

TASTED THIS WEEK

Diversity is the theme this week. We travel the world and throw in some spirit as well. Left field is sometimes an interesting position, and so it proved this time around. On an entirely different topic, we've just returned from a little R & R at Noosa. Two restaurants stood out – Wasabi and Ricky's – directly across the passageway from one another at Quamby Place, Noosa Sound. At Ricky's we enjoyed one of the best Australian pinot noirs we've ever tasted – the 2013 Mayer Yarra Valley Close Planted. If you can find any on retail sale, please tell me.



2014 Ca' Montini Terre di Valfredda Trentino Pinot Grigio This pinot grigio from northern Italy is a ground-breaker. It's racy and riesling-like in structure, with delicate nashi pear and citrus aromas. The palate has a slightly chalky feel. Pretty bottle. Pity about the cork seal, but this is well worth trying. (\$24.00) ★★★★★
http://www.vauclusecellars.com.au/content_common/pr-trentino_ca-montini-pinot-grigio.seo?utm_source=wine-searcher&utm_medium=referral&utm_campaign=ws-listing

2015 Ottelia Mount Gambier Riesling The Mount Gambier sub-region of the Limestone Coast is showing considerable promise. This riesling is aromatic, lively and dry, with classic varietal acidity, and is a very enjoyable drink. I wish I'd had some battered King George whiting or flathead and chips on hand when I tasted it. (\$22.00) ★★★★★

2015 Josef Chromy Tasmania Riesling A floral/lime style that makes quite an impact. The palate offers excellent intensity backed up by lively acidity. There's also a slight phenolic grip that adds a textural quality. (\$28.00) ★★★★★

2014 Tarrawarra Reserve Yarra Valley Chardonnay The aromatics are quite citrus-like and are backed up by subtle lees complexity and oak. The creamy palate needs just a little more fruit weight, but it offers enjoyable drinking. (\$50.00) ★★★★★

2014 La Crema Monterey Chardonnay This chardonnay from the United States is fresh and peachy, with an obvious oak influence. The fruit has its limitations and allows the oak to take a dominant role. (\$35.00) ★★★

2014 Sancerre (Domaine du Nozay) This sauvignon blanc shows a decided under-ripe character on the nose. The palate is better, but a little too delicate for its own good. (\$44.00) ★★★

2014 Sancerre (Daniel Chotard) A very attractive wine which offers aromas of nettle and passionfruit. The palate is generous, with an excellent line of acidity. (\$44.00) ★★★★★

2013 Chablis (Gerard Duplessis) The classic Chablis poached quince aroma is vibrant and very evident. The generosity of palate and regional acidity make it a very good example indeed of village chablis. (\$48.00) ★★★★★

2013 La Crema Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir A very pretty, fragrant Californian pinot that doesn't deliver enough intensity of fruit for the price. (\$50.00) ★★★



2013 Seppelt Chalambar Shiraz (Grampians & Heathcote) This is a very impressive blackberry/spice shiraz which is intense, fresh and beautifully balanced. The fine-grained tannins seal the deal. Incredible value. (\$18.00) ★★★★★

https://www.nicks.com.au/2013-seppelt-chalambar-shiraz?utm_source=wine-searcher&utm_medium=referral&utm_campaign=ws-listing

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2013 d'Arenberg The Custodian McLaren Vale Grenache Has some varietal character but is quite jammy, lacking vibrancy. (\$18.00) ★★

2014 West Cape Howe Frankland River Malbec Shows fresh plum and blueberry, but is just a little too light. (\$22.00) ★★★

2013 Fletcher X13 Langhe Rosso (Nebbiolo, merlot, cabernet sauvignon) This is an excellent young red in which all components play clear-cut roles, but it's the perfume and savoury tannins of the nebbiolo that lead the way. (\$49.00) ★★★★★

2013 Ottelia Mount Benson Shiraz A vibrant young red combining red and dark berries with spicy nuances. It's enjoyable drinking now, and just needs a little more mid-palate weight to achieve a higher rating. (\$27.00) ★★★★★

And now for a very spirited conclusion.

Rakia is a generic term for fruit brandy of the Balkans. In this case, the 36 Short rakia is distilled from McLaren Vale shiraz wine, and has a distinct anise/licorice aroma and flavour.

36 Short White A colourless spirit with a nose that reminds me of a combination of salted Dutch licorice and cleanly made grappa. Obviously, you'll need to like ouzo and pastis to enjoy this one, but it's very well made and potent (45%). (\$70.00) ★★★★★

36 Short Gold As the name suggests, the colour is a definite gold. Aniseed is again the lead aroma and flavour on a sweetish palate that shows some oak. It's even more adventurous and dangerous than the White because it lends itself to multiple shots and is the same alcoholic strength. (\$70.00) ★★★★★

More information and cocktail recipes are available at <https://www.36short.com.au/>

And then there's the **Settlers McLaren Vale Rare Dry Gin**.

The botanicals lean very much to citrus fruits with barely a hint of juniper. This is a very flavoursome gin with smooth spirit that isn't aggressive or over-hot. The palate isn't as austere as that of a classic London dry gin, making it a very pleasant tippie neat or in martini form. If you're thinking G & T, think Fever Tree Mediterranean tonic rather than an Indian tonic. Partnered with Guiseppe B. Carpano Antica Formula vermouth and Campari, it makes an excellent Negroni. (\$75.00) ★★★★★

http://settlersspirits.com.au/settlersspirits/Rare_Dry_Gin.html

Lester Jesberg

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