

WINE ENTHUSIAST

10 Dry Wines to End Your Dry January

It's okay if your month of not drinking didn't quite go as planned, you've got 11 more tries. So ease into it with these dry wines.

By Wine Enthusiast



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Each year, in countries all over the world, people attempt the New Year's challenge of not drinking for the month of January.

But 31 days without a glass of wine can be quite difficult. Maybe you found yourself at a special occasion and a glass of Champagne was necessary. Perhaps something needed to be celebrated with a toast. Or maybe you found yourself in the middle of a long week before realizing it was only 2pm on Monday.

Whatever your reason, it happens.

So whether you want to ease back into it and give not drinking for a month another shot, or celebrate the end of the challenge, here are some of our favorite dry wines right now.

Alpha Omega 2015 Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley); \$102, 95 points. This wine is pretty, floral and compact in red fruit, the texture soft and billowy on the palate. Rich and full bodied, it has additional complexity from small amounts of Cabernet Franc, Merlot and Petit Verdot. Integrated beautifully, it shows balance and power in equal measure. —Virginia Boone

Salcheto 2015 Vino Nobile di Montepulciano; \$24, 94 points. Made with organically cultivated Sangiovese, this fragrant elegant red opens with enticing scents of underbrush, sunbaked earth, wild berry, violet, crushed mint and a balsamic whiff of camphor. Smooth and savory, the linear palate has surprising vibrancy for such a hot vintage, delivering juicy Marasca cherry, strawberry compote, star anise and white pepper. Elegant fine-grained tannins lend polished support while a coffee note lingers on the close. Drink through 2025. Massanois Imports. Editors' Choice. —Kerin O'Keefe

Salomon-Undhof 2017 Ried Kögl Riesling (Kremstal); \$33, 94 points. Aromas of lemon pith and freshly cut pear contribute to the zesty nose. The palate continues in this vein, cutting its wonderfully juicy, ripe Mirabelle plum fruit with lemony vigor. This is zesty, fresh, textured and whistle clean, with a dry, lip-smacking finish. Fruit of the Vines, Inc. —Anne Krebiehl, MW

Ataraxia 2016 Chardonnay (Hemel-en-Aarde Ridge); \$39, 93 points. This is a stunning wine, with superb complexity and great balance between the ripe fruit characteristics and the lightly toasty, sweet spice elements. Notes of yellow melon, sweet orange, honeysuckle and almond paste are rich and satisfying, but by no means fat or overdone. It's medium in weight, with bright acidity and a pronounced minerality that lends focus and definition. The finish is fresh and vibrant, starting with crisp citrus flavors that evolve into a spiced orange-tea tone before landing on a succulent tone of cedar-grilled apple. Red Wolf Imports. —Lauren Buzzeo

Gerhard Pittnauer 2017 Pitt Nat Rosé Sparkling (Weinland Österreich); \$30, 92 points. Creaminess on the nose has the peppery edge of just ripe red fruit, reminiscent of savory rose hip and red currant. There clearly is a little funk on the nose, but the light palate is a hedonistic, weightless moment of uncommon, creamy, fizzy lightness. The wine seems weightless, fresh and wonderfully red-fruited with its tender tartness. Frivolous perhaps, but delicious, light and dry, too. Savio Soares Selections. —A.K.

Valdivieso NV Caballo Loco Number Seventeen Red (Central Valley); \$70, 92 points. Earthy berry, cocoa, oak spice, tobacco and herbal aromas are integrated on the nose. While this is thick and rich in feel, dense berry and spice flavors are compelling. A blend of multiple vintages of Valdivieso's best red-wine stock, it's dry, tannic and spicy on the finish. Drink now with thorough airing, or hold through 2030. El Catador Corp. —Michael Schachner

Domaine Lathuilière Gravelon 2017 Corcelette (Morgon); \$20, 91 points. Packed with red fruit, this rich wine is firmly structured. The dry core gives impressive richness to the tannins and to the pure fruit flavors. Its juicy character is beginning to come through, suggesting good potential. Drink this wine from 2021. Saranty Imports. —Roger Voss

Domaine de la Mordorée 2017 La Dame Rousse (Tavel); \$26, 91 points. Deep pink with an attractively dusky hue, this invigorating but sturdy rosé can be enjoyed year round. Ripe but fresh red-cherry and raspberry flavors are nuanced by hints of bramble, dried garrigue and earth. This refreshing yet penetrating wine should drink well through 2020. Kysela Père et Fils. —Anna Lee C. Iijima

The Grapes of Roth 2017 Virgin Berry Dry Riesling (Long Island); \$32, 91 points. A stony, citrus-laden nose offers glimpses of earthy white tea and stone fruit in this dry-style wine made from seedless (or virgin) Riesling grapes. There's power on the palate, with a firm grip of slate, yellow apple skin and peach flavors that lead to a lingering limestone finish. —Alexander Peartree

Adamant Cellars 2016 Bijoux White (Walla Walla Valley); \$25, 89 points. White wines are a rarity in Walla Walla Valley. This blend of 65% Sauvignon Blanc and 35% Semillion has fascinating sweet herb, lemon zest, wildflower and stone fruit aromas. It's full bodied, with dry fruit flavors. —Sean P. Sullivan

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