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Ask The Pros: What's The Best Sub-\$50 Wine For A Secret Santa Gift Exchange?

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It's nearly Christmas and holiday gift pools are back. Oft referred to as a Secret Santa exchange, deciding what to buy can be a challenge, especially when it comes to wine. And let's be honest, how many supermarket duds have you received that you re-gifted (even re-labeled) to a relative? (My uncle will always drink that Mega Purple stuff.) Working on the assumption that you give as you wish to receive, I queried a dozen wine pros, from winemakers, writers, to retailers, on what their under \$50 Secret Santa wine pick would be and why.

Julien Miquel, founder of award-winning wine blog Social Vignerons. Miquel was a flying winemaker before he turned into a wine writer and blogger, public speaker and consultant in digital strategy for wineries and wine brands.

“Instead of spending \$50 on a single bottle of wine, why not create even more surprise and excitement, by offering 4 bottles, in the form of an educational varietal wines tasting set? Some affordable brands deliver tasty wines that really taste like the grape they were made from. I'd gather a bottle of **Cycles Gladiator's Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Pinot Noir, and Petite Syrah,**

each costing around \$12. They are precise individual expressions of their respective grape variety grown in California's Central Coast, and their label is a fun talking point. A great way to learn and explore the variety the world of wine has to offer! Pack and wrap them up nicely, and you're sure to have the biggest gift in the pool.”



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