

A Very Good Year

Three Red Sox enter the world of wine By Lisa Altobelli



WHEN HE entertains at home these days, Manny Ramirez keeps quiet about his wine. “When friends come over, we pour them a glass and wait to see what they think,” says the Red Sox slugger. “So far everyone seems to like it.”

The selection is Manny Being Merlot, one of three Chilean wines marketed by Ramirez (*far right and above*) and fellow Red Sox Curt Schilling (*center and bottom of page*) and Tim Wakefield to raise money for charity. Manny’s houseguests are among the few who’ve tried it—the wines, imported by Massachusetts-based Charity Wines, hit shelves in June—but that hasn’t stopped besotted Red Sox fans from pre-ordering 264,000 bottles. “It blows me away,” says Wakefield, whose selection is a cabernet sauvignon. “It’s not like it’s a Bordeaux from France, but it’s for a great cause.”

Each player earmarked a charity and each helped select and name his wine: Wakefield, a knuckleballer, came up with Caberknuckle, while Schilling’s wife, Shonda, suggested her husband’s be called Schardonny. Ramirez, a budding oenophile, named his based on a catchphrase in Red Sox Nation. “I always hear, ‘That’s just Manny being Manny,’” he says. “I thought Manny Being Merlot—now that’s a fun name.” How do they taste? We asked an expert.



About Dr. Vino: Tyler Colman teaches wine classes at New York University and the University of Chicago. His blog, DrVino.com, was named one of the U.S.’s top three wine blogs by *Fast Company*.

CABERKNUCKLE

Dr. Vino says: There are hints of dark fruits like blueberry and blackberry and also flavors of vanilla and cinnamon. There are also leathery notes to it and a tobacco aroma. I look for a bit more tannin in a cabernet sauvignon, and these are not aggressive, which makes it go down smooth. You can pair this with a steak or grilled meats.

Rating: Double



SCHILLING SCHARDONNAY

Dr. Vino says: It’s a nice, crisp unoaked chardonnay. There’s currently a backlash against oak in the wine industry, so it’s good that they’re riding this trend. It has green apple, mango and apricot notes to it and it’s wonderful for

sipping out on the deck this summer or paired with grilled fish, chicken or pasta.

Rating: Triple



MANNY BEING MERLOT

Dr. Vino says: I’m usually down on merlot, but this one is well done. It’s well balanced, fruit forward and juicy with a hint of butterscotch. It also has faint notes of crushed black pepper, which makes it interesting, and the tannins are not at all harsh, which makes for easy drinking. This is good for grilling hamburgers and hot dogs outside this season.

Rating: Double

