Well-bred reds

All these wines, culled from the 10,000 or so I taste each year, are thoroughly distinctive and superior, generally scoring 17/20, a very high mark on my scale. The cheapest wines may have managed only 15.5 but are still very good value. Unlike so much of the fine wine on sale, they are all ready to drink. Single bottle prices are given but you can often save money by buying an assorted dozeln. Spain is on a roll; Italy's prices have softened.

Zugober, Belezos Crianza 2008 Rioja
A family Rioja Alavesa outfit founded by Jerezanos in 1987. Sweet strawberry fruit with real lift and freshness. Racy and transparent. Dry, appetising finish. 13.5%
£10.95 Corney & Barrow

Walter Clappis, The Hedonist Shiraz 2010 McLaren Vale
What's not to like? 14%
£12.99 Waitrose

Gerhard Markowitzch, Rubin 2010 Carnuntum
Full marks to Oddbins for having sourced special trademark Zweigelt (Rubin is Carnuntum's superior Zweigelt) in the cellar of one of Austria's most admired wine producers. Ripe, exuberant, almost ruddily fruity but with an undertow of freshness and acidity. Mitteleuropa in a glass. Real bite. A much more interesting wine than you expect to meet on the high street. 13%
£13 Oddbins, £18 Nick Dobson

Cordolani 2006 Patrimonio
Made by young Romain Perfetti in his fourth year of operation from Niellucciu (Sangiovese) and Grenache, this (liquid) Corsican smells attractively of sweat and cumin powder – lots of personality. Very mature combo of fruit, rock and herbs with a really refreshing finish. 14%
£16.50 HzVin, £18 Vinoteca

Boekenhoutskloof, The Chocolate Block 2011 Western Cape
Popular South African blend dominated by unirrigated Syrah from fashionable Swartland. Very sweet and opulent. A great, flattering palate texture. 14.5%
About £20 Berry Bros, Roberson, Slurp, Waitrose (seven branches) and others

Montescano, Refugio Pinot Noir 2010 Casablanca Valley
Made by André Oterttag of Alsace fame. Interesting aromas. None of the leanness of many Chilean Pinots and darker than most. Great to get your teeth into. Dry finish but juicy beforehand with plenty of crunchy fruit. 14%
About £20 Imbribos, Battle Apostle, Green & Blue

Dom Françoise André 2009 Beaune
From the recuperated Domaine des Terregeles, made by Françoise André and her daughter-in-law. Mid-cherry red. Already quite mature on the nose. Very pure quintessential Beaune. Lots of fruit, the whole fruit and nothing but the fruit. Hint of raspberries but a dry finish. Cracking and racy. 12.5%
£20.95 Jascots

Cave de Tain, Tesco Finest 2007 Hermitage
Quite a treat to find a pure, luscious northern Rhône Syrah you could already drink in so many branches of a supermarket. The Tain co-op has access to a large proportion of the firm Syrah grown on this famous hill in the northern Rhône. Dry finish but great fruit on the way there. 13.5%
£20.99 Tesco (166 stores)
Muga, Selección Especial 2006 Rioja
The Mugas have produced a classic blend, aged in casks they produce themselves. Dense, well balanced and vibrant. A reminder of how good rioja can be. 14% £22.49 Waitrose (140 branches)

Poggio Bonelli, Riserva 2007 Chianti Classico
Almost sour nose and then lovely richness and appeal on the palate. There’s a beginning, middle and end to this wine. Very resonant. 14% £12.95 Lea & Sandeman

Les Songs de Magdelaine 2007 St-Émilion
The second wine of Grand Cru Classé Ch Magdelaine that has just been absorbed into Ch Belair Monange (do keep up), from the property’s younger vines and lower slopes. Attractively scented with lots of evolution. Soft and gentle. If you like your right-bank claret subtle, this is a bargain but it ain’t no blockbuster. 13% £22.95 Corney & Barrow £33.55 DJR Wine

Marjan Simčič, Reserve Pinot Noir 2009 Brda
Hugely distinctive western Slovenian. Slovenia (and Croatia) deserve much more attention from fine-wine lovers. Fun, rich-yet-dry and full of personality. So different! Confident, long and pungent. 13.5% £26.95 Burcraft

Francesco Rinaldi e Figli 2008 Barolo
Lots of integrity here. Great intensity and the potential to develop further although even now it is exciting and already broachable. 14% About £34.50 Astrum

Dom Lignier-Michelot, En la Rue de Vergey 2008 Morey-St-Denis
Very rich and sweet on the nose. Lively and quite sumptuous. Lovely combination of Morey’s seduction plus freshness. Reverberant finish. This red burgundy works. 13% £34.60 Jasquets

Leflaive & Associés, Premier Cru Sur la Velle 2009 Monthélie
Rich red burgundy with notes of liquorice. Lots of energy and veracity in this pure, persistent wine. More 2009 than Monthélie. Biodynamically grown. 13% £35 Corney & Barrow