

Speaking of wine

By Russ Disotell

Easter is fast approaching and for many that means lamb on the table. Lamb is less gamey than mutton, but still has rich flavours that are matched nicely by dry, fruit forward red wines.

If you're on a budget, expect a large crowd for dinner or are entertaining people with only a passing interest in wine then Portugal's Fonseca Periquita 2012 (CSPC# 25262, \$8.95) is the wine for you. Sporting a very affordable price tag Periquita is a simple, straightforward honest wine, easy for everyone to enjoy. You can expect a medium to full-bodied wine with forward fruit, wonderful balance and a finish with good length. Cherry, plum, dried fig and raspberry fruit are abundant with a touch of spice (think oregano) and enough crisp acidity to balance out the fruit and match our lamb dishes.

Chile's Montes Twins Malbec Cabernet Sauvignon 2012 (CSPC#352054, \$12.90) is a full-bodied, soft, ripe blend that combines the structure and richness of a Cabernet with the velvety texture of Malbec. Deep, rich flavours of plum, blackberry and licorice, with wisps of toasty oak and clove, vanilla and cinnamon, herbal overtones overlay a framework of soft tannins and outstanding acidity. The flavourful, elegant finish has great length and depth. This Chilean is a superb match for your best roast lamb recipe.

A pair of Aussie Shiraz finishes off this month's list. McWilliam's Hanwood Estate Shiraz 2013 (CSPC#610683, \$14.95) offers very good value in its price range. The first thing you will notice is its deep purple colour, offering a promise of the pleasures to come. The open nose offers fragrant ripe red berry fruit and clean cedar

aromas. The palate features plenty of spicy berry, plum, sour cherry and black currant fruit with balanced acidity and moderate to soft tannins, all of which combine for a superlative structure. The finish is lingering and elegant. Match this charmer with grilled lamb. On other occasions, it is a perfect partner with your best steak.

Shingleback "Red Knot" Shiraz 2013 (CSPC#619395, \$17.95) is the vinuous equivalent to bringing out the good china. The step up in price brings more complexity and deeper, richer flavours. Spicy dark berry and coffee/mocha aromas dominate the nose. The palate offers up the vibrant red cherry and plum flavours Aussie Shiraz is famous for, supplemented by layers of blackberry, raspberry and cherry fruit, chocolate, vanilla and herbaceous spice. Medium soft tannins and an abundance of food friendly acidity complete the structural components. The finish has unbelievable length and elegance. Partner with rack of lamb, sit back and enjoy!

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. LH

