

GOOD SPIRITS

Bubbly personality

Don't settle for mediocre when you can have a sparkling wine that shines.

HERE'S A RADICAL IDEA: At this year's holiday gatherings, serve a sparkling wine with some personality. All too often, bubbly has the effervescence we want, but complexity and nuances in flavor? Not so much. We've chosen five palate-pleasing options you'll want to seek out this year for a drink that's as memorable as your toasts.

NONVINTAGE SEGURA VIUDAS BRUT RESERVA CAVA, SPAIN (\$7)

Probably the best sparkling wine value in the world, this dependable Spanish bubbly has fresh apple, citrus and bread dough notes and a zesty finish.

2010 CASCINETTA VIETTI MOSCATO D'ASTI, ITALY (\$17)

This very low-alcohol Northern Italian lightly sparkling wine is made from muscat grapes. It's a moderately sweet, delicate bubbly with pretty apricot, jasmine and lime blossom flavors, bright acidity and pleasant underlying minerality.

NONVINTAGE SCHRAMSBERG MIRABELLE BRUT ROSÉ, CALIFORNIA (\$20)

A terrific value from Schramsberg, it has pretty rose, strawberry, cherry and citrus notes.

NONVINTAGE ROEDERER ESTATE ANDERSON VALLEY BRUT, CALIFORNIA (\$30)

This is a first-class California sparkling wine from Mendocino County with lively bubbles, ginger, lime blossom, apple and brioche aromas, lemon zest and cherry flavors.

NONVINTAGE BOLLINGER CHAMPAGNE SPECIAL CUVÉE BRUT, FRANCE (\$60)

Not cheap, but this family-owned Champagne firm produces a beautiful nonvintage brut Champagne with deep yeasty bread dough aromas and generous apple, lime and pear flavors. It's a great call when only real Champagne will do. —*Tim Teichgraber*



uncork & mix

Sparkling wine's often paired with juices, but it's also a perfect partner for other spirits. Here, it's mixed with pomegranate-cherry juice, vodka and gin for a delightful and beautiful beverage. It's perfect for a crowd—serve it in a pretty pitcher and let your guests pour their own.

—*Johnny Michaels*



Cherry-Pomegranate Sparkling Cocktail

- 12 oz. defrosted, chilled cherry-pomegranate juice concentrate
- 8 oz. orange vodka, such as Svedka Clementine
- 4 oz. gin, such as Bombay Sapphire
- 24 oz. cava, chilled

Combine juice concentrate, vodka and gin in pitcher; chill. To serve, top with cava. Garnish with cinnamon sticks.

8 (6-oz.) servings ■

