

Two Bargains from Trader Joe

We occasionally buy some wine at **Trader Joe's**. But we recently discovered two that are **amazing bargains**. Each is **\$7.99 per bottle**. You will not find better deals on wine anywhere. This is the story of two bargains from Trader Joe.



(click for larger image)

Over the years Norma has become fond of their **“Trader Moon” Honey Moon viognier**. The **2013 vintage** is so outstanding we had to write about it. Quite simply, this is the best viognier I have ever tasted. Norma is not quite that enthusiastic, settling for **“pretty darn good.”**

Here’s the scoop: **floral and honeysuckle aromas** followed by **passion fruit** and an **amazing orange blossom flavor**. There’s a **hint of lime** on the finish. Viognier, like pinot noir, is very **susceptible to terroir and winemaking technique**. We find most of them overbearing with too much of the natural honey. Not this one.

And a few days ago I brought home a couple of experimental bottles of pinot noir. We’ve only tasted one – and Norma sent me back the next day to pick up a case. The wine is from **New**

Zealand. The Picton Bay South Island 2014 pinot noir is light enough to be a summer wine. Aromas of red raspberries and cherries are followed by more raspberries, tart cherries, and a hint of spice. Light enough to support what might otherwise be excessive acidity.



(click for larger image)

According to [Wine Searcher](#), Picton Bay is the export label for the highly regarded [Mt. Riley winery in Marlborough](#). It looks to me like this label was created specifically for the U.S. market and (perhaps) exclusively for Trader Joe's.

Trader Joe's generally gives store managers considerable latitude in choosing non-TJ's wines. You can probably find the Honey Moon almost everywhere. I know the Picton Bay is available at the Trader Joe's on Homestead Road in Los Altos, CA.