

17 Stellar Wines Under \$100 That Taste Like They're Worth Much More

You don't have to spend a small fortune to find some of the world's most interesting wines. Here are the best bottles to buy without shelling out a Franklin.

There's no denying the great pleasure of dipping into your wine cellar for a special dinner—a real occasion—and being able to choose among bottles you've collected from the greatest producers in the world: [Napa Cabernets](#) that have been sheltering there for a few years, inching toward beauty, or [Bordeaux](#) or [Barolos](#) that have been on that path even longer. But what about the slightly lesser occasions? The Friday night when your taste buds need waking up and you deserve to drink a really interesting bottle, no matter what's for dinner? I'm here to help. I recently concentrated on wines that would set you back less than \$100, and I can report that the world's your proverbial oyster on this front!

When it comes to good-value bottles, I generally start with strategies for finding them: Look for so-called “entry-level” or “second” wines from top producers, or their region-wide blends instead of single-vineyard bottles; explore lesser-known wine regions (or at least beyond [Napa Valley](#), Bordeaux and Burgundy). This time, though, I reverse-engineered the plan. I simply started tasting in the price range and then did a look back through the wines that really popped, that over-delivered on quality and excitement. And there they were—the same principles I've always relied on for finding good-value bottles: Terrific winemaking and fascinating alternatives came from winemakers whose top bottles are probably aging in your cellar but who offer near-similar fruit and winemaking skill in their “declassified” bottlings. And wines from regions, New World and Old, that might not be hot items on the secondary market proved both delicious and fascinating—from Sonoma, [Washington state](#), Italy, Spain, Portugal, South America ...

Champagne Bollinger Brut Rosé



From [Bollinger](#), a house that knows its way with Pinot Noir, comes a saturated-salmon-colored Brut Rosé that juggles power, weight and brightness. The nose swirls with dried cranberry, fuzzy peach and tropical flowers followed by intense flavors of red apple, raspberry, cherry, tangerine zest and almond delivered by exuberant bubbles, bright with citrus. A splash of still Pinot Noir—5 to 6 percent—provides mid-palate density that avoids heaviness with vivid textures, even with significant tannins.