

Pickering Mixed Case

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This month's Pickering Mixed Case is a tantalising selection of spring drinking. The reds include a superb, low-intervention, mineral expression of the Beaujolais and two Syrah-based blends: a deliciously rewarding Rhône red and Mullineux's superb Kloof Street red, an old-vine blend from Swartland. For whites, we have chosen a complex blend from the Veneto in the form of Monte del Frà's Ca' del Magro and an unusual wine from Germany's Pfalz region, combining Pinot Gris and Blanc with Chardonnay. The grand finale of the case is the Californian Chardonnay. A lavish treat indeed, this luxurious wine comes from one of the oldest producers in Napa.

2016 CA' DEL MAGRO, CUSTOZA SUPERIORE, MONTE DEL FRÀ



Family-run Monte del Frà translates as "Hill of Monks" and is located in the heart of the Bianco di Custoza DOC, just to the south of Lake Garda. It has over 205 hectares of vineyards, and is now run by Maria, Eligio and Claudio Bonomo. The Ca' del Magro, their flagship white, is the jewel in the winery's range, made from a single vineyard in the heart of Custoza.

The soil is poor and thin here, resulting in a wine of great concentration and *terroir* transparency. The grape varieties are vinified separately and rest on their lees for several months, gaining in both texture and complexity. In the glass, the wine is golden with an enveloping bouquet of grilled nuts and yellow peach characters. The white stone-fruit character is lifted by mineral notes. Drink now to 2025.

Food matches	Fish pie, sushi and sashimi, or roast chicken
Price	£14.50 per bottle
How to serve	Serve chilled at 10 to 12°C
Region	Veneto, Italy
Grape variety	Garganega 40%; Trebbiano Toscano 20%; Incrocio Manzoni 15%; Cortese 10%; Tocai Friulano 5%; Chardonnay, Riesling Italico and Malvasia 10%
Product code	V4577B
Style	Dry, medium-bodied white wine
Terroir	A hill of glacial origin with limestone, clay, gravel and sand soils
Buyer	Davy Žyva

Tasting notes

If you like this, you might like:

LUGANA, RIESLING, VERNACCIA OR PINOT GRIS

2017 MÉNAGE À TROIS, WEINGUT EYMANN



Weingut Eymann is a family-run estate in the heart of the Pfalz. The vineyards are planted on the Upper Rhine terrace on soils formed during the last Ice Age. Sustainability remains at the core of the estate's philosophy, with organic and biodynamic certification since 1982 and 2006, respectively. Today the estate is run by dynamic, young winemaker Vincent Toreye, who recently succeeded his parents.

The nose is full of concentrated and richly scented fruit, with aromas of apricot, peach-stone and lime. This wine is wonderfully textural from time spent on its lees. Glossy ripe fruit on the palate is coupled with crystalline acidity and a distinct minerality which leads to a persistent and refreshing finish. Drink now to 2022.

Food matches	Soft creamy cheeses or roast guinea fowl
Price	£19.00 per bottle
How to serve	Serve chilled
Region	Pfalz, Germany
Grape variety	Chardonnay, Pinot Blanc and Pinot Gris
Product code	V6205B
Style	Dry, medium-bodied white wine
Terroir	Top soil of thick loess and a sub soil of gravel and sand deposits
Buyer	Katherine Dart MW

Tasting notes

If you like this, you might like:

ALSACE PINOT GRIS

2015 EL MOLINO, CHARDONNAY, RUTHERFORD, NAPA VALLEY



Founded in 1871, El Molino was one of the first wineries in the Napa Valley and it is still family owned. Unlike most of their neighbours in Rutherford who have planted Cabernet Sauvignon, they grow Pinot Noir and Chardonnay to great effect.

This wine is made with Burgundy clones of Chardonnay, planted in 1978. Barrel-fermented, but with no malolactic fermentation, the wine is vibrant with a mineral core. It spends eight months in bottle before release. Drink now to 2026.

