fruit flavours. Cabernet Franc is noted for its herbaceous spicy quality and here, it's nicely layered over the plush fruit. The finish is lengthy, smooth and refreshing. Cabernet Franc's higher acidity makes it a prime candidate for pairing with tomato based dishes, vinegar based sauces (think smoky barbecue sauce) or rich vegetable dishes, as well as all sorts of grilled red meats. Want versatility, pair with chocolate for a pleasant surprise.

South Africa's Boschendal "The Pavilion" Chenin Blanc 2015 (CSPC# 281311, \$11.00) is very tasty and easy on the wallet. Citrus, pear and melon aromas are readily apparent on the nose and carry through on the light to medium bodied palate, where they are joined by gooseberry, peach and lime fruit. Add in a white pepper spicy quality, a touch of mineral and lots of refreshing citrus

acidity and you have yourself a great hot weather party white. As for food, pair with seafood, fish, chicken, pork or pasta with cream sauce.

Too hot to cook and considering Thai, Indian or Chinese takeout? Here's a wine for you. California's Ironstone "Obsession" Symphony 2014 (CSPC# 295931, \$15.10) is made from an obscure grape, the Symphony, and it is a simply delicious hot weather white. The nose is aromatic with floral, tropical fruit and spice aromas. Light to medium bodied and slightly off dry, it has crisp green apple, peach and tropical fruit flavours nicely balanced by a citrus acidity and a light spice. The finish is long, lingering and invigorating with some zip. It nicely balances the heat and spice of eastern cuisine and if you have a glass or two left over, it will match nicely the next day with pork dishes or rich, fatty fish, such as salmon or tuna. 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.*