

# WINEWISE

THE CONSUMER'S WINE GUIDE

August, 2012

## BEST GROSSET RIESLINGS EVER?



## 283 WINEWISE SMALL VIGNERON WINES REVIEWED

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## Ahhhhh.....Chardonnay

Chardonnay is the grape variety, white or red, in Australia right now, and you need look no further than the results of the Winewise Small Vigneron Awards for proof.

Fifty chardonnays, including three "Outstandings" are reviewed, and the good news is that 21 of them are \$30.00 or less.

The trend towards restraint in chardonnay is commendable. Fat, over-oaked whites simply don't make the grade, and balance, texture and finesse are the key words. To many, "minerality" is the buzzword, but we fear that, to many commentators and sommeliers, "minerality" equates with "light and acidic".

Some writers instance chablis as the role model for the swing towards restraint. Fair enough, but don't forget that high-quality chablis is powerful and complex. It does not derive its quality from acidity alone.

Our three "Outstanding" chardonnays are all from cool regions, and all are concentrated, complex and restrained. We won't damn them with faint praise by describing them as "minerally".

One of the most exciting outcomes is the emergence of Tumbarumba in New South Wales as a force at the quality end of the chardonnay market. I'm assisting in the organisation of the first Tumbarumba Wine Show and will chair it in May, 2013. We'll keep you posted.

Cheers,



## Riesling

These results are testimony to the spread of riesling across the country. Four states and eleven regions are represented in the results below and, in our view, NSW/ACT continues to rise in the riesling pecking order.

*In this class and all others, gold medal winning wines are shown (G). A gold medal score is 18.5 (or higher) out of 20.0, averaged over all three judges.*

**NOTE: All gold medal winners in the Small Vigneron Awards will be eligible for the 2013 Winewise Championship.**

### Highly Recommended



**2011 Gilberts Mt Barker Riesling (G)** This is a riesling of both power and finesse. The limey aroma and flavour is very pure and the dry palate features a strong line of acidity. A classic example. (\$22.00) *Excellent Value*  
Screwcap  
Region: Mount Barker, WA

**2012 Binbilla Hilltops Riesling (G)** Another very pure and fine riesling with excellent delicate aromatics, precisely defined fruit and crisp acidity. Faultless and delicious. (\$20.00) *Excellent Value*  
12.0% Screwcap  
Region: Hilltops, NSW

**2009 Eden Springs High Eden Riesling (G)** Although showing every bit of its three years in bottle, this is a delightfully drinkable riesling which is stylish and long-flavoured, balanced by lively acidity. (\$25.00)  
11.4% Screwcap  
Region: Eden Valley, SA

**2006 Tertini Crossroads Riesling (G)** A nicely developed, comparatively sweet riesling with excellent depth of flavour and cleansing acidity. A most enjoyable drink. (\$30.00)  
11.4% Screwcap  
Region: Southern Highlands, NSW

**2010 Half Moon Riesling** This is an appealing, slightly sweet riesling which is philosophically aligned with the German approach. The delicacy, fragrance and balance are commendable.  
Screwcap  
Region: Braidwood, NSW

**2011 Robert Stein Riesling** Another riesling that nods to Germany with its faint sweetness, fragrance and acid balance. Well made. (\$30.00)  
11.5% Screwcap  
Region: Mudgee, NSW

### Recommended

**2012 Robert Stein Riesling** Although it's a touch forward, this wine is packed with flavour and has plenty of acid to balance it in the short term. (\$30.00)  
11.5% Screwcap  
Region: Mudgee, NSW

**2011 Naked Run 'The First' Riesling** Shows hints of development and firmness, but the powerful limey flavour and lively acidity have a lot of appeal. (\$20.00)  
12.2% Screwcap  
Region: Clare, SA

**2009 Tertini Reserve Riesling** There's a little bottle-age character showing as well as a suggestion of sweetness. The rich flavour and acid balance got the thumbs-up from the panel. (\$35.00)  
12.9% Screwcap  
Region: Southern Highlands, NSW

**2011 Dinny Goonan Wines Single Vineyard Riesling** A delicate riesling with attractive florals and just a hint of development. The palate is long and well balanced. (\$22.00)

Screwcap

Region: Bellarine Peninsula, Vic

**2011 Zarephath Riesling** The lemony richness of this wine is its strong point and the long line of acidity provides excellent balance. (Not yet released)

Screwcap

Region: Porongurups, WA

**2011 Patrick Estate Riesling** This riesling is drinking very well now. A little touch of sweetness helps fill out the palate and provide some texture. The fresh acidity does the rest. (\$29.00)

11.0% Screwcap

Region: Coonawarra

**2011 Yarrh Riesling** A hint of development detracts little from the intense lemon/lime fruit which is lifted on the finish by racy acidity. (\$22.00)

11.5% Screwcap

Region: Canberra District, NSW

**2008 Eden Springs High Eden Riesling** Varietal and well made, but showing just a little too much development. (\$25.00)

12.0% Screwcap

Region: Eden Valley, SA

**2011 Helm Riesling Classic Dry** Very clean and well made, with a steely acid finish. The fruit is just a little green. Time in bottle will be beneficial. (\$30.00)

11.2% Screwcap

Region: Eden Valley, SA

**2010 Silkwood Riesling** A little too sweet for a top rating. Drinking well now. (\$15.00)

10.5% Screwcap

Region: Pemberton, WA

There's a trend towards sweetness in riesling, and, although we have no issue with that if the residual sugar is balanced by acidity, we remind entrants that the upper level for sugar in the riesling classes is 7.5 gm/litre. Next year wines showing obvious sweetness will be transferred to the sweet white class.

## Semillon Outstanding



**2009 Gartelmann Benjamin Semillon (G)** This is a classic Hunter semillon in every sense. It's just beginning to emerge from its closed-up baby stage, and show the marvellous lemon grass characteristics that are so regional. The palate is intense, long and acid-fresh. (\$25.00) *Excellent Value*

11.5% Screwcap

Region: Hunter Valley, NSW

**2007 Thomas Braemore Semillon (G)** The taste-off for top semillon was a very close-run affair. Andrew Thomas must wonder what he needs to do to win the SVA semillon trophy. He is in the top three most years, but hasn't taken out the big prize. His 2007 Braemore is a gem, with all the expected lemony Hunter flavour and acidity – plus a little bit of evolution. In the end, the top two wines reflected their respective vintages, and the 2009 edged ahead. (\$N/A)

10.5% Screwcap

Region: Hunter Valley, NSW

**Highly Recommended****2009 Coolangatta Estate Semillon**

**(G)** This flavour-packed semillon has just entered its ideal drinking window. The pure, lemony varietal fruit is impressive and the acidity is just right. (\$25.00)

11.0% Screwcap

Region: Shoalhaven Coast, NSW

**2011 The Willows Vineyard Barossa Valley Semillon (G)**

Here's a knockout young semillon which delivers superb lemony aroma and flavour. The vibrant palate is balanced by lively acidity. (\$16.00) *Excellent Value*

10.8% Screwcap

Region: Barossa Valley, SA

**++ Winner of the inaugural Len Sorbello Memorial Trophy for best current vintage or one year old semillon**

**2011 Mistletoe Reserve Semillon**

**(G)** A beautiful regional example in the austere, slightly lean style. It's certainly one to cellar, and it will fill out beautifully over time. (\$24.00)

10.8% Screwcap

Region: Hunter Valley, NSW

**2006 The Willows Vineyard Barossa Valley Semillon (G)**

If you're looking for a semillon to drink over the next year or two, this is it. It's still very fresh, but has rich and appealing lemon meringue flavour backed by perfectly balanced acidity. Delicious. (\$20.00) *Excellent Value*

12.5% Screwcap

Region: Barossa Valley, SA

**2010 Juniper Estate Semillon (G)**

Here we have a masterly example of barrel-fermenting semillon. The ripe varietal fruit is still very much to the fore, supported by lees-derived complexity. The palate texture is creamy and the balance is spot-on. (\$27.00)

12.5% Screwcap

Region: Margaret River, WA

**2009 Thomas Braemore Semillon**

This is a fine, elegant, restrained semillon in the true varietal-regional style. It is only just beginning to evolve, and will show its class in a couple of years' time. (\$N/A)

10.0% Screwcap

Region: Hunter Valley, NSW

**2009 Ridgeview Generations Reserve Semillon**

The lemon curd characteristics on nose and palate are very pleasant, and the crisp acidity merges seamlessly with the generous flavour. Drinking well now. (\$25.00)

10.8% Screwcap

Region: Hunter Valley, NSW

**2012 Thomas The O.C. Semillon**

A very well made semillon, seemingly "knocked" by recent bottling. The citrus/lemon pith characteristics are matched by balanced, clean acidity. All it needs is time to settle down. (\$22.00)

11.0% Screwcap

Region: Hunter Valley, NSW

**2006 Meerea Park Terracotta Semillon**

This is a dyed in the wool semillon for the true Hunter believers. It smells of lemon grass and hay, and the acidity is uncompromising and steely. There's plenty of life left in it. (\$30.00)

11.0% Screwcap

Region: Hunter Valley, NSW

**2010 Mount View Estate Flagship Semillon**

Shows the classic Hunter Valley lemon and grass aromas and flavours, but is still very closed and steely. Needs a few years. (\$45.00)

11.0% Screwcap

Region: Hunter Valley, NSW

**Recommended****2007 Meerea Park Alexander Munro Semillon**

This is a fuller, softer style offering "sweet" lemony fruit backed by good acidity. Drinking well. (\$35.00)

11.5% Screwcap

Region: Hunter Valley, NSW

**2007 Mistletoe Reserve Semillon**

There's plenty of varietal flavour here, and it's still fresh, although there is some honeyed development. Drink soon. (\$32.00)

10.0% Screwcap

Region: Hunter Valley, NSW

**2006 Pokolbin Estate Phil Swannell Semillon**

This wine is now drinking very well. It's showing a touch of honey-toast development and offers clear-cut varietal flavour on a fresh, balanced palate. (\$28.00)

10.7% Screwcap

Region: Hunter Valley, NSW



**2012 Heafod Glen Semillon** The tropical fruit aromas put this wine out of the mainstream, but the intensity, texture and freshness make a strong statement for fruit quality and winemaking skill. Well worth trying. (\$27.00)

11.8% Screwcap

Region: Swan Valley, WA

**2012 Thomas Braemore Semillon** A pale, lemony, fresh, very restrained semillon. Definitely needs time. (\$28.00)

10.5% Screwcap

Region: Hunter Valley, NSW

**2010 Coolangatta Estate Semillon** This wine has attractive citrus flavours, and is ripe and open, ready to enjoy. (\$25.00)

12.1% Screwcap

Region: Shoalhaven Coast, NSW

**2010 Mistletoe Reserve Semillon** There's plenty of varietal character here, backed by uplifting acidity. A good short term wine. (\$28.00)

11.3% Screwcap

Region: Hunter Valley, NSW

**2009 Mistletoe Reserve Semillon** A grassy style of semillon which is fresh and clean, but the acid is very prominent at the moment. Needs time. (\$32.00)

10.0% Screwcap

Region: Hunter Valley, NSW

**2011 Ridgeview Generations Reserve Semillon** This is a clean, fresh, strongly varietal wine that is delicate and fine. It just tapers a little on the finish. (\$25.00)

