

SPECIAL TRAVEL ISSUE

FOOD & WINE

WHERE TO GO NEXT
OUR ALL-TIME FAVORITE HOTELS FOR AMAZING FOOD

You'll fall hard for this spiced lamb pizza from Tel Aviv.
RECIPE P. 82

The World's Best Wine Shops

PLENTY OF PLACES CAN SELL YOU A GREAT BOTTLE—BUT ONLY A HANDFUL ARE WORTH TRAVELING OUT OF YOUR WAY FOR. **RAY ISLE** OPENS UP HIS BLACK BOOK.

THE WINE HOUSE, LOS ANGELES

This 18,000-square-foot warehouse in West Los Angeles is a wine geek's dream destination (plus, markups tend to be modest, which never hurts). Small-production California offerings like the supple, dark cherry-flavored **2012 Woodenhead Russian River Valley Pinot Noir (\$42)** are a specialty, and there's an impressive lineup of classes. winehouse.com.

LOVE TO

WINE

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WAYS TO COOK YOUR WAY AROUND THE GLOBE

The World's Best Wine Shops

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WHEN I was first getting into wine, I used to spend a lot of time at K&L Wine Merchants in Redwood City, California. I was a graduate student at the time, and my budget for bottles was minimal—maybe \$20 every other week.

I'd check out hundreds of interesting choices at the store, most of them out of my reach, then get to talking to one particular sales guy. He usually remembered what I'd bought the last time I was in and would recommend something new he thought I'd enjoy. The payoff was an introduction to a world of terrific wine and also, though I didn't realize it at the time, a list of go-to wine regions that would guide my travels in the future.

My point is, if you're interested in wine, there's no better resource than a great wine shop. But what are the qualifications? Lack of snootiness, no question. I still remember, even earlier in my wine life, asking for a Cabernet that "wasn't too tannic" at a high-end store in DC and getting a supercilious look in return, followed by a dismissive, "Well, you *might* like this." (Though I do credit that incident with my career-long determination to never, ever, under any circumstances, be a snob about wine.)

Beyond that? The shop should have enough unfamiliar names to spark your curiosity, certainly, and a reasonable temperature (if you walk into a store in the summer and start sweating, forget it). Good prices are a must—if everything you



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At Melbourne's City Wine Shop, pick a bottle from the shelf to enjoy at the streetside café.

recognize costs \$10 more than you're used to paying, run away. And, finally, there should be a varied, intriguing selection of affordable wines: That's often where a buyer's personality and acumen really shine through. I firmly believe you should be able to walk in with 20 bucks and leave with a good bottle, plus more knowledge than you had before you walked in.

Visiting great wine shops is one of my favorite things to do when traveling, especially overseas. When it comes to smaller estates and producers, a lot of interesting bottles never reach the US—France alone has more than 10,000 wineries, for instance. A half-hour's browsing in the downtime between visits to the Louvre and the Musée d'Orsay might unearth a dozen wines you've never heard of before and would love to try. And even for bottles you're already familiar with, local prices are often substantially lower.

It's impossible to know everything about wine, but part of the fun, of course, is trying. Here, to help with that quest, are 10 of my favorite stores around the world that are worthy of making a special trip to visit. And when you do, be sure to try something new for me.



Back-vintage Bordeaux at a fair price

Riesling from a rising star

CRUSH WINE & SPIRITS, NYC

New York is chockablock with wine stores, but for a broad selection that also has a guiding (and very discerning) sensibility behind it, I head to midtown and Crush. The stock skews European, with both benchmark and up-and-coming producers, and offers one of the best Riesling collections in town. Look for anything from young hotshot winemaker Florian Lauer from the Saar, such as his **2015 Peter Lauer Fass 6 Senior Riesling (\$26)**. crushwineco.com.

K&L WINE MERCHANTS, REDWOOD CITY & SAN FRANCISCO, CA

K&L's two Northern California locations are among the best sources for wine in the US. The staff is helpful, the selection spans great everyday bottles to ultra-sought-after rarities, and the prices are unbeatable. Recent case in point: the **2001 Château Branaire-Ducru (\$80)**, a perfect-to-drink-now, cedary, classified-growth Bordeaux. klwines.com.

