

Food

5 Thanksgiving wines to be thankful for



By [Dave McIntyre](#) Columnist, Food November 12

Exceptional Excellent Very Good



(Jennifer Chase/For The Washington Post)

One way to make Thanksgiving wine selections more fun is to choose a

theme. If your heritage is from a wine-producing country, celebrate that. Or follow the menu: For example, if you are using Italian recipes, choose accordingly. A Latin-themed menu would pair nicely with wines from Spain, Argentina or Chile. This week's picks fit one of my favorite themes: They are local (or, at least, from the East Coast). That, of course, presents a problem: These wines are not widely available and may require winery visits or shipping. Ironically, the easiest to find among them is from New York, not Virginia or Maryland. Perhaps some enterprising distributor or retailers should take a road trip and bring more of these local gems to market.

— **Dave McIntyre**

Chatham Vineyards, Church Creek Cabernet Franc 2014

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Virginia, \$24

Jon and Mills Wehner are best known for their unoaked chardonnay, called Steel, produced from their estate vineyards on the Eastern Shore, just yards from the Chesapeake Bay and its oysters. The 2014 cabernet franc is their best red yet that I have tasted, and in fact the best Virginia cab franc I've had in a long time. It is dark ruby, with savory aromas of meat and dried herbs. On the palate, the flavor is rich and deep, with just enough spice and bell pepper to reveal the identity of the grape. The moderate alcohol level left me refreshed and ready for more after each sip. Bravo! Alcohol by volume: 12.5 percent.

Distributed by Eastern Shore Classic Wines: On the list in the District at the Dabney and in Virginia at L'Auberge Chez François in Great Falls. The winery will ship to residents of the District, Maryland and Virginia.

Ankida Ridge Pinot Noir 2014



Virginia, \$45

Ankida Ridge has been a Virginia star since the debut of its pinot noir with the 2010 vintage. High on a mountainside northwest of Amherst, winemaker Nathan Vrooman produces elegant, light-bodied pinot that looks more to Burgundy in style than to California. The 2014, new to the market, is racy and energetic, with bright berry flavors and firm acidity. Many of the outlets below still have the 2013 vintage. ABV: 13 percent.

Distributed by Country Vintner: Available in the District at DCanter; on the list at Bourbon Steak. Available in Virginia at Altura Wine & Gourmet in Alexandria, the Local Market in Falls Church; on the list at Field & Main and the Whole Ox in Marshall, Salamander Resort & Spa in Middleburg.

GREAT VALUE

Red Tail Ridge Good Karma Riesling 2015



Finger Lakes, N.Y., \$15

Not only is this a delicious, food-friendly Riesling from New York's Finger Lakes, one of my favorite wine regions to visit, but it's a feel-good wine, too. The winery donates a portion of the profits to food banks in the states where the wine is sold. ABV: 10.5 percent.

Distributed by Country Vintner: Available in the District at Cordial Fine Wine & Spirits, Glen's Garden Market; on the list at Convivial, the Hamilton, Indique, Mulebone and RPM Italian. Available in Maryland at Finewine.com in Gaithersburg and Good Earth Natural Foods in Leonardtown; on the list at La Rive Breton in Leonardtown, Main Ingredient in Annapolis, Silver Diner (Frederick, Rockville, Waldorf). On the list in Virginia at the New Bridge in Warrenton, Screwtop Wine Bar in Arlington, Silver Diner (various locations), Union Street Public House in Alexandria.

Casanel Vineyards Red Spark Brut 2014



Virginia, \$45

Almost on a lark, Katie DeSouza decided to make a dry sparkling wine from some of the Norton grapes her family grows in their vineyard just outside Leesburg, Va. The result is surprisingly fun: a bright, ruby-colored wine with energetic fizz and delightful fruit flavors that seem to dance around in your mouth. Stylistically, it's more like an Italian Lambrusco than it does the cloyingly sweet sparkling shiraz from Australia that was in vogue a few years back. It is expensive; you can find good Lambrusco for less, and even good champagne can be bought at this price. But it is a delicious novelty, and it just might be the wine to match the cranberry sauce in your Thanksgiving feast. ABV: 12.5 percent.

Available at the winery.

Willow Oaks Craft Cider Vocare



Maryland, \$25 (500 milliliters)

I discovered Eric Rice at the FreshFarm Market in Silver Spring, where he was offering samples of several ciders alongside the fresh fruits grown on his farm in Frederick County, Md. Rice makes the Vocare in the Spanish sidra style, fermenting it for a year and then aging it for another year in oak barrels. The result combines richness and complexity with finesse. ABV: 7.4 percent.

Available at the market on Saturday mornings.

Availability information is based on distributor records. Wines might not be in stock at every listed store and might be sold at additional stores. Prices are approximate. Check Winesearcher.com to verify availability, or ask a favorite wine store to order through a distributor.

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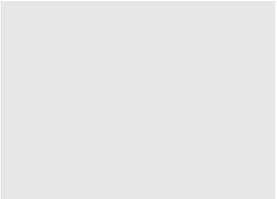
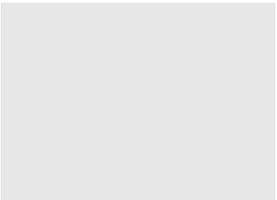
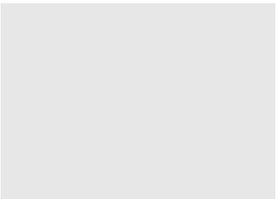
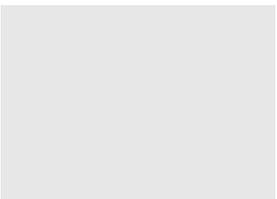


Dave McIntyre writes about wine weekly. He also blogs at dmwinline.com.

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