11.5% Screwcap

Region: Hunter Valley, NSW

**2011 Pokolbin Estate Ken Bray Semillon** A ripe style with a full, but balanced, palate and very appealing lemon curd characteristics. (\$25.00)

11.6% Screwcap

Region: Hunter Valley, NSW

**2012 Mount View Estate Reserve Semillon** Lemony with a slightly green edge that makes it slightly lean at the moment. Needs time. (\$25.00)

10.0% Screwcap

Region: Hunter Valley, NSW

**2011 Thomas Braemore Semillon** Shows plenty of varietal flavour on a balanced palate. Very fresh but just starting to come forward. (\$28.00)

11.5% Screwcap

Region: Hunter Valley, NSW

**2008 Thomas Braemore Semillon** An evolving semillon which is beginning to show some toasty maturity. The palate is based on a strong line of acidity which will ensure a good future. (\$N/A)

10.0% Screwcap

Region: Hunter Valley, NSW

**2011 David Hook Old Vines Pothana Vineyard Belford Semillon** Quite delicate, even a bit lean, with very racy acidity. Needs time. (\$25.00)

10.5% Screwcap

Region: Hunter Valley, NSW

**2012 Gundog Estate Poacher's Semillon** A grassy, citrus style with good acidity and a slight firmness on the finish. (\$30.00)

10.5% Screwcap

Region: Hunter Valley, NSW

**2011 Coolangatta Estate Semillon** Shows a hint of wet straw character on the nose, but the palate carries a good weight of varietal flavour and finishes with refreshing acidity. (\$25.00)

10.7% Screwcap

Region: Hunter Valley, NSW

**2009 Coolangatta Estate Wollstonecraft Semillon** Ageing nicely, beginning to show some toastiness. The palate is filling out, and has good acidity, but also some green, herbal notes. (\$25.00)

11.0% Screwcap

Region: Hunter Valley, NSW

After tasting some of the top wines, Tim Knappstein wondered aloud why semillon wasn't more popular. He agreed with us that some of Australia's best wines were on the table. Not bad praise from a South Australian riesling man!

## Sauvignon Blanc

### Highly Recommended



**2011 Sidewood Estate Sauvignon Blanc (G)** Very much in the gooseberry, rather than the herbaceous, style, this wine also shows hints of tropical fruits. The palate has good texture and acidity. Drinking well now. (\$24.00)  
12.0% Screwcap  
Region: Adelaide Hills, SA

**2011 Sandhurst Ridge Sauvignon Blanc** This barrel fermented style is packed with flavour tending towards the tropical fruit end of the scale. The creamy texture and length of palate are strong features. (\$22.00)  
13.0% Screwcap  
Region: Bendigo, Vic

**2011 Leura Park Voix de la Terre Sauvignon Blanc** The citrus, grassy and tropical fruit characteristics are complemented by just a touch of oak. The barrel ferment component imparts complexity and texture. A fresh, well made wine. (\$26.00)  
13.3% Screwcap  
Region: Bellarine Peninsula, Vic

## Recommended

**2011 Leura Park Sauvignon Blanc** Very much in the lemon-citrus range of aromas and flavours. This wine is still very fresh and rewarding to drink. (\$22.00)  
11.6% Screwcap  
Region: Bellarine Peninsula, Vic

**2011 Mantra Sauvignon Blanc** A nettle-grassy style that almost shrieks its grape variety. Perhaps there's a hint of residual sugar, but it's balanced by zippy acidity. (\$20.00)  
13.0% Screwcap  
Region: Margaret River, WA

**2011 Higher Plane Sauvignon Blanc** Another SB with a barrel ferment influence. The ripe fruit shows gooseberry-grass characteristics, and the barrel and lees inputs are positive in terms of texture and complexity. (\$27.00)  
12.5% Screwcap  
Region: Margaret River, WA

**2012 Windows Estate Sauvignon Blanc** Shows good citrus-grassy characteristics, but is a little soft on the palate. Nevertheless the rich flavour provides good drinking now. (\$22.00)  
12.0% Screwcap  
Region: Margaret River, WA

We don't judge at the right time of the year for sauvignon blanc to shine. The current vintage has just been bottled, and the previous one has probably been in bottle for a few months too long. Despite the timing issues, the Sidewood Estate held its head up high, and some good work is being done with barrel fermentation.

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## Semillon & Sauvignon Blanc Blends Outstanding



**2010 Warner Glen Estate PBF Sauvignon Blanc Semillon (G)** This wine sets a standard for the barrel fermented style that more and more makers are pursuing. The key factor in this type of wine is to retain fruit and not overwhelm it with artefact derived from the barrel work. Here we have delicious white peach and gooseberry fruit enhanced by subtle lees complexity. The palate is long and beautifully textured. (\$30.00) *Excellent Value*  
12.8% Screwcap  
Region: Margaret River

### Highly Recommended

**2011 Wine By Brad Semillon Sauvignon Blanc (G)** Here we have the fruit-driven approach to Australia's most popular white blend. It's very much gooseberry-grass and is still very fresh. The intense palate is balanced and enlivened by racy acidity. (\$18.00) *Excellent Value*  
13.0% Screwcap  
Region: Margaret River

## Recommended

**2012 Greedy Sheep Sauvignon Blanc Semillon** A richly flavoured, fresh blend showing lemon curd and grassy characteristics. The palate is long and lively. (\$18.00)  
Screwcap

**2011 Saracen Estates Sauvignon Blanc Semillon** This is a little on the light side, but it's still fresh and lively, offering grassy aromas and flavours. (\$22.00)  
12.3% Screwcap

**2012 Eldredge Semillon Sauvignon Blanc** More in the grapefruit-tropical fruit style, with a very fresh palate which seems to have the faintest touch of sweetness balanced by good acidity. (\$16.00)  
12.0% Screwcap  
Region: Clare, SA

**2011 A. Retief Sauvignon Blanc Semillon** An attractive barrel fermented style with lemon-peach characteristics and a good texture. There's just a little too much barrel complexity for the fruit. (\$28.00)  
12.5% Screwcap  
Region: Canberra District & Hilltops, NSW

**2011 South By South West by Higher Plane Semillon Sauvignon Blanc** The gooseberry and passionfruit flavours have a slightly green edge, but there's adequate flavour supported by lively acidity. (\$22.00)  
12.5% Screwcap  
Region: Margaret River

Margaret River has strong claims to being the home of this blend. The top two wines represent two entirely different takes style-wise, and both are excellent examples. The Wine By Brad SSB continues a great run by Brad Wehr who makes wines that are very strong in the quality:price ratio. The Warner Glen wine is much more profound, but there's little difference between the two in sheer quality terms.



## Chardonnay

As you can see, the chardonnay classes were very strong. Chardonnay is the most exciting grape variety in Australia, and the multifaceted nature of many of the wines is both intriguing and captivating. Try as many of these as you can.

### Outstanding

#### 2011 Paringa Estate Chardonnay

**(G)** The top three wines unquestionably deserve an Outstanding rating, but this chardonnay from Lindsay McCall was adjudged to be the clear winner. The pink grapefruit and white nectarine varietal characteristics are quite stunning, and they're greatly enhanced by nutty, struck-match barrel ferment overtones. This is a beautifully textured gem. (\$35.00) *Excellent Value*

13.5% Screwcap

Region: Mornington Peninsula, Vic

#### 2010 Hungerford Hill Tumbarumba Chardonnay

**(G)** Tumbarumba is rapidly emerging as a key cool region for chardonnay. Five Tumbarumba wines made the "cut" here – quite an achievement for an area considered to be small in terms of vineyard acreage. Grapefruit and oyster shell characteristics show on the vibrant, subtly complex nose. The palate is long, creamy and minerally, based on a long acid spine. (\$28.00) *Excellent Value*

12.8% Screwcap

Region: Tumbarumba, NSW

#### 2010 Shadowfax Macedon Ranges Chardonnay

**(G)** The grapefruit aromas suggest cool-grown fruit, and they are matched with nutty, funky barrel ferment overtones. The palate is long and creamy, supported by crisp acidity. (\$45.00)

12.8% Screwcap

Region: Macedon Ranges

### Highly Recommended

#### 2011 Mistletoe Reserve Chardonnay

**(G)** In a varietal category where cool regions dominate, this classy chardonnay from the Hunter Valley deserves special recognition. After topping its regional category easily, the Mistletoe held its head up high in the

final taste-off against all comers. It's a rich, complex chardonnay with excellent texture and balance. Enjoy it over the next year or two. (\$40.00)

13.4% Screwcap

Region: Hunter Valley, NSW

#### 2010 After Hours Margaret River Chardonnay

**(G)** Powerful white peach and grapefruit aromas and flavours make a big impact, as does the freshness and creamy palate. This is a seamless chardonnay with a long, lively finish. (\$19.00, but sold out at the winery) *Excellent Value*

13.0% Screwcap

Region: Margaret River, WA

#### 2011 Jack Rabbit Vineyard Chardonnay

**(G)** This is an excellent example of cool area chardonnay, with grapefruit aromas and a good whiff of barrel ferment complexity. The palate is long and fine, but has texture, substance and balance. (\$30.00) *Excellent Value*

12.0% Screwcap

Region: Bellarine Peninsula, Vic

#### 2010 Hutton Triptych Margaret River Chardonnay

**(G)** An impressive complex chardonnay which shows strong grapefruit characteristics coupled with cashew nut barrel ferment complexity and excellent texture. It will evolve beautifully over the next few years. (\$40.00)

12.5% Screwcap

Region: Margaret River, WA

#### 2009 Hutton Triptych Margaret River Chardonnay

**(G)** Last year's winner is still looking great. It's a complete wine in terms of varietal intensity and purity, texture and balance. There's still a way to go, so don't be afraid to keep it for a couple of years. (\$55.00)

13.6% Screwcap

#### 2011 Balnaves Of Coonawarra Chardonnay

**(G)** There's plenty of flavour and texture in this well-rounded, nutty, buttery chardonnay. Good acidity and well handled oak provide the balance for the richness. Skilful winemaking on display. (\$28.00) *Excellent Value*

14.5% Screwcap

Region: Coonawarra, SA

**2011 Ross Hill Pinnacle Chardonnay (G)** The fresh white peach and grapefruit aromas immediately grab the attention, and toasted hazelnut and cashew nuances add to the impact. The palate is lively, long and creamy. (\$35.00) *Excellent Value*  
12.7% Screwcap  
Region: Orange, NSW

**2011 Swinging Bridge Reserve Chardonnay (G)** Cool climate grapefruit aromas are the focus here and the palate follows suit, and is given texture and complexity by a just-right barrel ferment input. Very stylish indeed. (\$32.00) *Excellent Value*  
13.2% Screwcap  
Region: Orange, NSW

**2009 Hungerford Hill Tumbarumba Chardonnay (G)** The grapefruit, white peach and oyster shell aromas translate to a long, restrained, creamy palate which finishes with excellent acidity and classy oak. (\$28.00) *Excellent Value*  
13.5% Screwcap  
Region: Tumbarumba, NSW

**2011 Dawson and James Chardonnay** Here's a chardonnay for lovers of Corton-Charlemagne! The panel struggled to agree on gold, but there's no doubting the creaminess, structure and barrel ferment funk, which is carried well by the fruit and lingering acidity. (\$50.00)  
12.5% Screwcap  
Region: Huon Valley, Tasmania

