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The Best Red Wines for Summer

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Credit: Photograph by Travis Rathbone

When it comes to wine and summer, conventional wisdom would have you believe that the only one worth

sipping is a chilled white or rosé — or, if it must be a red, a Beaujolais, a lighter style from the French region of the same name. But there are so many more reds worth drinking than just a Beaujolais.

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You'll still want a wine that's light and refreshing and can stand being chilled, just like a white. That's why it's best to stay away from those with more than 14 percent alcohol, which tend to be overbearing in the heat, and those high in tannins — such as recent-vintage Bordeaux, Barolos, and Napa cabernets — whose slightly bitter taste will often be accentuated. Instead, look toward pinot noirs, cabernet francs, riojas (tempranillo-based wines made in Spain), and other bottles that weigh in under 14 percent. Here are five perfect wines to turn to when it's time to uncork one in your flip-flops.

2011 G.D. Vajra Langhe Rosso

This blend from Italy's Piedmont region is medium bodied with pleasantly tart fruit flavors. It's one of those reds that you can chill for a few minutes, then enjoy in the sun on the back patio. [\$16; [wine-searcher.com](#)]

Shinn Estate Vineyards Red

From one of Long Island's best wineries, this is a blend of multiple grapes — mainly merlot and cabernet franc — with good complexity and depth of flavor. It's an excellent match for grilled chicken. [\$16; [shinnestatevineyards.com](#)]

2012 Viña Sastre

Although this Spanish red, made entirely from tempranillo grapes grown in the Ribera del Duero region, contains 14 percent alcohol, it drinks lighter than that, thanks to its good acidity. It's a terrific barbecue wine. [\$22; [wine.com](#)]

2013 Hermanos de Peciña "Señorío de P. Peciña" Tinto Cosecha

Peciña is one of Spain's best producers of traditional riojas, and this one is fantastic, with an agreeably tart taste and a long finish. The price is right, too. [\$15; [bodegashermanospecina.com](#)]

2013 Louis-Antoine Luyt Cinsault

Luyt, the winemaker behind this Chilean red, is a transplanted Frenchman who makes some of South America's most compelling bottles. Juicy and loaded with peppery spice, it's a pleasantly distinctive wine. [\$22; [klwines.com](#)]

– [Michael Steinberger](#)

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