K. LAZ WINE COLLECTION, YOUNTVILLE, CA

This boutique spot is a key place to stop in Napa Valley for bottles from those elusive, mailing-list-only wineries that don't have public tasting rooms (or allow visitors at all). Sign up for proprietor Kerrin Laz's sit-down tastings (starting at \$65 for six wines), or just stop in between winery visits to browse a bit. A recent discovery: the layered **2013 Blankiet Estate Prince of Hearts Red (\$88)**. klazwinecollection.com.

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CITY WINE SHOP, MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA

Right across from the Parliament building, this spiffy outlet stocks offbeat, hard-to-find Aussie bottles. One recent example: Yarra Valley Syrah wizard Luke Lambert's quirky (and affordable)

2016 Crudo Rosé (\$27), a fresh, pink-hued blend of Syrah and Nebbiolo. Have a glass at the green-tiled wine bar and you're bound to learn something from the staff doing the pouring. citywineshop.net.au.

LE CLOS, DUBAI

It's fitting that this Middle Eastern playground for the ultrarich should have a great wine store, despite the UAE being a Muslim country. That may explain why Le Clos got its start in the Dubai airport (and now has five outlets there, plus one in town). If you want to blow a fortune on wine, this is one place to do it—but there's also a smart selection of under-\$30 bottles, such as Piedmontese star **Bruno Giacosa's 2013 Roero Arneis (\$28)**, a crisp white ideal for, well, desert weather. leclos.net.

LA SALUMERIA ROSCIOLI, ROME

Roscioli got its start in 1824 providing bread by papal edict to the underprivileged. It's still renowned for its loaves (the original bakery operates across the street), but the real destination is the combined wine bar, wine shop and gourmet store. Its dark wood shelves house over 2,800 Italian and international wines. Get your bottle to go or open it at one

White Burgundy that breaks the rules



of the crowded, lively tables. May I suggest the **2014 Medici Ermete Concerto Lambrusco Reggiano (\$21)** with meatballs and smoked ricotta and chestnut "polenta"? salumeriaroscioli.com.

VILA VINITECA, BARCELONA

Owner Quim Vila opened this small space in 1993, next to his family's popular gourmet shop in Barcelona's El Born neighborhood, just a few steps from the beautiful Santa Maria del Mar church. Though the floor space isn't huge, the selection is—partly because Vila is also one of Spain's major wine importers. Hard-to-find Spanish bottlings are a particular



Bespoke tastings of rare Napa wines are the order of the day at K. Laz in Yountville, California.

focus, like the **2013 Terroir al Limit Terra de Cuques (\$33)**, a pear-and-spice-inflected white from a superstar of the Priorat region. vilaviniteca.es.

LES CAVES DU PANTHÉON, PARIS

This fiercely independent 5th arrondissement shop has been following its own path since it opened in 1944. Former employee Olivier Roblin purchased it in 2009 and carries more than a thousand bottles, leaning toward the natural wines that are the rage in Paris right now. If you want to discover the next cool young winemaker breaking the rules in the Jura or pick up a top-notch Burgundy from an ambitious new name, like the **2013 Domaine Cecile Tremblay Bourgogne Rouge La Croix Blanche (\$45)**, this is the place. 011-33-1-46-33-90-35.

HEDONISM WINES, LONDON

Go to Mayfair to visit this appropriately named shop, which has a mind-boggling selection of more than 5,500 wines. If you happen to be a zillionaire, spring for the 80-bottle vertical of Bordeaux's legendary **Château d'Yquem** (the 1811 alone will run you just north of \$120,000). But there are great affordable wines, too, such as a rare non-Chardonnay white Burgundy, the silky **2011 Domaine Henri Gouges Bourgogne Pinot Blanc (\$27)**. hedonism.co.uk.

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: WEINGUT LAUER; COURTESY OF CHATEAU BRANAIRE-DUCRU; ALANNA HALE; VINEYARD BRANDS