**2010 Dawson and James Chardonnay** Although it pushes the boundaries in terms of sulphidic funk, this chardonnay shows impressive white nectarine aromas and flavours. The finish is a little acid-driven, suggesting that a year or two in bottle will do no harm. (\$50.00)  
12.0% Screwcap  
Region: Huon Valley, Tasmania

**2010 Seville Estate Reserve Chardonnay** A very well made chardonnay in which the white peach fruit merges seamlessly with nutty barrel ferment characteristics. The oak impacts on the finish, but the intense fruit copes well. (\$60.00)  
13.0% Screwcap

**2011 Windows Estate Chardonnay** Although a little oak-driven at the moment, this wine has the fruit weight and strength of varietal character to develop very positively in the short term. (\$39.00)  
13.5% Screwcap  
Region: Margaret River, WA

**2010 Saracen Estates Chardonnay Reserve** An impressive white peach-grapefruit style with all the bells and whistles. Toasty oak comes through on the finish. (\$60.00)  
14.7% Screwcap  
Region: Margaret River, WA

### Recommended

**2011 Walter Wines Federation Hill Chardonnay** A fruit-driven chardonnay with attractive peachy flavour. It's too simple for a higher rating, but it's an enjoyable drink. (\$20.00)  
12.5% Screwcap  
Region: Mudgee, NSW

**2011 Hutton Triptych Margaret River Chardonnay** This chardonnay is just starting to grow. It's showing citrus and stone fruit at the moment, with budding complexity. The palate is creamy but needs to fill out a little. (\$40.00)  
12.8% Screwcap  
Region: Margaret River, WA

**2011 Eden Road Tumbarumba Chardonnay** The classic Tumbarumba characteristics, restraint, finesse and steely acidity, are present in this immaculate wine. The grapefruit-lemon flavours are still evolving in this close-knit chardonnay. Cellar. (\$36.00)  
12.5% Screwcap  
Region: Tumbarumba, NSW

**2010 Chalkers Crossing Tumbarumba Chardonnay** There's plenty of interest and fascination here – citrus blossom, oyster shell, mineral etc. The palate is long, well textured and finished off with racy acidity. It needs a little more time. (\$25.00) *Excellent Value*  
13.5% Screwcap  
Region: Tumbarumba, NSW

**2011 Redgate Chardonnay** Shows nectarine and nougat aromas leading on to a complex, creamy, well structured palate. Not yet released, but needs a year or two. (\$N/A)

Screwcap

Region: Margaret River, WA

**2011 Shadowfax Macedon Ranges Chardonnay** A very, elegant, refined chardonnay with classy oak. It's a very cool climate style, right down to the high acidity which is just a little too dominant at the moment. Give it a couple of years to fill out. (\$45.00)

12.6% Screwcap

Region: Macedon Ranges, Vic

**2011 Balgownie Black Label Chardonnay** This is a rich, melony style of chardonnay with an attractive touch of gunflint sulphides. Well managed oak complements the satisfying varietal flavour. (\$24.00)

14.5% Screwcap

Region: Yarra Valley, Vic

**2012 Harcourt Valley Vineyards Chardonnay** A precocious young thing that impresses through its bright, light colour and fresh, fruit-driven palate. (\$20.00)

Screwcap

Region: Bendigo, Vic

**2011 Balgownie Estate Chardonnay** Richly flavoured with an agreeably "slippery" texture. Drinking well now. (\$45.00)

13.0% Screwcap

Region: Bendigo, Vic

**2008 Eden Road Tumbarumba Chardonnay** A remarkably tight, reserved chardonnay that is nowhere near its peak. Delicate citrus blossom and jasmine aromatics lead to a steely, dare we say "chablis-like" palate. Cellar at least 2-3 years. (\$45.00)

12.5% Screwcap

Region: Tumbarumba, NSW

**2011 Swinging Bridge Chardonnay** This wine is packed with melon-peach fruit, and provides very enjoyable drinking. It doesn't have the structure for cellaring. (\$19.95)

12.9% Screwcap

Region: Hilltops, NSW

**2010 Leura Park Block 1 Reserve Chardonnay** Offers good white peach fruit within a fairly firm structure, but is a little forward. Short term. (\$45.00)

14.0% Screwcap

Region: Bellarine Peninsula, Vic

**2011 Seville Estate Chardonnay** There's very good concentration of grapefruit aroma and flavour here, together with some cashew nut complexity. Fresh acidity lifts the finish. (\$33.00)

12.5% Screwcap

Region: Yarra Valley, Vic

**2008 Montgomery's Hill Chardonnay** A nutty/toasty style with good depth of melon fruit. Richly flavoured and drinking well now. (\$22.00)

13.0% Screwcap

Region: Albany, WA

**2010 Craiglee Chardonnay** The bright citrus and stone fruit characteristics are appealing, and the oak input is restrained. The creamy palate adds to the drinkability. (\$30.00)

13.0% Screwcap

Region: Sunbury, Vic

**2011 Silkwood Chardonnay** Fruit-driven and comparatively simple fresh young drinking. (\$20.00)

13.5% Screwcap

Region: Pemberton, WA

**2011 Mappinga (by Sidewood Estate) Chardonnay** A fresh, bright chardonnay that is a little simple, but has good acidity and length of fruit. (\$34.00)

12.0% Screwcap

Region: Adelaide Hills

**2011 Churchview The Bartondale Chardonnay** Rich and slightly forward, with plenty of peach and tropical fruit flavour. Good short term drinking. (\$40.00)

13.0% Screwcap

Region: Margaret River, WA

**2011 Paringa The Paringa Single Vineyard Chardonnay** There's some impressive fruit to be found in this wine, but it's under a thick layer of classy, expensive French oak. We won't rush to judgment. (\$50.00)

13.5% Screwcap

Region: Mornington Peninsula, Vic

**2011 South By South West by Higher Plane Chardonnay** The grapefruit nose carries a hint of greenness, but the palate is rewarding and well balanced. (\$22.00)

13.5% Screwcap

Region: Margaret River, WA

**2011 Portsea Estate Stonecutters Chardonnay** This is a big, rich, creamy chardonnay with its share of oak, but it's a good, mouthfilling drink now. (\$32.00)

13.0% Screwcap

Region: Mornington Peninsula, Vic

**2011 Heafod Glen Family Reserve Chardonnay** There's plenty of flavour packed into this chardonnay. However, there's also a touch of green melon character. A creamy texture and classy oak lift it out of the ordinary. (\$50.00)

12.0% Screwcap

Region: Swan Valley, WA

**2011 A. Rodda Murramong Vineyard Yarra Valley Chardonnay** Shows attractive melon and white peach characteristics, and the palate has an excellent texture. The nose carries some sulphides, but we could just call it funk. (\$36.00)

13.0% Screwcap

Region: Yarra Valley, Vic

**2010 Preveli Chardonnay** This is a white peach/citrus style with faintly grassy overtone. It's a little lean on the finish. (\$23.95)

13.0% Screwcap

Region: Margaret River, WA

**2011 Gartelmann Sarah Elizabeth Chardonnay** Has plenty of peachy flavour and a comparatively soft finish. Shows some oak. (\$30.00)

12.5% Screwcap

Region: Hunter Valley, NSW

**2010 St Aidan Chardonnay** Fairly rich, with a jersey caramel overtone. Balanced, satisfying drinking. (\$20.00)

14.0% Screwcap

Region: Ferguson Valley, WA

**2011 Credaro Chardonnay** An attractive lemony style that is comparatively simple, but has good length and a very fresh finish. (\$30.00)

13.0% Screwcap

Region: Margaret River, WA

**2011 Holm Oak Chardonnay** Shows good cool climate citrus/melon fruit and has a lively acid finish. The oak is a little too up front at this stage. (\$30.00)

13.0% Screwcap

Region: Tamar Valley, Tas

**2010 Chalice Bridge The Quest Chardonnay** This is a good, fresh varietal style that is fairly straightforward. Drinking well now. (\$26.00)

14.0% Screwcap

Region: Margaret River, WA

**2011 Zarephath Chardonnay** A fresh, uncomplicated chardonnay showing honeydew melon characteristics. Good drinking. (\$25.00)

13.0% Screwcap

Region: Porongurups, WA

**2010 Balgownie Estate Chardonnay** A complex, gunflint nose presages a palate that delivers initially, but tapers off slightly on the finish. (\$45.00)

13.0% Screwcap

Region: Bendigo, Vic

**2011 Juniper Crossing Chardonnay** Shows stone fruit with a touch of vanilla oak. Pleasant varietal drinking. (\$22.00)

13.0% Screwcap

Region: Margaret River, WA

**2011 De Salis Chardonnay** This is a nutty, buttery, complex chardonnay with an attractive core of restrained fruit and good acidity. Needs time. (\$32.00)

12.5% Screwcap

Region: Orange

The rise of genuine cool climate chardonnay continues. In Victoria the Mornington Peninsula, Yarra Valley, Bellarine Peninsula and Macedon Ranges lead the way. Tasmania is also very much in the running. However, highland areas of New South Wales are now giving the southerners something to think about. Orange and Tumbarumba are genuinely exciting, genuinely cool chardonnay regions already producing some of Australia's best wines.

Margaret River, of course, cannot be forgotten. It's slightly warmer but the emphasis is clearly on more elegance

**Continued Page 25**



**Pinot Gris/Grigio****Highly Recommended**

**2012 Hahndorf Hill Winery Pinot Grigio** It didn't quite attain gold medal status (gold from one judge; silver from the other two), but the Hahndorf Hill was clearly top pinot gris of the competition. From the pristine nashi pear aromas to the well balanced palate which delivers excellent mouthfeel, it delivered the goods. (\$25.00)  
13.0% Screwcap  
Region: Adelaide Hills, SA

**Recommended**

**2012 Di Lusso Estate Pinot Grigio** This wine is richly varietal, offering pear aromas and flavours. However, the palate is shortened up somewhat by phenolic firmness. (\$26.00)  
12.5% Screwcap  
Region: Mudgee, NSW

**2011 Portsea Estate Pinot Gris** The colour is a little brassy, but there's plenty of apple and pear showing on nose and palate. It's a touch firm, but the palate is substantial and persistent. (\$27.00)  
14.0% Screwcap  
Region: Mornington Peninsula, Vic

**2011 Pierrepoint Pinot Gris** There's no missing the varietal character here, but the palate is a little too firm. (\$36.50)  
13.5% Screwcap  
Region: Henty, Vic

Four wines reviewed; four different regions and three states represented. That's pinot gris in Australia. Everybody wants to give it a go. The problem is that pinot gris of high quality is difficult to find. In Australia it's rare to encounter a pinot gris that is intense, textural and not over-firm. Phenolics are a big problem with the variety, especially when it is over-cropped and the resulting wines don't have the intensity to carry the structure.

Added to the challenges facing Australian pinot gris makers is the fact that better than average examples from Italy and Alsace are selling here for sub \$20.00 – under screwcap. The road ahead is steep and slippery.

