

Weekday wines

Looking to try something different or adventurous, but don't want to make an expensive mistake? *Decanter's* tasting team has done the hard work for you by picking out 34 exciting and accessible wines for the festive season, and all UK-available

📍 denotes supermarket and high-street wines



Gramona, Brut Nature Gran Reserva, Cava, Spain 2008 18.5pts (95pts)

£16.95 **Berry Bros & Rudd**
It may have taken 132 years for this historic wine merchants to add a Cava to its portfolio, but it has taken the plunge in style. Gramona is one of the finest Cava houses and this is a vibrant glass of fizz, with an abundance of ripe apple and stone fruits mingling with more savoury, almond characters. **Alcohol 12%**



Recaredo, Brut Nature Gran Reserva, Cava, Spain 2007 18 (93)

£25.49 **Les Caves de Pyrène, Ottolenghi, Theatre of Wine**
From a winery founded in 1924, this is a serious, bone-dry style of Cava which has plenty going on. There are lovely hints of hazelnut, smoke and white fruit on the nose, and this layered complexity continues on the palate and beyond, to a lingering finish. A great food wine. **Alc 12%**



Waitrose, Blanc de Blancs, Champagne, France NV 18 (93)

£24.99 **Waitrose** 📍
It's often been true that anyone after a great-value, own-label supermarket Champagne could do far worse than reaching for one of Waitrose's offerings, and it seems that's still the case. From the Côte de Blancs area, this sparkler has plenty of breezy, lime and apple characters, plus an appealing texture. **Alc 12.5%**



Domaine de la Taille aux Loups, Triple Zéro, Montlouis Pétillant, France NV 17.5 (91)

£14-£18 **Justerini & Brooks, Oddbins** 📍
Chenin Blanc is a dexterous grape that can produce stunning wines whatever the style. This one is sparkling: light and fresh, with lots of green apple and lime fruit. There's no sugar added during dosage, hence the name Triple Zero, which gives the wine a very dry mouthfeel. **Alc 12.5%**



Gusbourne Estate, Brut Reserve, England 2008 17.5 (91)

£24.30-£27 **Armit, Lea & Sandeman, Oddbins, St Andrews Wine Co, Tanners, The Secret Cellar** 📍
This fine estate was established 10 years ago by a South African orthopaedic surgeon and ex-rugby player. Here, the nose shows roasted almonds with buttery notes and ripe stone fruits, while the palate is fresh, firm and persistent. **Alc 12%**



Josef Chromy, Tasmania, Australia NV 17.5 (91)

£20 **Marks & Spencer** 📍
This producer is one of Tasmania's best, as evidenced by the DWWA 2013 International Trophy for its Chardonnay. The estate's Chardonnay is also in this fizz, joined by Pinot Noir, and the nose shows green apple and citrus fruit, while the palate reveals lightly toasted notes, crisp acidity and a long finish. **Alc 12%**



Sugrue Pierre, South Downs, England 2010 19 (96)

£35 **Swig**
Made by Dermot Sugrue, former winemaker at Nyetimber, this is the second vintage from a vineyard planted on chalk in 2006. A classic blend of the three Champagne grapes, it boasts great purity and elegance. Lemon and apple aromas are followed by a palate of delicate stone fruit and crisp acidity: long, complex and absolutely delicious. Limited production. **Alc 12%**

For full details of UK stockists, see p97



**Lopez Martin, Carte d'Or
Brut Premier Cru,
Champagne, France NV**
17.5 (91)

£27.50 **Finest Fizz Biz**

It's a challenging task to source a good bottle of Champagne below £30. This small grower-producer has worked the region's vineyards for generations, creating its own house in the early 20th century. This cuvée is unpretentious, packed with zesty ripe fruit and showing strong vinosity. **Alc 12%**



**Torello, Brut Special
Edition, Cava, Spain NV**
17 (90)

£17.95 **Enotria**

The Torello family has a long, rich history, for the Can Martí estate has been under its ownership since the end of the 14th century. The strikingly liveried cuvée, made from Macabeo, Parellada and Xarel-lo, is forward but elegant in style with an attractive intensity of zingy, ripe apple fruit. **Alc 12%**



**Clos Floridène, Graves,
Bordeaux, France 2011**
18 (93)

£18 **Christopher Piper, The Wine Society** 🍷

Denis Dubourdieu, a leading expert on white wine vinification, owns this estate and the wine is a true standard bearer for white Bordeaux. Lots of herbal aromas with apple and citrus notes precede a textured palate with nice fruit concentration and minerality on the finish. Drinking beautifully now but will age very well. **Alc 13%**



**Domaine des
Aubuisières, Cuvée de
Perruches, Vouvray,
France 2012** 18 (93)

£9.99 **Majestic** 🍷

From a 28ha property with vines spread out on some of Vouvray's best soils, this is a delightful, great-value wine. The pear and peach nose is complemented by floral hints and the palate is fresh, mineral and vibrant with ripe fruit and honey notes, driven on by Chenin's signature acidity. **Alc 13%**



**Loxarel, Xarel-lo
Amfora, Penedes, Spain
2012** 18 (93)

£13-£16 **Caviste, Les Caves de Pyrène, Market Row Wines, The Grape Store, The Solent Cellar, Wright's Independent**

For more than four generations the Mitjans family has been caring for the vineyards that make this amphora-fermented and aged wine. The palate has a good nervosity and a great harmony between the limey acidity and the weighty structure. **Alc 13%**



