

FORTUNE

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The 25 best wines for this summer

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When it's warm outside and our focus turns to summers at the lake, grilling, and watching the kids water ski, we want different kinds of wines than we do when we're indoors and have less to distract us. We want the carefree, vinous equivalents of "Summer of '69" or "Empire State of Mind," and with all of the entertaining that we do this time of year, we need a pretty versatile soundtrack of summer wines to carry us through. Here are the kinds of wine you'll want over the next few months—the best wines for nearly every outdoor occasion.

Rustic, spicy reds for backyard barbecues and cool nights by the fire pit.

Hearty reds have their places in summertime, too, but the devil is in the details. Some people like to pair Zinfandels with barbecued food, but I find most of them too heavy—and too alcoholic—for hot weather. As a rule, try to avoid overly oaked and extracted reds wines of any variety this time of year.

To pair with barbecue I prefer Carmenères because their spicy, oftentimes herbaceous character really complements condiments and marinades. **Inama's 2012 Più Carmenère Colli Berici DOC** has nice black cherry and plum flavors and good staying power on the midpalate, but feels more a match for grilled steak than burgers.

