

	Welcome: Hunting for Value	Grape Varieties	Cost £/Where from
White	<p>Clairette du Languedoc AOP – Jean Claude Mas 2021, Herault, Languedoc France We have come across the wines of Jean Claude Mas before – he is a major player and has a reputation as one of the best winemakers in the Languedoc and his extensive range of Languedoc wines are highly regarded and great value. In 5 years he has won 500 awards!</p> <p>Very unusually for France, this is an Appellation and wine which actually refers to the grape variety in its name! It is one of the oldest and smallest Appellations in the Languedoc (which region we always like to visit to unearth unusual wines at great value). Clairette was vinified in the Gallo Roman era (and shouldn't be confused with the Bordeaux wine style Clairet, which gives us the origins of the term claret that we use for Bordeaux red wines).</p> <p>It lies in the Herault region of the Languedoc, not too far from Picpoul de Pinet which we have tried before. The wine should be citrus fruity, elegant and intense on the nose, floral, rich and round, well balanced acidity – Old World wines made with New World attitude! Suggested to go well with Mackerel and seafood platters – likely a little softer than Picpoul de Pinet (the lip stinger).</p>	Clairette	CO Op £8.50 but we get 10% off with Karen's mum's former staff discount so net at £7.65 to the group.
White	<p>Cape Heights Sauvignon Blanc Western Cape, South Africa 2020 At our last Wine Discovery we tried a South African Chenin Blanc, also from Western Cape which was a universal hit and we revisit Western Cape again this week to sample a Sauvignon Blanc! This wine is made using grapes from various coastal growers on soil that composes shale and limestone in the northernmost part of Western Cape – the wine has some lees contact before bottling – we are promised ripe yellow fruit flavours, hints of lime and plum stone and herbal notes for a zippy and quaffable wine.</p> <p>The winemakers are JD Rossouw, Ryno Booysen and Pierre Louw. It has won IWSC Silver in the past. This wine is a recommendation from June who had enjoyed it at a Quiz Night so we have incorporated it into the Wine Discovery this week! – As you Wine Discoverers know, there are two distinct styles of Sauvignon Blanc – the NZ, full on, gooseberry, cut grass fruity wine that you can have a glass of for its own sake but can be a bit overpowering with delicate food – or the Loire Valley Sancerre / Pouilly Fume (or indeed the Pessac Leognan we had at our Summer Lunch) style which is great with food but probably a bit serious when you just want to quaff a glass of white! I suspect this will sit somewhere more in the middle of the two !</p>	Sauvignon Blanc	£7.80 after case discount