**Viognier****Recommended**

**2011 Flynns Wines Viognier** Apricot varietal characteristics show clearly, and the palate has an impressively creamy texture. However oak makes its presence felt a little too much. (\$28.00)  
13.2% Screwcap  
Region: Heathcote, Vic

**2010 Gatt Accent Viognier** The varietal characteristics of this wine are fresh enough but are challenged by barrel-derived components. (\$19.90)  
13.5% Screwcap  
Region: Barossa Valley, SA

**2012 Heafod Glen Viognier** A fresh wine that delivers varietal character, but not quite enough of it. (\$27.00)  
11.9% Screwcap  
Region: Swan Valley, WA

**2011 Tanglewood Estate Viognier** Shows apricot varietal characteristics but is a little too developed and phenolic. (\$16.00)  
Screwcap  
Region: Mornington Peninsula, Vic

**2011 Baillieu Viognier** The exotic apricot, ginger and musk stick aromas and flavours are appealing, as is the silky mouthfeel. The only negative is the level of sulphides on the nose. Some will love the wine, and look upon it as positively complex. Our panel marked it down, but it's an interesting package for the money. (\$20.00)  
12.5% Screwcap  
Region: Mornington Peninsula, Vic

**2011 Fox Gordon Abby Viognier** Quite reductive on the nose, but it has the right texture and offers good apricot-ginger varietal character. (\$19.95)  
12.5% Screwcap  
Region: Mt Crawford, Barossa Valley, SA

Viognier is a difficult grape to handle. Pick it early and the wine lacks flavour. Pick it late and the result is oily apricot nectar. The ideal result is a fresh apricot-ginger style with a slippery texture and balanced phenolics. Oak is not necessary – in fact, it can detract.



## Verdelho

Impressing a wine judge is always difficult, but to impress with verdelho is doubly so. It certainly isn't one of the "noble" varieties and a lot of skill is required in vineyard and winery to produce a wine of freshness and flavour, but without excessive phenolics. Only two wines came close to filling the bill.

### Recommended

#### 2012 Mount View Estate Verdelho

This wine shows some green characteristics which cost it a higher ranking. However the floral and faint banana-like aromatics, adequate fruit and clean finish got it over the line. (\$19.00)

12.5% Screwcap

Region: Hunter Valley, NSW

**2012 Mandoon Verdelho** Shows pineapple aromatics and has reasonable fruit weight, with a phenolic grip on the finish. (\$18.00)

13.5% Screwcap

Region: Swan Valley, WA

## Other Dry Whites

### Highly Recommended

#### 2010 Topper's Gewürztraminer (G)

Panel leader Nick Bulleid MW summed it up when he said "this wine is in the Alsace style rather than Australian mainstream. It has richness and texture." Add to that very attractive rose water aromatics, and you have a very impressive wine. You might say it's hedonism in a bottle. (\$22.00) *Excellent Value*

12.6% Screwcap

Region: New England, NSW

### Recommended

**2012 Little Wine Co. Gewurz** The top wine is a little "out there" and adventurous. This one is text book, technically correct Australian. The nose is very fresh, showing musk stick and lychee notes. It's crisp, clean and delicate. Drinking at its best right now. (\$20.00)

12.9% Screwcap

Region: Hunter Valley, NSW

#### 2011 K1 by Geoff Hardy Arneis

Has some attractive baked pear characteristics and feels good in the mouth. Simple but appealing. (\$20.00)

12.5% Screwcap

Region: Adelaide Hills, SA

#### 2011 David Hook De Novo Bianco

A very pleasant, ready to drink white with apple and citrus overtones. A cleansing acid finish adds to the appeal. (\$30.00)

13.0% Screwcap

Region: Hunter Valley, NSW

#### 2011 Fox Gordon Princess Fiano

Very much at the nectarine-tropical fruit end of the spectrum. It's fresh, a little firm, and has good texture and length. (\$19.95)

13.5% Screwcap

Region: Adelaide Hills, SA

#### 2012 Oliver's Taranga Vermentino

The aroma of white flowers is very appealing and the palate is of good length and finishes with lively acidity. We could drink a lot of this at a long luncheon table. (\$24.00)

13.0% Screwcap

Region: McLaren Vale, SA

#### 2012 Churchview St Johns Mar-

**sanne** A very drinkable wine with a soft, appealing palate. The nose shows a little bit of honeysuckle and dry straw. (\$35.00)

11.0% Screwcap

Region: Margaret River

#### 2011 Topper's Mountain Petit

**Manseng** It's good to see some effort being put into a little-known south-west France variety. This wine shows the sort of mango and lemon curd nose we often encounter in Jurançon wines. Well worth trying. (\$34.00)

12.3% Screwcap

Region: New England, NSW

Of the newcomers, vermentino is the one that will become familiar to us all. A lot of it is being planted in warm areas because it has an amazing capacity to retain acidity as it ripens. Whether it rises higher than "just a good drink" status remains to be seen.

## Sweet White

### Highly Recommended

**2010 Pertaringa Autumn Harvest Riesling (G)** This is an impressively fresh young wine in which the varietal flavour is beautifully balanced by crisp, clean acidity. (\$18.00)  
10.5% Screwcap  
Region: McLaren Vale, SA

**2011 Lillypilly Noble Blend (G)** There's plenty of orange rind and butterscotch character in this luscious, complex sweet white. Good acidity freshens the finish. (\$24.00/375ml)  
11.0% Screwcap  
Region: Riverina, NSW

**2010 Geoff Hardy Hand Crafted Noble Intent Botrytis (Verdelho) (G)** When we tasted this wine, we all decided that it was "different". That difference turned out to be verdelho, and the citrus-tropical fruit aromas and flavours are very attractive. A rich, sweet wine with a lively finish. (\$25.00/375ml)  
9.2% Screwcap  
Region: Limestone Coast, SA

**2010 Patrick Botrytis Riesling** Shows good botrytis character and is quite concentrated. It doesn't quite have the vibrancy of the top three. (\$50.00/375ml)  
11.0% Screwcap  
Region: Coonawarra, SA

### Recommended

**2012 Eden Road Canberra Riesling** This is a delicate, fresh lemony riesling in the off-dry style. It just lacks a little intensity. (\$25.00)  
10.9% Screwcap  
Region: Canberra District, NSW

**2008 Lillypilly Noble Blend** A very well made wine with a touch of orange rind botrytis character. The sugar-acid balance is good, but there's some phenolic firmness on the finish. (\$24.00/375ml)  
11.0% Screwcap  
Region: Riverina, NSW

**2012 Robert Stein Off Dry Riesling** A nicely aromatic wine with a pleasing clean acid finish. It just lacks slightly in intensity. (\$30.00)  
11.5% Screwcap  
Region: Mudgee, NSW

**2010 Juniper Estate Cane Cut Riesling** Fresh and well made, showing stone fruit characteristics. Needs a little more intensity. (\$27.00/375ml)  
11.0% Screwcap  
Region: Margaret River, WA

**2011 K1 by Geoff Hardy Riesling Gewürztraminer** The varietal rose petal character comes through strongly. A little too sweet, but we bet it's popular. (\$25.00)  
10.5% Screwcap  
Region: Adelaide Hills

## NSW Small Winemakers Show

The NSW Small Winemakers Show received 573 entries from 98 small producers that crush a maximum of 500 tonnes annually.

### The trophy winners are:

2011 First Creek Winemakers Reserve Chardonnay (Hunter Valley) **Best White**

2011 Leogate Estate Western Slopes Shiraz (Hunter Valley) **Best Red**

2006 Tertini Crossroads Riesling (Southern Highlands)

2009 Winburndale Solitary Shiraz (Bathurst)

2011 Hart & Hunter Oakey Creek Semillon (Hunter Valley)

2009 Gartelmann Benjamin Semillon (Hunter Valley)

2008 Lillypilly Noble Blend (Riverina)

2011 Two Rivers Rocky Crossing Cabernet Sauvignon (Hunter Valley)

2011 David Hook Barbera (Hunter Valley)

Centennial Vineyards Blanc de Blanc (Southern Highlands)

## Pinot Noir

### Outstanding

#### 2009 K1 by Geoff Hardy Pinot Noir

**(G)** Two key quality factors of pinot noir are opulence and silkiness, and this wine is well-endowed with both. All that, and dark cherry, nuances of forest floor and delightfully fine tannins as well. (\$35.00) *Excellent Value*

14.5% Screwcap

Region: Adelaide Hills, SA

#### 2010 Home Hill Kelly's Reserve Pinot Noir

**(G)** This is a silky, fragrant, dark cherry style with a long, fine palate. It's just beginning to show its true form, but will improve even further. (\$50.00)

Screwcap

Region: Huon Valley, Tas

### Highly Recommended

#### 2010 Holm Oak Pinot Noir (G)

The fragrance and weight of fruit are impressive, as is the touch of herbal complexity. The palate is silky, long and very well balanced. (\$32.00) *Excellent Value*

13.5% Screwcap

Region: Tamar Valley, Tas

#### 2010 Dawson and James Pinot Noir

**(G)** If we had to pick one wine out of this group that is going to transform itself into something very special over the next few years, this is it. The comparatively deep colour, depth of varietal flavour, tannin and oak handling all suggest that this wine simply needs time. (\$50.00)

13.5% Screwcap

Region: Huon Valley, Tas

#### 2010 Clyde Park Reserve Pinot Noir

**(G)** This is a first-class example of cool-area pinot noir. It's fragrant and faintly herbal, with complex, slightly gamey overtones. The palate is built on acidity and fine tannins, but delivers elegant, satisfying fruit. (\$49.00)

12.5% Screwcap

Region: Bellarine Peninsula, Vic

#### 2009 Kyneton Ridge Estate Premium Pinot Noir (G)

Here's a pinot with power and texture, offering opulent red berry flavour supported by fine tannins and fairly prominent oak. (\$45.00)

13.5% Screwcap

Region: Macedon Ranges, Vic

#### 2011 Home Hill Kelly's Reserve Pinot Noir

This is a big pinot that is crammed with dark cherry flavour supported by fine, firm tannins. The nose is just starting to open and show pinot fragrance. Give it a few years to reach its best. (\$50.00)

Screwcap

Region: Huon Valley, Tas

### Recommended

#### 2009 Nintingbool Pinot Noir

There's plenty of ripe dark berry fruit to be enjoyed here, and the tannins are fine. A touch of forest floor complexity adds interest. (\$35.00)

13.7% Screwcap

Region: Ballarat, Vic

#### 2010 Richard Meyman Bersenbrück Pinot Noir

This is a fragrant red cherry style which is delicate but long-flavoured. The tannins are suitably fine, and contribute to the well balanced palate. Good drinking. (\$35.00)

13.8% Screwcap

Regional blend, Tas

#### 2011 Home Hill Pinot Noir

This pinot tastes so youthful that it's almost raw in nature. It's a substantial young wine that is strongly varietal and just needs some time to soften the edges. (\$35.00)

Screwcap

Region: Huon Valley, Tas

#### 2010 Montara Grampians Pinot Noir

The rich, fleshy palate handles the "sweet" chocolate oak very well. Good drinking now. (\$25.00)

13.3% Screwcap

Region: Grampians, Vic

#### 2010 Home Hill Pinot Noir

A big, rich pinot with a structure to match. Definitely needs time to soften and gain complexity. (\$35.00)

