

# San Jose Mercury News

# LIFESTYLES

## 14 great summer wines under \$20

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POSTED: 07/06/2015 12:00:00 PM PDT | UPDATED: A DAY AGO

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The recent heat has inspired me to look for white wines. Rich, full-bodied wines tasted too tannic for the weather.

There are plenty of natural choices, and a verdejo from Spain is refreshing; esoteric naturals for warmer weather.

The West Coast has unusual white blends in the past several

“I’ve tasted some really intriguing white blends lately...The 2014 Sea Monster Octopussy (\$20) is a blend of viognier, riesling, grenache blanc and chardonnay that displays tangerine and lemon-lime flavors but also has some heft.”

little to no oak. I wanted wines that were flavorful, obviously, but the wines will be served well-chilled, so a ton of complexity wasn't really necessary. I've tasted a lot of worthy contenders that are more expensive, but it was easy to find wines costing \$20 or less.

Let's start with racy sauvignon blanc. The 2014 Cuvaison Sauvignon Blanc (\$18) from Carneros is a good example: crisp pink grapefruit flavors accented by a hint of tomato stem. But there are also sauvignon blancs that are more tropical, like Washington's 2014 Columbia Crest "H3" Sauvignon Blanc (\$15), which tastes of passion fruit and peach. The 2014 Niner Wine Estates Sauvignon Blanc (\$20) from Paso Robles is a combination, with citrus and a hint of grassiness coexisting with white peach, passion fruit and some creaminess.



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