

West Coast Riesling under \$15

Lynne Char Bennett

Sunday, October 4, 2009



[More...](#)

Vintners have discovered that this aromatic white is suited to Northern California's Monterey County and to Washington state's Columbia Valley. The wines we tasted for the most part are slightly off-dry, balanced and affordable.

Good domestic Riesling is available for less than \$15 a bottle - a bargain when you consider its flexibility at the dinner table.

2008 Chateau Ste. Michelle Columbia Valley Riesling (\$10): When this off-dry Riesling was first produced in 1972, it was labeled Johannisberg Riesling. Consistent, easy drinking and value-priced, with plenty of fruit, including green melon, cantaloupe and citrus; seamless acidity, pink grapefruit on the finish.

2008 Fess Parker Santa Barbara County Riesling (\$14): Fess Parker's son, winemaker Eli, and head winemaker Blair Fox now oversee about 700 vineyard acres in Santa Barbara County. Tropical fruit, pineapple and lime; fresh, clean aromas and flavors; weightier body with a fruity, moderately sweet finish.

2008 Firestone Vineyard Central Coast Riesling (\$11): In 2007, Bill Foley's Foley Family Wines purchased Firestone, which was founded more than three decades ago in Santa Ynez Valley by Leonard Firestone and his son, Brooks. This bottling treads a bit on the ripe side; very aromatic and lush with lemon compote, stone fruit and ruby-red grapefruit.

2008 Jekel Vineyards Monterey Riesling (\$12): Pear, pineapple and ripe tropical aromas merge on the medium-bodied palate that is not quite as lively as the nose, but will do well by mildly spiced foods. Includes a tiny bit of Muscat.

2008 Maddalena Monterey Riesling (\$14): The San Antonio Winery is the last producing winery in Los Angeles. Established in 1917 by the Riboli family, the winery also produces wine from Paso Robles and Rutherford fruit. Lovely aromas and flavors of pear, apple and stone fruit; clean and fresh. This well-balanced off-dry wine is perfect with Asian food.

2008 Pacific Rim Columbia Valley Sweet Riesling (\$10): Riesling specialist Pacific Rim indicates a wine's sweetness level on its back labels. This bottling - which hits the upper range of medium sweet - weighs in with about 6.5 percent residual sugar and less than 8.5 percent alcohol. Mouthfuls of sweet peach and tropical fruit are balanced with ample acidity.

Lynne Char Bennett is a Chronicle staff writer. E-mail her at lbennett@sfchronicle.com.

Healthy Living



• What do women think of men with wrinkles?



• Is Your Desk Job Making You Fat?



• Look Your Best Over 40 – Anti-Aging Tips for Guys

AmazingLivingTools.com

<http://sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2009/10/04/FD4U19TVU3.DTL>

This article appeared on page **K - 6** of the San Francisco Chronicle

© 2009 Hearst Communications Inc. | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Feedback](#) | [RSS Feeds](#) | [FAQ](#) | [Site Index](#) | [Contact](#)