

TASTED THIS WEEK

Rowlee Wines is a relatively new player in the Orange district of New South Wales. Plantings began in 2000, and vines now cover eight hectares of high-altitude land on Cargo Road. Well known winemaker PJ Charteris consults to Rowlee.

2014 Rowlee Arneis A fresh lemon-pear style that is clean and lively but slightly light and acid. It was a good move to hold it back an extra 12 months before release. (\$25.00) ★★★★★

2014 Rowlee Pinot Gris Fresh, crisp and clean, with varietal character, but it's on the light side. (\$25.00) ★★★

2014 Rowlee GAS (Pinot gris, arneis, sauvignon blanc) Slightly complex – I hesitate to describe it as minerally – but there is a chalky note about it. Hints of stone fruit and pear show on a satisfying acid-fresh palate with a slight grip. (\$25.00) ★★★★★

2013 Rowlee Nebbiolo This is a darned good crack at nebbiolo from comparatively young vines in a cool region. First it has colour. Second it has freshness – and flavour. There's a touch of rose petal in the bouquet, and the palate is delicate, but certainly not overwhelmed by tannins. (\$38.00) ★★★★★

I like to try some of the cheaper imports from the major chains once in a while, just to ascertain value for money. Here are four from Dan Murphy's.

2013 Domaine des Amoureux Muscadet Sevre et Maine At over two years of age, this wine is holding up well under screwcap. It shows attractive apple and quince backed up by acidity, and is a good partner for seafood. (\$10.00) ★★★★★

2014 Rocca di Montemassi Calasole Vermentino From Maremma in Tuscany, this white is discreetly appley, vibrant and racy, with decent fruit weight and grip. Another good seafood wine. (\$17.00) ★★★★★

2014 La Vieille Ferme Ventoux rouge Fresh and slight, showing red fruits and strawberries. It's pinot noir-like, and is quite delicious quaffing. (\$14.00) ★★★★★

2014 Esenzia Old Vine Garnacha Esenzia suggests concentration, but don't expect it from this Spanish wine. It's a light, bright raspberry style of grenache that is somewhat dilute. (\$17.00) ★★☆☆

Lester Jesberg