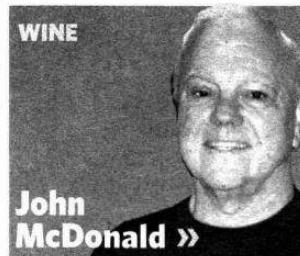


Vinhos Soalheiro

Soalheiro Wines

Cape Gazette

## Note that 375 ml bottles don't cellar as well as 750s



**D**on't forget Polar Bear Plunge this Sunday. Rehoboth has done journeyman work in providing access to a storm-ravaged beach. In fact, if you haven't been downtown since the nor'easter, just viewing the beach would be worth the trip. This event has raised millions of dollars to support Special Olympics Delaware. I was quite surprised that the event was being held on Super Bowl Sunday, but the crowds have been huge in past years, and both competitors and spectators have a great time. See ya there or be square!

Joh. Jos. Prüm Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese 2013 is killer. RRs know I review these nearly every year because they are terrific food wines, even in off years. An off year for them is 92 points. The 2013s are a solid 94. Don't forget these need to cellar, ready to drink in 2020 and will store until at least 2045. They are selling at \$65 since WS wrote them 95 points and highly recommended and an excellent QPR. Smart shoppers reading here who have developed a relationship with one of our fine local wine shops, should be able to bring in a case of the 2007, 96-97 points, that can be found under \$700. I realize that sounds

expensive, but they will cellar well into 2035 and are drinking great now. Slate, peaches, white flowers, honeysuckle and lime aromas leap from the glass. On the palate, a bit complicated. Rich, succulent with slatey minerality and silky texture, which support a complex flavor profile of pineapple, honey, pear, peach and apple riding a tart acidity. The 2007 finishes very long and clean with more mineral notes. They are still a bit un-evolved, just beginning to be approachable. I did find some 375 ml at \$27 that are drinking beautifully, and that is the way to go. Remember 375s are ready sooner and don't cellar as well. Keep through 2030, at least.

Wow! Quinto de Soalheiro Alvarinho (100 percent) Vinho Verde 2014 from Portugal is a wonderful wine for grilled seafood. We can buy it well under \$20. These 91-point lovelies have a complex nose of pear, lime flowers, peach and dry gravel. On the palate, crisp and refreshing with stone fruit flavors and a crisp, long, clean, dry, chalky finish. I truly enjoy Alvarinho with scampi or clams casino, and I like to sear very lightly floured mahi mahi in clarified butter with S&P then hit it with a blast to make a lovely beurre blanc. This label is another of those that produces consistent 90-pointers.

Just saw an ad for a 2009 Blason D'Issan Bordeaux at \$36/bottle if you buy a case with free shipping. This is a good value 89-point wine. I need to be a wine snob here. Blason is a second. I'm buying the 93-point Chateau D'issan 2009 for under \$80 if I go this route. Very dark purple color says cellar me.

Cassis, violets, plums, tobacco and spicy oaken aromas lead to full body, ripe but chewy tannins, and juicy fruit on the mid palate.. These need a few more years in the cellar but should be delicious after 2019 and better for those who have time. The 2010 at \$85 and 94 points is more approachable and elegant. Similar profile of violets, plums, oaken spices and cedar. Avoid 2011, '12 and '13. Don't know about 2014 yet but the word is better at 92-93.

The Walter Hansell Cuvee Alyce Russian River Chardonnay 2012, recommended here a few years ago at \$35 is wonderful now. I cracked one open last Sunday and was delighted. Hope you bought some, but if you failed it is still available. Unfortunately the current price is \$45. It is well worth it though, and I'm laying on a strong 94 points. Named for Stephen Hansell's mom, this pale golden wine opens to quince, tropical fruit, butter and slight oaken nose. It is a ripe, full-bodied chardonnay that is creamy and intense, with proper acidity, a touch of oak and a very long, clean finish. Buy under \$45, add 1 price point. All vintages since 2007 are well made and rate 92 or better.

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Original source material contains defects.