

By Edward Deitch,
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Two excellent \$10 wines are notable not only for what's inside the bottles, but for what's on the outside – some of the more creative labeling I have seen. The wines are from Austria, a grüner veltliner and a zweigelt. While grüner has become a popular white alternative in the United States, the zweigelt is less known.

Enter Monika Caha, who is something of an Austrian wine impresario in this country and who realized that she had an opportunity to help Americans navigate those pesky Austrian grape names while introducing them to some very good and inexpensive wines. Her solution was to brand the wines with the phonetic versions of the names and some colorful artwork that makes them stand out.

Thus, the grüner veltliner was named “Grooner” and the red zweigelt was called “Zvy-gelt,” which tells consumers how to pronounce the varieties and, for browsers in wine stores, turns the often-intimidating German-language label issue into something playful. The names are shouted out by a “Grooner Girl,” as the company calls her.

Unlike most gimmicky labels, these two are backed up by the quality of the wines. Both are produced by the Meinhard Forstreiter winery in the Kremstal region of Lower Austria. The 2010 Grooner is fresh, light and zesty with green apple, lime and herb notes and a touch of smokiness. It's a good introduction to the variety and will pair well with a variety of lighter foods, including fish and chicken dishes and asparagus. Alcohol is 12 percent.

The 2009 Zvy-gelt is all about spicy cherry and has a subtle and intriguing menthol note. It is somewhat like pinot noir but more peppery. Softly tannic, it's easy to drink but packs a lot of interest for its \$10 price. Try it with burgers, pizza and other casual foods. Alcohol is 13 percent. Imported by Frederick Wildman and Sons, New York.

Edward Deitch is a James Beard Award-winning wine critic. Find many more of his wine reviews and commentary on his blog, Vint-ed.com, and follow him on .