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Top 10 organic wines

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The Best Certified Organic Wines

Americans are used to paying extra for organic meats, produce and dairy, but a few entries on our Top 10 Organic Wine list are just \$11 a bottle. So why not do right by the world -- and yourself -- by going green the next time you're in the wine shop? You're guaranteed to have a good bottle of vino and a conversation-starter. Enjoy our selections of Top 10 Organic Wines.

Santa Julia 2011 Chardonnay Orgánica

Mendoza, Argentina

Price: \$11

Santa Julia is a brand produced by Familia Zuccardi, the largest family-owned winery in Argentina. Half of their estate vineyards, located in Mendoza, are certified organic. The 2011 Chardonnay Orgánica is a medium-bodied, dry white wine offering a fruity bouquet of apple, pear, banana and pineapple.

BioKult 2010 Rosé

Niederösterreich, Austria

Price: \$13

The Michlits family makes their BioKult wines from grapes that are certified organic by both the USDA and Austrian Bio Garantie. Vinified from the native Blauer Zweigelt varietal, it is a dry rosé with a pleasant 12.5 per cent alcohol. The wine boasts tart strawberry, kiwi and melon flavors with a touch of minerality.

Les Hauts de Lagarde 2010 Rouge

Bordeaux, France

Price: \$13

Made in the Entre-Deux-Mers region of Bordeaux, Les Hauts de Lagarde wines are made from certified organic grapes. Composed of 65 per cent Merlot, 25 per cent Cabernet Sauvignon and 10 per cent Cabernet Franc, the 2010 Rouge is a medium-bodied wine boasting warm black fruit flavors and smooth, rounded tannins.

Benziger 2009 Sonoma Valley Zinfandel

Sonoma Valley, California

Price: \$45

Benziger Family Winery currently produces three tiers of wine: biodynamic, organic and certified-sustainable. The grapes that go into their 2009 Zinfandel, part of the winery's Sonoma Valley Appellation Series, are picked from CCOF-certified vineyards. A robust red wine, it boasts rich jammy fruit flavors with earthy notes and a touch of pepper on the seductively smooth finish.

Quivira 2009 Grenache

Dry Creek Valley, California**Price:** \$26

Quivira is considered an American leader in biodynamic winemaking. The winery's Grenache is respected not only for its eco-friendly production but also its complex, spicy flavors and bright acidity. Its cherry and berry notes and vanilla oak will pair well with seared duck in cherry sauce, pepper-crusted salmon or aged goats' milk cheeses.

Balance by Heath Dolan 2009 Red Field Blend**Mendocino County, California****Price:** \$24

Balanced both in its approach to farming (the winery is biodynamic) and flavor, this red blend from winemaker Heath Dolan is composed of 40 per cent Syrah, 40 per cent Zinfandel and 20 per cent Primitivo grapes. On the nose, it features a mélange of cranberry, clove and orange peel. In the mouth, its ripe fruit flavors are joined by earthy notes and fine tannins

Korbel Winery Organic Brut**California****Price:** \$15

America's best-known sparkling wine producer recently got in on the green movement by introducing their first Organic Brut in 2009. The wine offers classic, crisp Brut-style flavors at a very affordable price. Serve it with eggs and bacon, coffee cakes, afternoon tea, white fish, roast chicken, or simply on its own as a palate-cleansing aperitif.

Silver Thread Vineyard 2010 Semi-Dry Riesling**Finger Lakes, New York****Price:** \$15

Silver Thread is not only an East Coast leader in organics, but is also considered one of the Finger Lakes' finest Riesling producers. The winery's Semi-Dry Riesling offers mouth-filling apricot, peach and a bit of lime with minerality on the finish. With zippy acid to balance its sweetness, the wine works well as an aperitif, with lightly-spiced Thai cuisine, a plate of artisan cheeses or an apple tart.

Hawk and Horse Vineyards 2006 Latigo**Lake County, California****Price:** \$45 (375 ml)

Perched at roughly 2,000 feet elevation in Lake County, California, Hawk and Horse Vineyards has achieved both biodynamic (Demeter) and organic (California Certified Organic Farmers) certification. Their 2006 Latigo is made from Cabernet Sauvignon fortified with 142-proof Germain-Robin brandy from neighboring Mendocino County. At 16.5 per cent ABV, the resulting Port-style wine is rather smooth and not too strong. It features rich, round flavors of black cherry, black currants and damson plum with just a hint of chocolaty caramel.

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