

SPARKLING WINES

In this panel tasting, we included sparkling wines of many different origins and price points. As usual, the cream rose to the top, and we identify a couple of wines that offer serious value for money. There's even one for prosecco fans.

NV Champagne Veuve Monsigny Premier Cru Brut A complex, richly flavoured champagne that offers bready autolysis character together with freshness and lively acidity. The fine mousse creates a creamy mouthfeel. Available from Aldi at a very agreeable price. (\$36.00) ★★★★★

NV Chandon Brut Attractively bready, with other complex notes. A lively, creamy, long-flavoured bubbly with a strong acid backbone. (\$32.00) ★★★★★

2012 Seppelt Salinger Henty Vintage Cuvée Rich and complex, showing brioche and toasted nuts aromas. The palate is tight and creamy, with acid drive on the finish. (\$30.00) ★★★★★

2011 Heemskerk Tasmania Chardonnay Pinot Noir Fresh, with faintly bready hints. An appealing, comparatively restrained wine with a creamy mousse and refreshing acidity. (\$60.00) ★★★★★

NV Champagne Jeeper Grand Assemblage Brut Fairly deep yellow colour. Bready and a little too mature, but it's drinking pleasantly if you enjoy the big flavour. (\$83.00) ★★★★☆

NV Abel's Tempest Tasmania Chardonnay Pinot Noir The nose is slightly musky and the palate is a bit plain, but doesn't lack flavour. The dosage sweetness is a little too obvious. (\$32.00) ★★★★☆

NV Gapsted Wines Tobacco Road King Valley Prosecco There's a hint of moscato-like aroma, but it's not overpowering, and the nose is particularly fresh. The palate is delightfully fruity, creamy and dry enough. Here's your house bubbly for the festive season. (\$16.00) ★★★☆

NV Champagne Achille Princier Brut Grand Tradition Intense, complex, nutty and bready, but showing oxidative, slightly aldehydic characteristics. It has good acidity but the dosage is comparatively sweet. (\$54.00) ★★★

2013 Coldstream Hills Pinot Noir Chardonnay Showing some development and a hint of breadiness. A bit broad and plain. Based on experience, this was probably not a good bottle, but such is life with cork seals. (\$35.00) ★★★

NV Heemskerk Georg Jensen Hallmark Cuvée Slightly forward, with simple stone fruit aromas. There's plenty of flavour and adequate acidity. (\$40.00) ★★★

NV Larry Cherubino Ad Hoc Carte Blanc Prosecco Fresh citrus notes with hints of pear. Lively and creamy but fruit-driven and comparatively simple. Slightly too sweet. (\$27.00) ★★★

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NV Chandon Brut Rosé Bright pink. Fresh strong pinot berry characteristics. Simple. (\$28.00) ★★★

NV Risky Business King Valley Prosecco Fresh but simple pear aromas. Clean, fruity and slightly sweet. (\$25.00) ★★★

NV Mr Mick Clare Valley Cuvée Brut The nose is rich but straightforward and peachy. Broad and slightly sweet. (\$17.00) ★★★

2012 Oakridge LVS Blanc de Blancs Rich and bready, but showing too much oxidation. The palate offers a creamy mousse but also a touch of volatile acidity. (\$42.00) ★★

NV Yellowglen Limited Edition Brut Cuvée by Samantha Wills Fresh but very simple. Sweet and blatantly populist. (\$13.00) ★★

2015 Yellowglen Vintage Prosecco Slightly advanced stone fruit. Fairly sweet and a little too forward. (\$22.00) ★★

The Aldi company usually stocks imported wines of good value and the Veuve Monsigny is a prime example. Those with a patriotic leaning, will be satisfied with the NV Chandon Brut. However, if you're expecting a steady stream of visitors in the weeks leading up to Christmas, the Gapsted Prosecco may be just the sparkler you need.

<https://gapstedwines.com.au/products/gapsted-tobacco-road-nv-prosecco>

Our vintage champagne report is coming up later in the month.

Three more gems from the National Cool Climate Wine Show

We unearthed some treasures in the Other Red Varieties class. These three are gold medal quality through and through.

2015 Tamburlaine Orange Reserve Malbec This is a vibrant, plush red packed with red berry and blueberry flavour. The structure is fine and the finish is long. Fellow judge Nick O'Leary declared it to be "the best Australian malbec I've ever tasted." (\$44.00) ★★★★★
<https://tamburlaine.com.au/wines.aspx>

2015 Chain of Ponds The Stopover Barbera The nose is a winner – red fruits with a hint of undergrowth complexity. It's a delicious red – lovely and lush. This wine appears not to be available yet, but it could be worth contacting Chain of Ponds. ★★★★★
<https://www.chainofponds.com.au/>

2015 Moppity Lock & Key Reserve Hilltops Tempranillo Moppity is a prolific gold medal winner, and this tempranillo breaks new ground. Rich red flavours show out on a plump but savoury palate. (\$27.00) ★★★★★
http://www.moppity.com.au/index.php?route=product/product&path=20&product_id=72

Lester Jesberg