Screwcap

Region: Huon Valley, Tas

#### 2010 Paringa Estate Pinot Noir

There's plenty of classy oak showing here, but the fruit underneath is vibrant and intense. Needs a few more years in bottle. (\$60.00)

14.5% Screwcap

Region: Mornington Peninsula, Vic

**2010 Pierrepont Pinot Noir** The dark cherry perfume is very attractive, and the palate offers good weight of fruit supported by fine tannins. (\$39.50)  
13.5% Screwcap  
Region: Henty, Vic

**2010 Brown Magpie Pinot Noir** The red cherry aromas and flavours are appealing, as is the silky mid-palate texture. However, the finish is a little too firm. (\$30.00)  
13.0% Screwcap  
Region: Bellarine Peninsula, Vic

**2011 Jack Rabbit Vineyard Pinot Noir** Has attractive red berry aromas with hints of forest floor. The palate starts out well, but is just a little lean on the finish. (\$30.00)  
12.0% Screwcap  
Region: Bellarine Peninsula, Vic

**2010 Oakdene Peta's Pinot Noir** The nose and fresh and varietal, showing dark cherry with hints of dried herbs. The finish is a little too firm. (\$35.00)  
13.5% Screwcap  
Region: Bellarine Peninsula, Vic

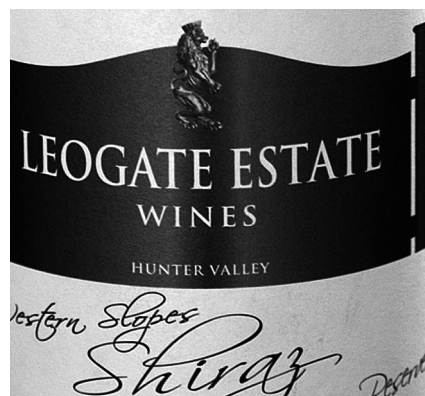
**2009 Prancing Horse Estate Pinot Noir** The nose is fragrant and spicy, and the palate starts off with good varietal flavour, but the finish is very dry. (\$65.00)  
Screwcap  
Region: Mornington Peninsula, Vic

**2010 Paringa Estate The Paringa Pinot Noir** This wine is packed with dark cherries, but the new oak is too prominent at the moment. (\$90.00)  
14.5% Screwcap  
Region: Mornington Peninsula, Vic

Think pinot noir. Think cool. Every region represented here is genuinely cool climatically, and that's where the future of pinot noir in Australia lies.

Home Hill Wines entered four pinots and all distinguished themselves. Well done. On the subject of congratulations, four producers from the Bellarine Peninsula (Geelong) made this select list – a strong showing by the region.

## Shiraz Outstanding



**2011 Leogate Estate Wines Western Slopes Shiraz (G)** The vibrant, opulent dark berry fruit is beautifully matched to high quality medium-toast oak. The palate is very long and satisfying, balanced by very fine tannins. (\$45.00)  
14.0% Screwcap  
Region: Hunter Valley, NSW

**2011 Beach Head (Credaro) Shiraz (G)** This simply has to be one of the best value for money red wines in Australia. It delivers flavour aplenty and a hint of varietal spiciness as well. The palate is beautifully balanced by well managed tannins. (\$19.00) *Excellent Value*  
14.0% Screwcap  
Region: Margaret River, WA

**2010 Fox Gordon Hannah's Swing Shiraz (G)** We've had plenty to say on how not to make Barossa shiraz. Here's an example of how it's done with flair. The fundamental of success is picking the grapes ripe, but not over-ripe. As a result, the varietal characteristics show in sharp focus – blackberry and plum, with hints of spice from both fruit and beautifully handled oak. (\$44.95)  
13.9% Cork  
Region: Barossa Valley, SA

**2010 Printhe Mt Canobolas Collection Shiraz (G)** The vibrant raspberry blackberry and spice aromas have an attractive brambly edge, but this wine is even better on the palate. The length, fineness, balance and varietal character are all of the highest order. A cutting edge cool climate shiraz. (\$35.00) *Excellent Value*  
Screwcap  
Region: Orange, NSW



**2009 Chalkers Crossing Hilltops Shiraz (G)** Winemaker Celine Rousseau has a way with shiraz, and this one is showing no signs of slowing down. The vibrant red fruits aromas carry brambly, peppery notes and the palate is long, supple and fine. Delightful. (\$30.00) *Excellent Value*  
14.0% Screwcap  
Region: Hilltops, NSW

**2010 McLaren Vale III Associates Giant Squid Ink Shiraz (G)** Well, here's an impressive wine at an impressive price. We're not sure about the name, but we're sure of one thing – this wine packs a punch. Despite all the richness, power and toasty oak, there's no disputing the balance of the palate. The oak imparts nutmeg and cinnamon aromas which match the blackberry fruit very well. If you shell out the asking price, you'll definitely have a wine that is well worth long term cellaring. (\$216.00)  
14.5% Screwcap  
Region: McLaren Vale, SA

### Highly Recommended

**2010 Eden Springs High Eden Shiraz (G)** A very appealing style which offers bright, ripe fruit with a hint of spice. The palate is rich and long-flavoured without being too "sweet" or heavy. Enjoyable now, but will benefit from cellaring. (\$28.00)  
14.0% Screwcap  
Region: Eden Valley, SA

**2008 Gatt Shiraz (G)** Here's a big, concentrated blackberry shiraz that retains its freshness. The oak folds in very nicely, complementing the fruit, and the varietal flavour lingers on the finish. (\$55.00)  
14.5% Screwcap  
Region: Barossa Valley, SA

**2010 Ernest Hill 'Shareholders' Shiraz (G)** This is a very impressive medium-bodied style showing fragrant red and dark fruits with a nicely balanced oak component. The palate is long and fine. (\$40.00)  
13.8% Diam cork  
Region: Hunter Valley, NSW

**2011 Leogate Estate Wines Broken-back Shiraz (G)** Rich, ripe and concentrated, but, at the same time, very fresh and lively. The blackberry flavour almost overflows on a long, fine palate. (\$26.00) *Excellent Value*  
14.0% Screwcap  
Region: Hunter Valley, NSW

**2007 Ridgeview Generations Reserve Shiraz (G)** A very impressive shiraz that is beginning to show its true quality. The rich blackberry fruit is matched with positive, but not overdone, oak of high quality. The tannins are very fine, helping to give the palate a silky feel. (\$45.00)  
14.5% Screwcap  
Region: Hunter Valley, NSW

**2009 Winburndale Solitary Shiraz (G)** After a succession of show awards and glowing praise, especially in this publication, we're amazed that Winburndale hasn't achieved a higher profile. The 2009 is vibrant dark berry/spice varietal style of excellent length and balance and, although it can be enjoyed now will cellar for at least 5-7 years. (\$30.00) *Excellent Value*  
Screwcap  
Region: Bathurst, NSW

*Note: A vertical tasting of Winburndale Shiraz will appear in our October issue.*

**2009 McIvor Estate Heathcote Shiraz (G)** This is an impressively peppery shiraz with excellent red fruits aromatics. It shows some new oak, but carries it well on a long, beautifully balanced palate. (\$40.00)  
13.7% Screwcap  
Region: Heathcote, Vic

**2010 Windance Shiraz (G)** The rich red fruits nose is well matched to the slightly toasty oak. Nicely weighted tannins provide balance to a generous, long palate. (\$22.00) *Excellent Value*  
Screwcap  
Region: Margaret River, WA

**2007 Pauletts Andreas Shiraz** A very fresh shiraz that is remarkably unevolved. As a result, it looks a little simple at the moment, but the vibrant dark berry fruit will gain complexity over time. The oak handling respects the fruit. (\$50.00)  
14.5% Screwcap  
Region: Polish Hill River, Clare, SA



**2011 Leogate Estate Wines The Basin Shiraz** A powerful, vibrant, dark berry shiraz that is satisfyingly mouth-filling. Needs a few years in bottle to show its best. (\$45.00)  
14.0% Screwcap  
Region: Hunter Valley, NSW

**2010 Sanguine Estate Shiraz** The spice and red fruits impress on both nose and palate. There's certainly length and intensity as well, but the finish shows a little too much oak. (\$39.95)  
14.8% Screwcap  
Region: Heathcote, Vic

**2010 Heathcote Winery Mail Coach Shiraz** This is a vibrant wine that offers aromas and flavours at the ripe end of the scale. The generous palate is packed with blackberry flavour, and just needs a few years to soften. (\$33.00)  
14.2% Screwcap  
Region: Heathcote, Vic

**2008 God's Hill Menzel Shiraz** A ripe, rich shiraz with plenty of blackberry flavour complemented by "sweet" oak. It's beginning to drink well. (\$45.00)  
14.8% Screwcap  
Region: Barossa Valley, SA

**2010 Honey Moon Vineyard Shiraz** A spicy dark cherry style with hints of eucalyptus and five-spice. The tannins are firm but fine, providing excellent support for the fruit. (\$47.50)  
14.0% Screwcap  
Region: Adelaide Hills, SA

**2010 Yarrh Shiraz** An attractive, silky shiraz that is just on the right side of the ripe/unripe divide. There's a hint of white pepper, but the dark cherry fruit flows the length of the palate. (\$25.00) *Excellent Value*  
13.0% Screwcap  
Region: Canberra District, NSW

**2010 Seville Estate Old Vine Reserve Shiraz** Very much in the dark cherry style, with herbal spicy notes. The fine tannins and silky texture impress. (\$60.00)  
13.0% Screwcap  
Region: Yarra Valley, Vic

**2009 Redman Coonawarra Shiraz** A very attractive rich dark berry style with plenty of ripe flavour and the framework to balance it. (\$23.00) *Excellent Value*  
14.8% Cork  
Region: Coonawarra, SA

**2009 Honey Moon Vineyard Shiraz** Complex five-spice and peppery notes highlight the nose, and the firmly structured palate offers plenty of flavour. (\$47.50)  
14.5% Screwcap  
Region: Adelaide Hills, SA

**2010 Redman Coonawarra Shiraz** Very much in the fresh, ripe, plummy style with a touch of cloves from the oak. There's plenty of satisfying "sweet" fruit on the palate. (\$23.00)  
14.2% Cork  
Region: Coonawarra, SA

**2010 Thomas Sweetwater Shiraz** A fragrant medium-bodied style with impressive freshness and persistence. The classy oak is slightly overt, but matches the fruit well. Just needs a few years. (\$35.00)  
14.5% Screwcap  
Region: Hunter Valley, NSW

**2006 Ridgeview Generations Reserve Shiraz** At six years of age, this is still a youthful shiraz tasting of ripe, sweet berries. The tannins are quite fine and the palate has good length. (\$50.00)  
15.0% Screwcap  
Region: Hunter Valley, NSW

**2010 Eden Road Hilltops Shiraz** The ripe red berry nose, leaning to raspberry, is captivating. After that, the palate delivers, with good length, acidity and oak balance. (\$40.00)  
13.5% Screwcap  
Region: Hilltops, NSW

**2009 Sons of Eden Remus Shiraz** This is a substantial shiraz with plenty of blackberry character and balanced tannins. It pushes the boundaries in terms of ripeness and alcohol, but it's a style that will be loved by many. (\$60.00)  
14.5% Cork  
Region: Eden Valley, SA

