

WEDNESDAY

A TREAT IN THE CELLAR

If for no other reason than you've made it halfway through the week!

Masi Costasera Amarone Classico
LCBO 317057, \$38.95

Not many of us actually have a wine cellar, of course, but it's worth finding a cool, dark place where you can keep a couple of age-worthy bottles against the evening when something special is needed. A friend suddenly announces it's her birthday and you don't have a present. Or maybe you just want to impress the in-laws. The good thing about an Amarone is that it's ready to drink now but will also keep well for years—even decades—and Masi's Costasera is one of the most reliably delicious. Pressed from grapes that have been left to dry during the winter and partially affected with botrytis noble rot, Amarone is vinified into a deep, dry red full of flavours of ripe, raisiny fruit, cherry jam and cinnamon spice. It's a powerful wine but soft and velvety, brilliant with game meats, red meats and hard cheese like Parmigiano-Reggiano. It's also known as a *vino di meditazione*, a wine to sip and meditate upon last thing at night, in good company or alone.



THURSDAY

THE HOUSE WHITE

Only you need know that this is one of the best bargains out there.

Cono Sur Viognier
LCBO 64287, \$9.95

How many times have I poured this wine for friends only to have them pause in their conversation to praise it! The secret is the price—less than 10 bucks for a Viognier of real character and class—further proof that South America is the world's best source for wine bargains. Grown in the gentle climate of Chile's Colchagua valley, it's a deliciously flavourful, aromatic white full of the sense of apricots, white peaches and star fruit. There's enough balance and complexity to make it a great choice before dinner and it's also a fine match for anything from fish and chips to Chinese food or mild curries. It wasn't many years ago that Viognier was virtually unknown to everyone except fans of rare (and very expensive) French Condrieu. Now we can all enjoy this gorgeous grape. So much personality for the price!

