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## Wines for hot August nights



Classes may be in session for many this month, but that doesn't mean summer is over. These all fresco-friendly wines will help you transition from vacation mode to back-to-school mode with ease.

### Elegant whites:

#### **Lucien Albrecht Cremant d'Alsace Brut \$15**

Sparkling wine is perfect for warm-weather sipping, especially when topped with a dash of fruit liqueur, but who wants to pay Champagne prices for a casual cocktail? Cremant d'Alsace is the answer. Bubbly with a pleasing price, this dry sparkler made with Pinot Blanc is delicious.

#### **2006 Domaines Schlumberger Pinot Blanc "Les Princes Abbes" \$15**

I'm a fan of Schlumberger's entire roster from Riesling to Gewurztraminer. Though lesser known than its relatives, Pinot Gris and Pinot Noir, Pinot Blanc takes center stage with this crisp, citrus-scented bottling. Serve with a salad of avocado and cantaloupe scooped into balls, cubed fresh mozzarella cheese, and cherry tomatoes dressed with olive oil.

#### **2005 Trimbach Pinot Gris "Reserve" \$20**

From the classic producer, Trimbach, comes their popular Pinot Gris. Though Pinot Gris and Pinot Grigio are the same variety, in Alsace the wine becomes a ripe, full-bodied white with exotic fruit notes. Try with grilled fleshy fish.

## WINE TOOLS



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### WINE GUIDE VIDEOS

The experts share their tips, tricks and techniques for enjoying wine at its best

### Hearty reds:

#### **2006 Vaza Cosecha, Rioja, Spain \$12**

Spanish wines are hot these days and no wonder – you can't beat the quality/value relationship. This new brand from the Ferrer family marries Old World heritage with New World style. A young, unadorned wine (cosecha) made with Tempranillo and Graciano, it's packed with juicy red fruit flavors and a hint of earthiness.

#### **2006 Escudo Rojo, Chile \$14**

If bargains are on your list, scan the aisles for their red checkered label. The Chilean property of France's Rothschild family, this smooth red is a blend of Syrah, Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, and Carmenere. From burgers to pizza, it's an easy everyday sipper.

#### **2005 JC Cellars Syrah, "Haley's Reserve" Rockpile Vineyard, Sonoma, California \$60**

Winemaker Jeff Cohn is a master with bold reds honing his skill at well-known Rosenblum Cellars. This ultra-rich, chewy wine sports layers of complexity with smoky aromas, blackberry jam notes, and a texture you could wrap yourself in. You'll need nothing short of a hunk of meat to stand up to this one.

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Leslie Sbrocco is an award-winning author of *Wine for Women* and *The Simple & Savvy Wine Guide* (HarperCollins), and a nationally-recognized speaker, and wine consultant. She is host of PBS television's *Check Please!* which has garnered both a James Beard and Emmy award.