**Recommended**

**2010 Hugh Hamilton Black Ops Shiraz Saperavi** Just add a dash (6.0%) of saperavi and you have what is probably a unique blend. It works. Plum, flowers and pepper show on the lively nose, and the palate is bright and long. (\$29.50)

14.5% Screwcap

Region: McLaren Vale, SA

**2010 Brick Kiln Shiraz** A very rich, ripe shiraz with a firm tannin structure. It's big on flavour and freshness, but definitely needs time. (\$25.00)

14.8% Screwcap

Region: McLaren Vale, SA

**2010 McLaren Vale III Associates Squid Ink Shiraz** Obviously the "little brother" of the gold medal winner, this wine shows plum and cigar box characteristics. The palate is quite firm, requiring a few years to soften. (\$55.00)

14.5% Screwcap

Region: McLaren Vale, SA

**2009 Deviation Road Reserve Shiraz** This red is still very fresh, showing plenty of berry flavour with hints of eucalyptus and herbs, leading to a firm finish. (\$38.00)

14.0% Screwcap

Region: Adelaide Hills, SA

**2010 Thomas Motel Block Shiraz** A good, concentrated red berry shiraz which is very fresh and just needs a little time to settle down and integrate the oak. (\$50.00)

13.8% Screwcap

Region: Hunter Valley, NSW

**2011 Ernest Hill 'William Henry' Shiraz** There's an attractive spiciness to the blackberry fruit of this very fresh red. The oak is just a little too obvious. (\$40.00)

13.7% Screwcap

Region: Hunter Valley, NSW

**2009 Totino Estate Shiraz** The plum and dark berry aromas and flavours are quite seductive, and there are hints of white pepper and green herbs. Firm tannins provide appropriate structure. (\$19.95)

14.0% Screwcap

Region: Adelaide Hills, SA

**2009 Rosnay Organically Grown Shiraz** The red fruits characteristics carry hints of menthol which are not excessive, and the palate is long, with a touch of oak on the finish. (\$20.00)

14.0% Screwcap

Region: Cowra, NSW

**2010 Paterson's Gundagai Shiraz** Attractively spicy, with red fruits flavours, a whiff of white pepper and fine tannins. (\$18.00)

14.5% Screwcap

Region: Gundagai, NSW

**2010 Gundog Estate Marksman's Shiraz** Very fresh and spicy in a medium-bodied varietal style, but there's a hint of greenness which detracts slightly. (\$50.00)

14.0% Screwcap

Region: Canberra District

**2008 Paringa Estate The Paringa Shiraz** Very perfumed, showing dark plums and cherries. The oak is prominent at the moment and needs time to integrate with the other components of the wine. (\$80.00)

14.5% Screwcap

Region: Mornington Peninsula, Vic

**2010 Kyneton Ridge Estate Heathcote Shiraz** A rich, ripe dark cherry style of shiraz that is strongly expressive of variety and region, although the toasty oak could have been toned down somewhat. (\$45.00)

15.0% Screwcap

Region: Heathcote, Vic

**2010 Blackjack Wines Block 6 Shiraz** This is a star-bright shiraz that is fragrant and spicy. The cherry-plum fruit persists on an impressive, fine, firm palate. (\$35.00)

13.5% Screwcap

Region: Bendigo, Vic

**2009 Mantra Shiraz** A bright young red which is fresh and fruity, with a hint of mint. It's a little simple, but offers good short term drinking. (\$25.00)

13.5% Screwcap

Region: Margaret River, WA

**2009 Phillip Shaw No. 89 Shiraz** This is an intense shiraz with a cool climate brambly overtone. The fruit is challenged by charry oak. (\$50.00)

13.7% Screwcap

Region: Orange, NSW

**2010 Craiglee Shiraz** Quite spicy, with a gamey/meaty complexity. The red fruits flavours extend on a long palate with a fresh finish. (\$45.00)  
13.5% Screwcap  
Region: Sunbury, Vic

**2009 K1 by Geoff Hardy Shiraz (Silver Label)** Slightly floral, spicy and minty, but shows dark cherry/red berry fruit and mocha oak. Short term. (\$20.00)  
14.5% Screwcap  
Region: Adelaide Hills, SA

**2009 Hahndorf Hill Winery Single Vineyard Shiraz** Shows vibrant dark berry/cherry fruit, but is a little lean on the mid palate and dry on the finish. (\$30.00)  
14.5% Screwcap  
Region: Adelaide Hills, SA

**2010 Balnaves of Coonawarra Shiraz** The blueberry aromas are attractive, and there's a hint of mint as well. The palate offers a good core of fruit with supporting tannins. Worth cellaring for a few years. (\$25.00)  
14.5% Screwcap  
Region: Coonawarra, SA

**2010 Naked Run 'BWC' Shiraz** Has good ripe blackberry fruit, but the oak is overt. (\$30.00)  
14.5% Screwcap  
Region: Barossa Valley, SA

**2010 Anvers McLaren Vale Shiraz** There's plenty of plummy fruit and vanilla oak packed into a flavoursome palate. The finish is a little hard. (\$28.00)  
14.5% Screwcap  
Region: McLaren Vale, SA

**2010 Sanguine Estate Progeny Shiraz** A bright young shiraz showing both dark berry and spice. While there's plenty of varietal flavour, the finish is quite firm. (\$19.95)  
14.8% Screwcap  
Region: Heathcote, Vic

**2010 Possum McLaren Vineyards Dr. John's Willunga Shiraz** This is a dark, brooding shiraz that has its share of oak, but the plum-violet nose and the lush fruit have appeal. (\$18.00)  
14.5% Screwcap  
Region: McLaren Vale, SA

**2010 Tapestry McLaren Vale Shiraz** A rich shiraz showing blackberry and dark chocolate characteristics. The finish is very firm. (\$28.00)  
14.5% Screwcap  
Region: McLaren Vale, SA

**2010 Flint's of Coonawarra Ros-trevor Shiraz** Shows very ripe fruit and plenty of oak to match. Not very subtle, but certainly doesn't lack flavour. (\$20.00)  
14.5% Screwcap  
Region: Coonawarra, SA

**2010 Mappinga (by Sidewood Estate) Shiraz** Quite a savoury style with good length of flavour. The tannins are a little hard. (\$34.00)  
14.0% Screwcap  
Region: Adelaide Hills, SA

**2011 Mount View Estate Reserve Shiraz** Very fresh and varietal, but, at the same time, a little raw, showing some dusty oak. Needs time to settle down. (\$35.00)  
13.5% Screwcap  
Region: Hunter Valley, NSW

**2009 Rosby Shiraz** Shows attractive varietal fruit which is let down somewhat by ordinary oak. (\$19.00)  
14.2% Screwcap  
Region: Mudgee, NSW

**2010 Ross Hill Pinnacle Shiraz** A peppery/spicy shiraz that offers plenty of forward dark berry flavour. (\$40.00)  
14.5% Screwcap  
Region: Orange, NSW

**2009 Kyneton Ridge Estate Heathcote Shiraz** Quite an opulent wine, with pronounced dark cherry and spice characteristics. However, the oak is very obvious. (\$30.00)  
14.7% Screwcap  
Region: Heathcote, Vic

We can't say it often enough. shiraz is Australia's finest red grape variety. Run an eye down the list of over 80 wines and you'll see a wide range of regions and styles represented.

We're happy that a Hunter Valley wine came out on top. It's the region that has made the most progress with shiraz in the past decade.

## Cabernet Sauvignon

### Outstanding

**2009 Ross Hill Pinnacle Cabernet Sauvignon (G)** The intensity of this exceptional cabernet is allied with a fineness rarely seen in wines of such power. The blackcurrant aromas and flavours are enhanced by high quality oak and the finish is very long. (\$40.00)  
14.5% Screwcap  
Region: Orange, NSW

**2010 Seville Estate Old Vine Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon (G)** Cassis aromas waft from the glass and entice the taster. The palate follows on beautifully – fresh, long, intense, fine and ultra-varietal – with just-right high quality oak. A stunner. (\$60.00)  
13.5% Screwcap  
Region: Yarra Valley, Vic

### Highly Recommended

**2010 Mandoon Research Station Cabernet Sauvignon (G)** Here's a wine that excites the senses. There's blackcurrant, cinnamon, vanilla, cloves and dark cherry. The palate has the classic firm cabernet structure and the oak is very well integrated. (\$45.00)  
14.0% Screwcap  
Region: Margaret River, WA

**2010 Redman Cabernet Sauvignon (G)** This is a powerful, dense cabernet simply packed with blackcurrant flavour. The oak imparts a sweet, spicy touch and complements the fruit beautifully. Give this wine time for the firm structure to soften. (\$33.00)  
14.3% Cork  
Region: Coonawarra, SA

**2010 Harcourt Valley Vineyards Cabernet Sauvignon (G)** A very appealing cabernet in the classic style, showing blackcurrant characteristics together with hints of blueberry and leaf. The palate is elegantly firm. (\$25.00) *Excellent Value*  
Screwcap  
Region: Bendigo, Vic

**2009 Saracen Estates Cabernet Sauvignon Reserve (G)** This is a rich cassis style with hints of redcurrant and leaf. The palate is long and firmly structured – ideal for cellaring. (\$70.00)  
13.9% Screwcap  
Region: Margaret River, WA

**2009 K1 by Geoff Hardy Cabernet Sauvignon (G)** The blackcurrant aromas are alluring, and a touch of medium-toast oak adds to the appeal. Fine, savoury tannins balance the intense, long-flavoured palate. (\$35.00)  
14.5% Screwcap  
Region: Adelaide Hills, SA

**2009 Winburndale Fontana Cabernet (G)** A powerful, fresh complex wine in which the strong varietal characteristics complemented by hints of licorice, mint and dried herbs. Oak shows, but doesn't dominate the fruit. Will benefit from a few more years in bottle. (\$30.00)  
Screwcap  
Region: Bathurst, NSW

**2010 Seville Estate Old Vine Morgan's Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon (G)** This is a very attractive medium-bodied cabernet, showing blackcurrant with a hint of leafiness. The tannins are particularly fine and the finish is long. (\$40.00)  
13.0% Screwcap  
Region: Yarra Valley, Vic

**2006 Wood Park Reserve Cabernet (G)** There's no shortage of varietal character here. The palate is filled with blackberry and cassis fruit supported by firm but balanced tannins. One for the long haul. (\$N/A)  
Screwcap  
Region: King Valley, Vic

**2008 Hutton Triptych Margaret River Cabernet Sauvignon** The intensity and varietal flavour of this wine definitely impress, as does the structure and length of palate. It's far from ready to drink, but patience will be rewarded. (\$65.00)  
13.6% Screwcap  
Region: Margaret River, WA

**2010 Balnaves Of Coonawarra The Tally** There's plenty of everything here – intense varietal flavour, oak, tannins and acidity. All the components are yet to fully marry, but they will. All this wine needs is time, and plenty of it. (\$90.00)  
14.5% Screwcap  
Region: Coonawarra, SA



**Recommended**

**2010 Fuddling Cup Cabernet Sauvignon** A very ripe cabernet in which the alcohol is a little obvious, but there's no lack of varietal character. (\$28.00)

14.6% Screwcap

Region: Margaret River, WA

**2010 Ciavarella Oxley Estate Cabernet Sauvignon** Shows some leafiness but has the fruit to carry it. A good medium-bodied style with a firm finish. (\$20.00)