**The Society's Exhibition,
Albariño, Rías Baixas,
Spain 2012** 18 (93)

£12.95 **The Wine Society** 🍷

Albariño seems to be the flavour of the moment with lovers of white wine, and this example would be a great choice next time you have a hankering for seafood. A peachy nose with hint of white flowers, then a refreshing palate with a lot of citrus notes and rich fruit. Quite punchy with nice minerality on the finish. **Alc 13%**



**Ken Forrester,
Workhorse Chenin
Blanc, Stellenbosch
South Africa 2012** 17.5 (91)

£7.99 **Marks & Spencer** 🍷

Planted in the shadow of the Helderberg mountain, the 35-year-old vines here benefit from cool, ocean breezes. First are punchy aromas of wet grass, then a weighty, complex palate high in acidity with a good intensity and structure. A rich Chenin that would pair well with food. **Alc 14%**



**Les Vins de Vienne,
St-Péray, Rhône, France
2012** 17.5 (91)

£14.99 **Waitrose Direct** 🍷

A collaboration between leading producers François Villard, Yves Cuilleron and Pierre Gaillard, this comes from St-Péray – a small, all-but-forgotten white wine region in the northern Rhône. It has plenty of ripe apple flavours on the creamy, textured weighty palate and the finish is long and lingering. **Alc 13.2%**



**Must-try
white**

**Yalumba, Viognier, Eden
Valley, South Australia
2012** 18 (93)

£12.99-£14.99 **Majestic, Waitrose** 🍷

Yalumba has spent the past 30 years mastering Viognier and this Eden Valley beauty is the quintessence of what the grape variety can put forth. Delicate stone fruit aromas with hints of floral make for an elegant nose. These flavours follow through on the palate, which has lovely texture and is quite complex. **Alc 14%** ➤

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Planeta, Eruzione 1614, Carricante, Sicily, Italy 2012 17.5 (91)

£15.40 Carruthers & Kent, Enotria
Taking its name from the Etna eruption in 1614 that lasted 10 years, this fresh and elegant Carricante has an attractive lime and floral nose and a palate loaded with beautiful aromas, an elegant structure and limey finish. The 10% blend of Riesling brings a soft floral and honey touch as well. **Alc** 13.5%



Te Whare Ra, TWR Sauvignon Blanc, Marlborough, New Zealand 2012 17.5 (91)

£18.95–£21 Bottle Apostle, Hallowed Ground, Harvey Nichols, Swig
The grapes for this wine come mainly from the Awatere Valley where cooler nights and warmer days have helped accentuate the vibrant aromas. The palate has lime and apple fruit and crisp acidity. An intense, stylish and serious glass of wine. **Alc** 13.5%



Weingut Thörle, Riesling Feinherb, Rheinhessen, Germany 2012 17.5 (91)

£12.95 Caviste, Field & Fawcett, Wadebridge Wines
From a family-run winery that has been making wine here for four generations, this Riesling has delicate floral aromas with plenty of minerality. The structured palate boasts lots of pretty fruit with a steely backbone and good, direct acidity. **Alc** 12%



Cramele Recaş, Castel Huniade Fetească Regala, Romania 2012 17 (90)

£5.99 Adnams
Recas' vineyards were first documented in 1447 and this cuvée, made from local grape Fetească Regala, is named after a key historical landmark. A very inviting wine at an incredible price, showing lots of citrus and peach characters and a touch of honey on the finish. **Alc** 13%



Chacra, Pinot Noir Barda, Patagonia, Argentina 2011 18.5 (95)

£18.95–£26 Harvey Nichols, Lea & Sandeman
Pinot Noir is not a grape usually associated with Argentina but this bodega makes some of the best in the New World, especially at this price level. Beautiful purity of plum and berry aromas, and spice. The palate is silky smooth with lively red fruit characters and firm tannins. **Alc** 13.5%



Beyra, Beira Interior, Portugal 2011 18 (93)

£9.50 Bottle Apostle, Drinkmonger, Pippa Sedgwick Wines, Reserve Wines, Wadebridge Wines, Worth Bros
Síría and Fonte Cal grapes from some of the highest vineyards in Portugal (700m) have produced a beautifully pure and fruit-forward wine. There's appealing freshness and minerality on the palate too, which is lively with just a hint of spice. And you get change from a tenner! **Alc** 13%



Viña Mayu, Syrah Reserva, Elqui Valley, Chile 2010 18 (93)

£10.99 Asda, Sainsbury's
This won a 2013 DWWA Red Rhône Varietal Regional Trophy and it's easy to see why. Assertive, dark berry fruits give added complexity from strong peppery and iodine components. Despite that lovely savoury facet there is still plenty of sweetness to the fruit and a long finish. **Alc** 14%



Kozlovic, Teran, Istria, Croatia 2012 17.25 (90+)

£13.49 Bowes Wine, Great Wines Direct, Hallgarten Druitt, Guildford Wine Co, Novum, Stony Wines, Wine Therapy
Kozlovic is one of the best-known estates in Istria, and while perhaps more famous for its Malvasia or more structured reds, this Teran is a fine, approachable quaffer. Full of juicy red cherry fruit and a hint of liquorice, it is a moreish and friendly wine crying out for a plate of antipasti. **Alc** 13%



Must-try red

Dominio do Bibei, Lalama, Ribeira Sacra, Spain 2010 19 (96)

£19.95 Berry Bros & Rudd, Caviste, Field & Fawcett, Wadebridge Wines
Located on the banks of the Bibei River where Romans once found large deposits of gold, this Mencía blended with Garnacha, Brancellao and Muraton displays plenty of vibrant red cherry characters with spice. The palate is nicely textured with fine acidity and freshness on the finish. A fantastic wine. **Alc** 13%

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