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No-stress guide to holiday wines

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Idea no. 1: great cabernet

It seems at times like Cabernet has lost its voice in the fray, perhaps because it is (1) expensive, (2) often not that interesting, and (3) in need of long aging. And yet it remains a superstar, which is doubly surprising considering how bad the average table Cab is.

Yet, Napa Valley is still offering up the fruits of its stellar 2007 vintage, and amid the usual hammerhead specimens are plenty of wines that will reward time in the cellar.

Reward the Cab lover in your life with a classic bottle that will pay dividends on holiday to come.

2007 Nickel & Nickel John C. Sullenger Vineyard Oakville

Cabernet Sauvignon: A bit of a surprise in this lineup from the Far Niente folks. It holds back on the oak and lets gravelly stone, deeply extracted blackberry and chewy cassis notes shine through, with a distinct freshness.