14.5% Screwcap

Region: King Valley, Vic

**2010 Oxenberry Farm Trailblazers Cabernet** This is a wine that shows clear-cut varietal character, and doesn't stray into the over-ripe zone. The palate is well balanced and lively, with integrated oak. (\$30.00)

14.8% Screwcap

Region: McLaren Vale, SA

**2004 Balgownie Estate Cabernet Sauvignon** At eight years of age, this cabernet is just beginning to show some bottle age character. The blackcurrant varietal aromas and flavours are given complexity by hints of tobacco and leather. The palate is long and firm. Needs more time. (\$85.00)

14.0% Screwcap

Region: Bendigo, Vic

**2007 Protero Cabernet Sauvignon** This is a leafy blueberry style of good length, with fine, balanced tannins. (\$25.00)

14.5% Screwcap

Region: Adelaide Hills, SA

**2009 Rosby Cabernet Sauvignon** A cabernet of substance, with chocolate and vanilla oak overtones. (\$27.00)

Screwcap

Region: Mudgee, NSW

**2007 Hutton Triptych Margaret River Cabernet Sauvignon** The cassis aromas and flavours carry some leafiness, but this wine has good length. The tannins are on the firm side. (\$75.00)

13.9% Screwcap

Region: Margaret River, WA

**2009 Mantra Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon** The nose shows blackcurrant and bay leaf aromas, and the impressive intensity of this wine is more than matched by the oak. (\$50.00)

13.5% Screwcap

Region: Margaret River, WA

**2010 Blackjack Wines Cabernet Merlot** A slightly leafy/eucalypt style of cabernet with good persistence and balance. Cellar 3-5 years. (\$25.00)

14.0% Screwcap

Region: Bendigo, Vic

**2010 Credaro Cabernet Sauvignon** Shows good varietal characteristics, but is a little too oaky on the finish. (\$40.00)

14.0% Screwcap

Region: Margaret River, WA

**2010 Mount Avoca Cabernet Sauvignon** Offers good cassis varietal aroma and flavour together with fine-grained tannins. Tapers just a little on the finish. (\$28.00)

13.0% Screwcap

Region: Pyrenees, Vic

**2010 Gatt Eden Springs High Eden Cabernet Sauvignon** A fresh, full bodied varietal style with an herbaceous touch to the nose. The palate is satisfying and well balanced. (\$28.00)

12.9% Screwcap

Region: Eden Valley, SA

**2010 Bendigo Wine Estate Cabernet Sauvignon** Here's a big, solid cabernet with plenty of dark berry flavour, and oak and tannins to match. (\$22.00)

14.0% Screwcap

Region: Bendigo, Vic

**2010 Gartelmann Rylstone Cabernet Sauvignon** This wine offers varietal fruit of considerable depth, but the oak is prominent. (\$35.00)

14.5% Screwcap

Region: Mudgee, NSW

Well, Coonawarra and Margaret River did well, but were trumped by the Ross Hill and Seville Estate. This is Ross Hill's second great result (following a Winewise Championship win) and calls into question the theory that cabernet sauvignon must grow in close proximity of the ocean to produce outstanding wine.



## Other Red Varieties Outstanding



**2010 Geoff Hardy Hand Crafted Lagrein (G)** When the editor was in Italy last year, he came home raving about a couple of lagreins he had tasted in Trento. Now we can see why. This wine has a brilliant purple colour, and a mulberry nose with a hint of licorice. The palate is opulent and beautifully balanced. (\$30.00) *Excellent Value*  
14.2% Screwcap  
Region: Limestone Coast (near Bordertown), SA

### Highly Recommended

**2010 Morgan Simpson Wines Plan B Mataro (G)** This is a very impressive red that belies its alcoholic strength. There's no portiness or hotness, and the nose and palate show plum and blueberry characteristics. The finish is pleasingly savoury. (\$18.00) *Excellent Value*  
15.7% Screwcap  
Region: McLaren Vale, SA

**2011 Di Lusso Estate Barbera (G)** A very lively young wine with perfumed cherry aromas. The palate offers fine tannins and a persistent finish. (\$28.00) *Excellent Value*  
14.3% Screwcap  
Region: Mudgee, NSW

**2009 Coolangatta Estate Tannat** Bright purple colour. Dark cherries and plums show on the nose. The freshness and fruitiness of this wine are winners, as are the perfectly managed tannins. (\$25.00) *Excellent Value*  
14.0% Screwcap

**2011 919 Touriga** Touriga, at its best, is a fragrant variety, and this one certainly makes an impact with the bouquet – cherries, blueberries and musk sticks. It's a delicious, easy to drink wine. (\$38.00)  
13.5% Screwcap  
Region: Riverland, Vic

**2010 Hugh Hamilton 'The Oddball' Saperavi** This is a very fresh wine which shows attractive summer pudding aromas. The palate packs a punch, and the tannins are firm, but fairly fine. (\$45.00)  
14.5% Screwcap  
Region: McLaren Vale, SA

### Recommended

**2010 Koppamurra McLaren Vale Mouvèdre** A ripe dark berry style of considerable substance, but with that substance comes finesse by way of well managed tannins. Attractive drinking now and for the next few years. (\$22.00)  
14.0% Screwcap  
Region: McLaren Vale, SA

**2010 Hahndorf Hill Winery Blueblood Blaufrankisch** It's good to see a serious effort being made with this grape variety. All too often in Austria and Germany it is light and ordinary, but this version is a serious, albeit very drinkable red wine. The fresh, fragrant red and blue berry characteristics are captivating. (\$35.00)  
14.0% Screwcap  
Region: Adelaide Hills, SA

**2010 Mandoon Grenache Old Vine** An attractive, fresh grenache with raspberry overtones devoid of the confection character that sometimes plagues the variety. Good drinking right now. (\$22.00)  
14.5% Screwcap  
Region: Swan Valley, WA

### 2010 Grove Estate Somita Nebbiolo

There's a nice touch of varietal rose petal on the nose, and ripe fruit flows long on a firm but balanced palate. A good effort. (\$40.00)

Screwcap

Region: Hilltops, NSW

### 2011 Juniper Crossing Tempranillo

Fresh perfumed raspberry, spice and licorice in an almost "joven" wine. (\$22.00)

14.5% Screwcap

Region: Margaret River, WA

### 2010 Little Wine Co. Tempranillo

A well made wine with the varietal red berry-licorice-spice mix. Not quite the intensity for a top award, but very good drinking. (\$26.00)

13.5% Screwcap

Region: Hunter Valley, NSW

### 2011 Di Lusso Estate Lagrein

Bright, juicy and varietal. Shows some oak, but doesn't quite have the middle palate it needs. This is certainly young vine syndrome. Watch this variety and producer. (\$28.00)

13.4% Screwcap

Region: Mudgee, NSW

### 2010 McIvor Estate Sangiovese

A perfumed, medium-bodied sangiovese with varietal dark cherry flavour and firm, fine tannins. (\$25.00)

13.5% Screwcap

Region: Heathcote, Vic

### 2011 Belabula Tempranillo

A vibrant wine with an impressive nose that is a melange of berries with a hint of licorice. The palate just lacks some middle, but the varietal character is strong. (\$28.00)

13.5% Screwcap

Region: Hunter Valley, NSW

### 2009 Halifax Wines Ad Lib (Grenache Noir)

A very fresh raspberry style of grenache with good varietal character. The acid addition was slightly overdone. (\$30.00)

14.0% Screwcap

Region: McLaren Vale, SA

The occasional spark is beginning to fly in the "other" red varietals category.

## Classic Australian Blend

### Highly Recommended

### 2010 Anvers Razorback Road Shiraz Cabernet Sauvignon (G)

A very stylish red that shows the shiraz dominance of the blend. Oak plays a role, but doesn't dominate this vibrant, intense wine. (\$22.00) *Excellent Value*

14.5% Screwcap

Region: Adelaide Hills, SA

### Recommended

### 2009 Cape Naturaliste Vineyard Torpedo Rocks Cabernet Shiraz

The intense fruit is strongly challenged by oak, but is not overwhelmed. However, we feel the wood is a little too prominent. (\$60.00)

14.7% Screwcap

Region: Margaret River, WA

### 2010 Sons of Eden Pumpa Cabernet Shiraz

The cassis of cabernet and blackberry of shiraz merge well here, but the oak stands out a little too strongly. (\$25.00)

14.5% Screwcap

Region: Eden Valley, SA

### 2009 Paramoor The Fraser Shiraz Cabernet Sauvignon

A lively, bright-coloured wine with a slightly peppery overtone. The tannins are a bit too firm for the weight of fruit. (\$25.00)

14.5% Diam cork

Region: Goulburn Valley, Vic

Nineteen wines judged, and only four make the grade – not a good strike rate. Excessive development and/or oak were the main culprits. However, the four wines reviewed certainly uphold the honour of Australia's classic red blend.

### Continued from Page 12

and less bigness. That's a trend we strongly support, and Margaret River will always be a strong player in the chardonnay field.

Finally, the exceptional chardonnays of Mistletoe must be acknowledged. It shows what great attention to viticulture and skilful winemaking can achieve.

## Cabernet Blends

### Highly Recommended



**2010 Silkwood Cabernet Merlot (G)** There's an appealing vibrancy to this wine that won over the judges and the chairman. The lively red berry and blackcurrant fruit together with the poise and fineness of the palate make this blend a winner. (\$15.00) *Excellent Value*  
14.0% Screwcap  
Region: Pemberton, WA

**2010 Credaro Cabernet Merlot (G)** The combination of blackcurrant, plum and leafiness works well, and, although there's just enough fruit weight on the palate, the finish is long and the tannins are fine. (\$24.00) *Excellent Value*  
14.0% Screwcap  
Region: Margaret River, WA

**2010 Singlefile Margaret River Cabernet Merlot (G)** A cassis-leaf style that shows positive, but not over-done oak. The palate finishes firmly and has a long, satisfying finish. (\$37.00)  
14.2% Screwcap  
Region: Margaret River, WA

**2008 McKellar Ridge Trio (Cabernet Blend)** A bright, still youthful blend with plenty of red fruits flavour and a hint of leaf. The oak is just a little too prominent. (\$35.00)  
14.5% Screwcap  
Region: Canberra District, NSW

### Recommended

**2010 South By South West by Higher Plane Cabernet Sauvignon Merlot** This wine offers abundant ripe fruit with a hint of leafiness. However, the tannins are very firm and need time to soften. (\$22.00)  
14.0% Screwcap  
Region: Margaret River, WA

**2009 Pertaringa Understudy Cabernet Petit Verdot** The fruit is ripe and concentrated, but the oak is assertive and drying on the finish. (\$22.00)  
14.0% Screwcap  
Region: McLaren Vale, SA

**2009 Sanguine Estate Cabernet Sauvignon/Cabernet Franc/Petit Verdot** Herbal notes combine quite well with the blackcurrant and plum fruit. The flavours are very ripe, but still fresh enough. (\$24.95)  
14.5% Screwcap  
Region: Heathcote, Vic

**2010 Mandoon Cabernet Merlot** The blackcurrant aromas are fresh and attractive, but the palate needs more fruit to cope with the oak. (\$24.00)  
14.0% Screwcap  
Region: Margaret River, WA

The so-called Bordeaux blends offer some value this year, particularly the top two wines. They demonstrate that 100% cabernet sauvignon isn't always the way to go.

