

# Chilean Cabernets: Reasonable and Delicious

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For the past decade or longer, Chile has continued to perfect their red wines to world-class standing. The Wine Spectator ratings for many Chilean wines have consistently been in the mid 80's-90's, while pricing remains attractive.

[Costco](#) offers an excellent Cabernet Sauvignon from wine maker Aurelio Montes, on a fairly consistent basis; that is a great buy in the \$15-\$18 range. It is one of this winery's better ones too and they simply call it [Montes Alpha](#).

This wine has been available in Arizona for at least 15 years and first appeared in the valley at outlets such as [Cost Plus World Market](#). It quickly developed an enthusiastic following who waited for shipments to arrive, then scarfed them up right out of the shipping cases! As production and exports grew, it gradually became a permanently stocked item.

Montes Alpha is a pretty consistent wine that is known for a delicate bouquet that is a balance between mint, tobacco, and dark berries. Its color isn't quite the deep inky red of the typical Cabernet, but more on the ruby side. This makes its full-bodied flavor somewhat of a surprise with bold tannins and noticeable alcohol. Normally this wine benefits from a little more flavor integration that a couple more years of aging provides. Buy extra and lay it down for a couple years? Most collectors do, and it responds well.

Regardless of how long you stash it away, with a char broiled steak, prime rib, or corned beef, it's a perfect value.

**Montes Trivia:** Someone once noticed that the flavor of Montes Alpha is comparable to California's Healdsburg Alexander Valley Cabs such as those produced by the [Simi Winery](#). A side-by-side tasting of these can provide an interesting lesson on how expert producers from two different hemisphere's can maintain consistent quality, despite local conditions, year-after-year.

Serve from the fridge after about 40 minutes (55 degrees). For those who really love full-bodied reds, try it with some bittersweet chocolate, wow.