White	<p>Falanghina, “La Mia Strada” Benevento IGP, Naples, Southern Italy 2020 We continue a theme of finding some of the more unusual white grape varieties of Italy – this wine was a Daily Telegraph star buy for Christmas 2020 and has a hint of orange flavour to it which makes for an ideal winter white with a zesty fruity zing and clean finish – it seems to have been recommended by numerous wine columnists and Italian whites continue to provide some great value alternatives for interesting wines which can be simply quaffed on their own and are still food friendly. Who can resist the label with that retro “La Dolce Vita” feel – ideal with a fritto misto at La Piazza restaurant!</p>	Falanghina	Co Op £8.25 but we get 10% off with Karen’s mum’s former staff discount so net at £7.42 to the group
Red	<p>Beaujolais Villages AOP “Reserve de Pizay”, Chateau de Pizay 2020 we always like to include a Beaujolais wine from time to time – they give plenty to talk about – and they are generally good value especially for a quality French wine which is getting ever more expensive and even more so for a wine from Burgundy (although we tend not to think of Beaujolais as a Burgundy in the true sense – the region is some distance from the classic regions of Burgundy and the grape grown here is Gamay, not Pinot Noir which is behind all the great Burgundy reds – the reason is that Pinot Noir would struggle to grow in the granite soils of Beaujolais where Gamay thrives).</p> <p>There are three theoretical quality levels of Beaujolais (ignore Beaujolais Nouveau altogether!) – basic “Beaujolais”, then “Beaujolais Villages” which come from the hilly northern part of the region and then at the top, the so called “Cru” Villages that can use their own name on the bottles such as “Fleurie”.</p> <p>We have in the past tried examples of both the middle ranking “Villages” wines as well as those of the Cru Villages such as Fleurie. It is important to remember that the quality levels are theoretical and an excellent grower may well be producing wines at “Villages” level that exceed those of a lesser producer in one of the named Cru villages! Our example is a Villages level wine from a good producer.</p> <p>Beaujolais can be lightly chilled to bring out its fruit flavours and is a hit with pate, cold cuts etc so great with our buffet table! There is a great story on the back of the bottle on how it found its way to the Co Op. The Chateau is absolutely stunning with extensive manicured topiary gardens if you look it up on the internet and runs as a boutique hotel with large spa, gourmet restaurant, wine courses run in the vineyards – sounds like heaven! – the first Seigneur of Pizay commenced construction of the Chateau in 1030 AD and his direct descendants continued to own and live in it until 1916 and it now forms part of a Hotel group. It has 80 hectares of vineyards and as well as its “mere” Villages and basic Beaujolais wines it also produces wines that can be sold under the Village Cru names of Regnie, Morgon and Brouilly – it has one of the highest European Environmental certifications and organic status since 1996 and the vines are 40 years old. This promises to be an exceptional Beaujolais at a bargain price from a top producer also producing Cru wines from parts of the vineyard that fall into those Appellations.</p> <p>When we met Olly Smith (I couldn’t help but do a bit of name dropping here!) he said he thought Beaujolais represented one of the best value wines on the market with Burgundy credentials.</p>	Gamay	Co Op £8.50 but we get 10% off with Karen’s mum’s former staff discount so net at £7.65 to the group

Red	<p>Portada – Vinho Regional Lisboa, Lisbon, Portugal 2020 DFJ wines. This wine is at a bargain price for what's on offer – it is a veritable who's who of Portugal's indigenous grape varieties along with a couple of international varieties thrown in. It has scored highly and received awards in the past so we are expecting a wine punching well above its price point.</p>	Shiraz, Cabernet Sauvignon, Caladoc, Alicante Bouschet, Touriga Nacional, Tinta Roriz, Castelao	Co Op - £6.75 but we get 10% off with Karen's mum's former staff discount so net at £6.08 to the group
Red	<p>It comes from the Lisbon area between the Tagus river and Atlantic Ocean – the grapes get warm sun and cool sea breezes – The grapes are sourced from three single Estates – the Quinta de Porto Franco, Quinta da Portela and Quinta do Romao. This is intended to be a great everyday wine but we are assured a long an intense finish in an elegant wine – can be quaffed or can go with food – notes of chocolate and blueberries are promised – Portada has an extensive range of wines and this is yet another region of Portugal to be discovered – the Co Op has a great selection of Portuguese wines – I think the store's wine manager may be Portuguese and has ensured the shop has a great (but surely disproportionate!?) selection of Portuguese red wines – we are not complaining as it gives us Wine Discoverers a rich seam of regions and winemakers to try to get a real feel for that country's wines which are getting more and more attention.</p> <p>As we sailed under the big suspension bridge that spans the Tagus River into Lisbon we just had to get a wine from that region to remind us! A little unusually for Portugal, a screw cap – normally the winemakers are keen to help sustain their country's cork growers and tend to opt for corks.</p>	Touriga Nacional, Touriga Franca, Tinta Roriz	Co Op £11.50 but we get 10% off with Karen's mum's former staff discount so net at £10.35 to the group

	<p>taste it in the mouth after swallowing indicates a quality wine). This, I suspect would be great with your Sunday roast beef. The winemaker is Maria Serpa Pimentel and Pacheca also produce some very top end examples of Douro reds.</p> <p>A trademark of Portuguese red wines is their use of indigenous grape varieties that you are unlikely to have heard of and this is really what sets them apart from New World wines.</p>		
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