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*Wined
down*
WITH JOE ROBERTS

THE BEST SUMMER WHITE WINES FOR HER



The Girls Of Summer And The Wines To Woo Them With

by **JOE ROBERTS**

June 28, 2012

Summertime...when the livin' is supposed to be easy, or at least when it's supposed to *feel* that way, albeit temporarily. When the days are long, the nights are made for bonfire parties and our minds set sail for the shore with eyes set on beaches, breakers and (of course) *bikinis*.

No self-respecting beach-bound cooler should ever be empty until the sunrise dawns on the terrible day *after* your most non-terrible beach party. And so it's my job to offer up a list of wines that 1) taste great when chilled and 2) play well with, well, summer play.

Coming up with a list of white wines for the former is easy, but when it comes to the latter, what we really need is *context*. Because it doesn't do you a bit of good pouring a white wine that will put your bikini-clad partygoers in a bad mood because it doesn't match up with their complex, delicate, inner-goddess countenances. In other words, you'd better not pour the ladies something they're likely not to like.

And so it's with maximizing your party's potential in mind that we take a look at four of the feminine personalities that might be gracing your summertime beach festivities and match the wines to *them*. Each recommendation below will run you less than \$15 per bottle, so you can stock a cooler without having to sell any stock.

THE GIRL: Cute, Fun-Loving Coworker Who [Digs Sports](#)

Her Usual Drink: "Lite" beer

Pairs Best With: Vinho Verde from Portugal

The Portuguese didn't invent refreshing white wine for under \$10 a bottle, but they've damn-near perfected it. Hailing from that country's green, wet northwest, white Vinho Verde is simple, vibrant and like citrus fruits channeled into a laser weapon. It's got lower alcohol and often comes with a bit of spritz, making it the perfect gateway drug into fine wine for the beer-drinking lovelies at your summer shindig. The introductory offerings from Portuguese producers [Aveleda](#) and **Casa de Vila Verde** are hard to beat.

THE GIRL: The [Party Girl](#) You Met Last Weekend

Her Usual Drink: Moscato

Pairs Best With: Off-dry Riesling

There's nothing wrong with the grapey, fun and often-bubbly Moscato d'Asti, but like any product suffering from unplanned spikes in popularity, growing production doesn't always go hand in hand with growing quality. In fact, the results can sometimes taste more like Moscato d'*Nasti*. Satisfy her candy craving with something you both can drink — a lime-and-flowers Riesling with a bit of residual sugar. Riesling's strong acidity, mineral undertones and relatively low alcohol wield a touch of sweetness the same way that Conan the Barbarian wields a broadsword to slice through evil hordes: effortlessly. [Dr. Loosen's Dr. L Riesling from Germany](#) is as solid and refreshing as they come, with only a hint of sugar. Sweeter tastes will want to go for something like **Christobel's Eden Valley Riesling from Australian producer Yalumba**.

THE GIRL: Your Hot, Flirtatious Cougar Neighbor

Her Usual Drink: Big, buttery Chardonnay. As in, only ever big, buttery Chardonnay

Pairs Best With: Torrontes from Argentina

The bloom might have come off the rose when it comes to overly ripe, overly oaked, overly creamy Chardonnay, and so the time is overly ripe to try a bait-and-switch on even the staunchest of Big Chardonnay drinkers. Those who otherwise might not even try another Chardonnay that was given a lighter winemaking touch can still dig on Argentina's Torrontes, which delivers most of the tropical fruits of Big Chardonnay, a little bit of the alcoholic fat, but little-to-none of the wood — and all with the added benefit of intense floral notes. Try the offerings by [Tilia](#) or **Callia Alta**, and she might not know it wasn't actually Chardonnay until the first glass is already empty.

THE GIRL: The Local [Coffee Shop's](#) Vegan Barista Who's Training to be a Yoga Instructor

Her Usual Drink: Green tea

Pairs Best With: Austrian Grüner Veltliner

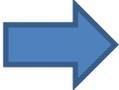
Chances are good she's going to want a salad, and pretty much nothing in the wine world matches up to salad like the refreshing, expressive Grüner. GV is Austria's signature grape variety and might be proof positive that, despite spawning Sigmund Freud, not everything in that country is a product of suppression. If you're set on spicing things up by offering her GV's

citrus, pears and white pepper aromas, grab a bottle from [Zantho](#), [Grooner](#) or [Pratsch](#) (that last one is organic, which ought to get you a few extra bonus points with that perky little yoga practitioner).

THE GIRL: Your [Best Girl](#)

Her Usual Drink: A Manhattan

Pairs Best With: Italian Vermentino



I'm letting the cat out of the bag with this, and I will probably get flogged at the next Secret Gathering of the Wine Cognoscenti, but I have to tell you that Italian Vermentino is a secret-sauce, strong kung-fu kind of white wine. The quality, complexity and deliciousness Vermentino delivers in the better examples make it a bargain in the sub-\$15 range. Tasting a really good Italian Vermentino at those prices is kind of like looking in your couch cushions for spare change and instead finding gold doubloons left by 17th century pirates. It combines flavors of lemon preserves, ginger spices, tropical fruits and nuts with more refreshment than an entire lemonade stand. Save it for that special conquest, make damn sure she sees that you bought Italian, but don't tell her how little it cost you (if you serve up **Vitiano's Vermentino/Verdicchio** blend, or [Argiolas Costamolino](#), she'll be too busy complimenting you on your wine smarts to notice, anyway).

About the Author:

Joe Roberts is a certified wine geek, and has been called "an original" by media maven Gary Vaynerchuk, "provocative" by the Seattle Times, and "a Robin Hood in the exclusive world of vineyards and corkings" by The Urban Grocer. His wine knowledge has been tapped by the L.A. Times, New York Times, CNBC.com, Mutineer Magazine, Publix, Palate Press, Mint.com, and Wines.com. You can find Joe regularly roasting wine's sacred cow (and pairing them with robust, obscure red) at the award-winning [1WineDude.com](#).