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Wine Topics

Cheap Wines That Don't Taste Cheap

These days, browse the wine aisles, and you'll see gobs of bottles under or around \$10. Many are pretty drinkable, but few are memorable.

While not exactly flawed in that "pour-it-down-the-drain" way, they're often fruity, super-soft, but not much else. They lack a certain "oomph"—either a good tannic grip in reds or a nice balanced acidity in whites—to make them a harmonious whole.

Or, they're one-note wonders: A mediocre Syrah, for instance, might bring loads of dark-fruit flavors but none of the intriguing smoke and spice notes that a great Syrah will offer.

That's not the case with the wines we've tasted and enjoyed below. While all cost around \$10, they each bring something more than mere drinkability to the glass.

Oops! Wines

Oops! is a silly name for some seriously good wines. "Oops" refers to the way in which Chilean winemakers mistakenly thought the grapes they were growing were Merlot. Turns out, many of their fields were planted with Carmènere, a grape historically used in Bordeaux, France.

In the spirit of the saying, "when life gives you lemons, make lemonade," many winemakers who found themselves with vineyards of Carmènere are now proudly crafting it into some excellent wines. Oops! also crafts a good white, too. Recommended wines include:

**Oops 2005 Carmenère:** Here's a brighter, lighter red that will work well with grilled foods — it's not too heavy to drink on a warm summer night.

**Oops Sauvignon Blanc:** Look for this racy and refreshing wine later in the summer as the temperature rises.