


# Two new reds under \$10 sure to sell out



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ADVICE

It's always fun to buy wine for a song and find it really sings. But here's the real music: This column starts with not one but two sub-\$10 great value reds — one from Portugal, the other from Spain. Plus, four other gems to know about



**2023 RUA N2 Red Blend Vinho**  
**Regional Alentejano, Portugal**  
**Score 94**  
(LCBO 43763, \$9.55)  
This sumptuous blend of Alicante Bouschet, Touriga Nacional and Aragonez — Tempranillo in Spain — exudes a warm, almost beguiling perfume. Cherry-chocolate fig aromas echo on the palate layered with earthy blackberry, cacao, dried fig and a quiet, umami-rich hint of hoisin. Named after Portugal's longest and most scenic road, Rua N2, this wine takes you there. Perfect with a little Fado music in the background. (13.5% alc. 9 g/L sugar)



**2024 Castillo do Luna Organic**  
**Tempranillo Cabernet D.O.**  
**Utiel-Requena, Spain**  
**Score 94**  
(LCBO 44500, \$9.80)  
Each glassful opens with sumptuous yet discreetly vibrant scents of stewed damsons, muddled berries and soft leather with a pinch of pink peppercorn. Then, it sweeps in with an immediate richness cloaking the palate, but the wine isn't heavy at all. It's just comfortably plush and well-balanced with loads of ripe fruit that tastes lifted but plummy and pure. (12.5% alc., 4 g/L sugar)



**2022 Inniskillin Reserve**  
**Cabernet Franc VQA Niagara**  
**Peninsula, Ontario**  
**Score 92**  
(LCBO 17290 \$17.95 till Oct. 12, reg. \$19.95)  
This Ontario wine could pass for a California Cab. It's a rush of dark berries with remarkable depth. A warm breath of wild-blueberry cobbler and spice leads into dark fruit that tastes almost sweet, though it's bone dry. Berry-rich and sun-drenched, each sip glides in with sure satisfaction. Cocoa powder, clove, nutmeg and a subtle biscuity note add a cerebral layer to the fruit. (14% alc., 3g/L sugar)



**NV Bottega Il Vino dei Poeti Brut**  
**Prosecco DOC, Treviso, Italy**  
**Score 90**  
(LCBO 897702 \$18.95)  
This Prosecco is a cut above many sub-\$20 expressions on shelf. Energetic but elegant, consistent and poised — almost ballerina-like — each silvery-gold sip starts with a soft, almost ethereal fragrance that drifts from Granny Smith to Bosc pear to white blossom. The attack is fresh and invigorating, an orchard-fruit thrill that's bracing but balanced. Easy to enjoy, with an airy kiss of sweetness, this bottle gets the party started. (11% alc., 12 g/L sugar)




**NV Labrusca Lini 910 Lambrusco**  
**Rosso Secco, Emilia-Romagna, Italy**  
**Score 91**  
(LCBO 632208, \$21.95)  
This bottle could change the way you think about Lambrusco. Aromas of dried cranberry, field strawberry and rubbed oregano with a sprinkle of salt and pepper draw you in. Then, the wine slips in with immediate appeal — bone dry and invigorating, effervescent yet generously fruited. Beetroot and cranberry meet violet and star anise before gliding back to the cranberry note found on the nose. (10.5% alc., 9 g/L sugar)



**2021 Le Clos Jordanne Le Grand Clos**  
**Chardonnay VQA Twenty Mile Bench, Ontario**  
**Score 92**  
(LCBO 184549, \$55)  
This expression of Ontario Chardonnay shines pale gold in the glass and exudes creamy-toasty aromas before bathing the palate in elegance. Tingling acidity balances a generous crème brûlée and apple tart centre. Then, those flavours gradually reveal praline, hazelnut, sweet butter and a whisper of cool oyster shell that's felt as much as tasted on the finish. Not long, but undeniably compelling. (13% alc. 2g/L sugar)


CAROLYN EVANS HAMMOND IS A TORONTO-BASED WINE WRITER. WINERIES SPONSOR SEGMENTS ON HER INSTAGRAM SERIES BUT DON'T SELECT THE WINES SHE REVIEWS. REACH HER VIA EMAIL: CAROLYN@CAROLYNEVANSHAMMOND.COM



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