



# Speaking of wine

By Russ Disotell

The holidays are rapidly approaching and we are well on our journey into another traditional Canadian winter and all that entails. So, I will make some wine suggestions to help ease your holiday stress.

This is where you expect wines for the Christmas turkey, but surprise, no. The reason is that after years in the wine trade it has become obvious that celebrations such as Christmas dinner aren't about the wine, they're about conversations, the company we keep and the star of the show, that Christmas turkey, or ham or whatever your traditional meal is. So, serve a wine you're comfortable with and one that you like. I will suggest a Pinot Noir or Gamay (Beaujolais for instance) as a red or a medium-bodied Chardonnay or food-friendly Pinot Grigio for a white.

Leading up to the New Year, and then into January, there will be plenty of occasions that will benefit from the addition of an inexpensive, quality wine, whether pre-Christmas work or family gatherings or post-New Year ski or skating parties. Here are a few economical suggestions.

At the top of the list is Argentina's Argento Malbec 2015 (CSPC# 591693, \$9.95) a medium-bodied, velvety soft red with plenty of heft and relatively painless on the wallet. A plum, berry and herbal nose gives way to deep, rich flavours of red cherry, red currant, berry and mocha. The balance is wonderful with silky soft tannins, nicely matching the rich fruit. The finish is lengthy with lots of flavour and just a hint of spice. Perfect on its own or matched with winter barbecue fare, stew or spicy finger foods.

Montes Twins White Blend from Chile is a blend of Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay and Viognier and a great companion for parties of all sorts. The nose is open and inviting with citrus and gooseberry aromas. The palate is round, creamy and complex, featuring layers of lime, pineapple, Granny Smith apple, honeydew and tangy lemon fruit. There is great length to the refreshing finish. It is absolutely lovely as an aperitif our food-friendly Chilean will match nicely with finger foods and appetizers, even those with a modicum of spice or heat.

Henry of Pelham Chardonnay 2015 (CSPC# 291211, \$14.95) from Ontario is our last

selection. A full, rich Chardonnay, it has a round, richly flavoured palate with pear, spice, melon, citrus, guava and peach flavours, knife edge balance and a lengthy, lingering finish. Perfect for sipping on its own or matched with poultry, pork and freshwater white fish.

Remember, drink responsibly and don't drink and drive. Happy Holidays and 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. Russ has been writing for Living Here Magazine since its inception in 2013 and we are grateful for his insights and recommendations to our readers on finding the perfect wine to go with food, friends and family!*