Food matches	Buttery roast chicken or sea food linguine
Price	£55.50 per bottle
How to serve	Serve lightly chilled
Region	California, USA
Grape variety	Chardonnay
Product code	V2156B
Style	Dry, medium-bodied white wine
Terroir	Gravel, sand and loam soils
Buyer	Fiona Hayes

Tasting notes

If you like this, you might like:

GRAND CRU WHITE BURGUNDY

2016 DOMAINE DES ESCARAVAILLES, CAIRANNE LE VENTABREN



Founded in 1953, Domaine des Escaravailles has been owned by the Ferran family for three generations. The *domaine* owes its name to the Occitan term “escaravay”, which means stag beetle. The vineyards extend over 40 hectares of stony and steep clay-limestone hillsides in Rasteau and 25 hectares on the neighbouring *terroirs* of Cairanne. The vines are cultivated in the old-fashioned way, with ploughing and organic fertilizers.

Dark red in colour with purple hues, the nose shows red fruit with hints of kirsch and rosemary. The palate is smooth and structured with black fruits, lots of sweet spices and herbs. An elegant, aromatic and expressive wine, this is rich and rewarding. Drink now to 2024.

Food matches	Grilled lamb or beef Wellington
Price	£18.95 per bottle
How to serve	Decant for 30 minutes and serve at room temperature
Region	Rhône, France
Grape variety	Grenache, Syrah, Carignan
Product code	V3025B
Style	Dry, full-bodied red wine
Terroir	Clay and limestone
Buyer	Fiona Hayes

Tasting notes

If you like this, you might like:

GIGONDAS, VINSOBRES OR RASTEAU

2017 MULLINEUX & LEEU FAMILY WINES, KLOOF STREET RED



Mullineux was established by husband and wife winemakers Chris and Andrea Mullineux. Since 2007, their ambition has been to produce wines that are a true expression of the Swartland. They work closely with a select group of growers who follow sustainable, reasoned farming practices.

Syrah makes up the majority of this blend and the grape's presence is immediately clear from the pepper spice on the nose and mid-palate. This spice is met by juicy red fruit and rose perfume. Supple tannins and flecks of shale minerals give this wine a complexity that belies its price. Drink now to 2021.

Food matches	Barbecued butterflied leg of lamb and ratatouille
Price	£14.95 per bottle
How to serve	Serve from the bottle at cool room temperature (12 to 18°C)
Region	Swartland, South Africa
Grape variety	Syrah 90%, Carignan 4%, Cinsault 2%, Grenache 2%, Tinta Barocca 1%, Mourvèdre 1%
Product code	V6614B
Style	Dry, full-bodied red wine
Terroir	Various soils including granite and schist
Buyer	Katherine Dart MW

Tasting notes

If you like this, you might like:

SOUTHERN RHÔNE REDS

2017 WILD SOUL, JULIEN SUNIER



Julien Sunier started out with three tiny parcels in Fleurie, Morgon and Régnié. In the decade since, the size of his holdings has increased very little, but Julien's reputation has grown considerably. He is today regarded as one of the finest makers of the expressive, mineral style of Beaujolais which is putting the region back on the connoisseur's map.

Explosive aromatics are a hallmark of Julien's wines. With its beguiling bouquet of summer pudding and violets, Wild Soul is no exception. It is light-bodied, fresh and moreish – in short, everything a Beaujolais Villages should be. Julien buys the grapes for this *cuvée* from a friend, and uses no sulphur whatsoever during vinification or bottling. Drink now to 2020.

Food matches	Charcuterie, pâté or – a less traditional option – lamb madras
Price	£21.00 per bottle
How to serve	Serve lightly chilled
Region	Beaujolais, France
Grape variety	Gamay
Product code	V5131B
Style	Dry, light-bodied red wine
Terroir	Granite slopes with this, sandy soils
Buyer	Adam Bruntlett

Tasting notes

If you like this, you might like:

LIGHT CABERNET FRANC FROM THE LOIRE VALLEY