### Recently Tasted

**2011 Tarrawarra Estate Yarra Valley Viognier Marsanne Roussanne** Here's one to add to the extensive Tarrawarra tasting we covered last issue. This vintage certainly shows its viognier component on the nose, but the apricot aromas are very fresh and not over the top. It's a very textural wine in which each variety plays its part, with hints of pear and apple coming through on the long palate. (\$30.00)  
12.5% Screwcap *Highly Recommended*

## Sparkling Wines

### Outstanding

**2001 Courabyra 805 Pinot Noir Chardonnay Pinot Meunier (G)**

Without doubt, this wine is the sparkling discovery of the year. It's remarkably fresh and delicate, yet has great drive, creaminess and subtle bready complexity. Marvellous stuff. (\$55.00)

13.0% Cork

Region: Tumbarumba, NSW

### Highly Recommended

**2009 Saracen Estates Sparkling Maree (G)**

The vibrant apple-like aromatics carry a touch of brioche complexity, and the mousse is very fine on a long, satisfying palate. (\$38.00)

12.3% Cork

Region: Margaret River, WA

**NV Bundaleer Sparkling Shiraz (G)**

Although some toasty American oak shows though, the dark berry fruit carries it well. Most importantly this wine is beautifully balanced - not too sweet, not too firm. A very enjoyable drink. (\$19.00) *Excellent Value*

13.9% Zork

Region: Southern Flinders Ranges, SA

**2011 Mistletoe Moscato (G)**

A gold medal for a moscato! It's well deserved and shows how open-minded the panel was. It's essential that this style is sweet, but balanced, vibrant and grapey. This wine ticks all those boxes. (\$22.00)

6.2% Crown Cap

Region: Hunter Valley, NSW

### Recommended

**NV Centennial Blanc de Blancs A**

zippy, lemony bubbly with a touch of toasted nuts autolysis. Good drinking. (\$35.00)

12.0% Diam cork

Region: Southern Highlands, NSW

**2010 Leura Park Grande Cuvée Pinot Chardonnay**

Pale salmon pink colour. The nose is attractively musky, and the palate is fresh, showing a little dosage sweetness. (\$30.00)

11.5% Cork

Region: Bellarine Peninsula, Vic

**2008 Silent Range Estate Sarah Kathleen Sparkling Shiraz**

This is a fresh, intense bubbly, but the sweetness and oak are a little overdone. However, this style will appeal to many. (\$30.00)

14.0% Crown Cap

Region: North-east Victoria

**NV Oxenberry Farm Farmgate Sparkling Red**

Quite simple, but fresh and fruity, showing a touch of oak. (\$9.00)

14.0% Cork

Region: McLaren Vale

## Fortified Wines

### Highly Recommended

**2009 919 Limited Release Vintage**

No doubt about it, Eric Semmler has a special touch with the 'vintage port' style. This one is fragrant, lifted by clean spirit, showing hints of licorice. The palate is at the drier end of the spectrum and is beautifully balanced. Cellar 10-20 years. (\$50.00)

19.0% Screwcap

Region: Riverland, Vic

**NV Burge Family Winemakers 'Wilsford' Founders Reserve 'Three Generations'**

Small maker Barossa fortifieds are some of the hidden treasures of Australian wine. This one shows rancio complexity and has been well freshened. It's just a touch too sweet in our view, but many would disagree (\$36.00/500 ml)

19.5% Cork

Region: Barossa Valley, SA

### Recommended

**NV Lillypilly Fiumara 7 Dominic Blend**

Quite raisiny, showing barrel-age complexity. Would be better with a freshen-up (\$24.00)

18.0% Screwcap

Region: Riverina, NSW

**NV Feathertop Tawny**

Quite complex and interesting, but needs freshening. (\$25.00/375ml)

13.5% Screwcap

Region: Alpine Valleys, Vic

## 2012 Riesling

### Outstanding

**2012 Grosset Springvale Watervale Riesling** This riesling is a long way out of the ordinary. It's packed with the true Clare lime juice aromatics and flavour supported by marvellous steely acidity. A wonderful riesling that begs for a few years' cellaring. (\$33.00)  
12.5% Screwcap

**2012 Grosset Polish Hill Clare Valley Riesling** A beautifully restrained and perfumed riesling with lime blossom aromas. The palate is long, intense and mouthwatering, with a great acid line. (\$43.00)  
12.5% Screwcap

### Highly Recommended

**2012 Grosset Alea Off-Dry Clare Valley Riesling** Shows restrained lime blossom aromatics that are ready to burst forth. Very Clare indeed, with great power of fruit, refreshing acidity, and just a slight sweetness. (\$30.00)  
11.8% Screwcap

### Recommended

**2012 O'Leary Walker Watervale Riesling** Shows a little bit of colour. It's very limey, but somewhat forward. Nevertheless, it's packed with flavour and has a good acid finish. (\$18.00)  
12.5% Screwcap

**2012 O'Leary Walker Polish Hill River Riesling** Quite perfumed, with rich varietal flavour and balancing acidity. It's showing the first signs of development. Short term. (\$20.00)  
12.5% Screwcap

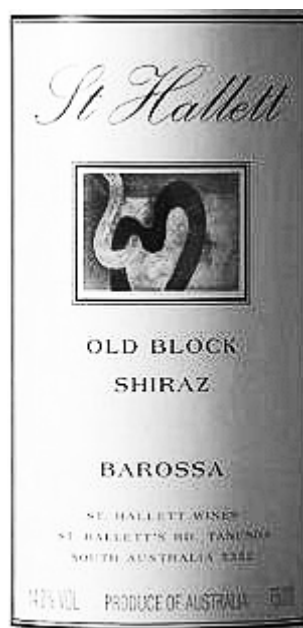
**2012 Tim Adams Clare Valley Riesling** This wine has attractive apple-lime characteristics, but doesn't quite hit the high notes of the top wines. (\$22.00)  
11.5% Screwcap

**2012 Wynns Coonawarra Estate Riesling** Slightly advanced, but has varietal character. This is a richly flavoured riesling that drinks well now. (\$17.00)  
12.0% Screwcap

This is just a small taste of a great riesling vintage. There will be a lot more about 2012 in our next issue.

## Recently Tasted - Shiraz

### Outstanding



**2009 St Hallett Old Block Barossa Shiraz** This is a wine that is everything an Australian warm-area shiraz should be. It's rich, intense and vibrant, with plenty of blackberry flavour. The fine tannins are impressive, as are the hint of spice and the very well handed oak. (\$100.00)  
14.4% Screwcap

### Highly Recommended

**2010 Wynns Coonawarra Estate Black Label Shiraz** This wine offers very rich, fresh blackberry with lashings of sweet oak. The length, savoury tannins, mulberry flavours and balance are impressive (\$30.00)  
13.5% Screwcap

**2010 Singlefile Frankland River Shiraz** The very intense blackberry/dark chocolate characteristics carry a whiff of black pepper. This wine has its share of oak but is very classy nonetheless. (\$37.00)  
14.5% Screwcap

**2010 Wynns V & A Lane Coonawarra Shiraz** A perfumed blackberry style which is very attractive. There are hints of licorice and the palate is long. The tannins are a bit firm at the moment. Keep. (\$45.00)  
13.5% Screwcap



**2010 St Hallett Blackwell Shiraz** A rich, full flavoured style that flaunts its Barossa heritage. The rich, dark berry fruit carries the slightly charry oak comfortably. Enjoyable now with appropriate food, but will age quite well. (\$40.00)

14.5% Screwcap

**2010 Singlefile Mount Barker Syrah** Licorice, dark berry and tilled earth aromas show out, and the palate is fresh, well balanced and medium-bodied. (\$37.00)

13.6% Screwcap

**2009 Kurtz Family Vineyards Boundary Row Barossa Valley Shiraz** Big ripe and blackberry-like with rich fruitcake overtones. There's a lot to this wine - including oak, but the powerful fruit copes well. (\$24.00) *Excellent Value*

14.8% Screwcap

### Recommended

**2010 Shingleback The Davey Estate McLaren Vale Shiraz** A substantial blackberry/chocolate shiraz, with sweet oak. Acidity pokes through on the finish. (\$22.95)

14.5% Screwcap

**2010 West Cape Howe Two Steps Shiraz** A plush mulberry style with a hint of spice. It's very fresh, to the point of being almost too young at the moment, showing its acidity on the finish. However, there's great fruit in this wine. Give it time. (\$26.50)

14.0% Screwcap

**2011 Wynns Conawarra Shiraz** The spicy red fruits nose is light but fresh, and the palate tends a little lean but expresses the variety well. Short term. (\$20.00)

13.5% Screwcap

**2010 Paxton McLaren Vale Shiraz** The big, blackberry, spicy nose is inviting, but the palate just lacks a little weight in the middle. (\$20.00)

14.0% Screwcap

**2010 Mitolo Jester McLaren Vale Shiraz** The colour is a little advanced. Although there's plenty of rich regional fruit, we think this wine is a short term proposition. (\$28.00)

15.2% Screwcap

**2010 Exemplar Heathcote Shiraz** A rich dark berry shiraz with menthol overtones. The palate is satisfying, but the tannins are robust. (\$65.00)

14.0% Screwcap

**2010 Exemplar McLaren Vale Shiraz** This wine certainly isn't short on substance. The "thick" fruit is matched with chewy tannins which demand cellaring. (\$65.00)

14.0% Screwcap

### Agreeable

**2010 Tulloch Private Bin Shiraz** Although the colour is comparatively advanced, this wine offers adequate red berry and tilled earth flavours on a medium-bodied palate. (\$50.00)

12.5% Screwcap

**2010 Dowie Doole Cali Road McLaren Vale Shiraz** Big and slightly over the top, with sweet oak making a strong statement. Lacks finesse. (\$28.00)

14.5% Cork

**2009 Koonara Ezra's Gift Coonawarra Shiraz** The colour is dull. There's reasonable varietal mulberry, spice and mint. Short term. (\$30.00)

13.5% Screwcap

**2009 Wynns Michael Coonawarra Shiraz** Big, rich, dense blackberry characteristics with a slight raisin overtone – quite oaky. (\$100.00)

14.0% Screwcap

### Acceptable

**2010 Vinaceous Snake Charmer McLaren Vale Shiraz** Forward colour. Ripe and fairly developed. (\$22.00)

14.5% Screwcap

Once again we have shiraz for all tastes. Don't let them pass you by.

## Recently Tasted - Cabernet Sauvignon Outstanding

**2010 Wynns Black Label Coonawarra Cabernet Sauvignon** The Wynns Black Label lineage, stretching back to the fifties, is one of Australia's most distinguished. What's more, the wines have never been better than they are right now. This one offers very intense cassis aromas and flavours with a cedary overtone. It's a varietal classic. (\$30.00) *Excellent Value*  
13.5% Screwcap

### Highly Recommended

**2009 Wynns Glengyle Coonawarra Cabernet Sauvignon** This is a very intense cellaring style crammed with blackcurrant flavour. The long palate is very fine and firm. (\$62.00)  
14.0% Screwcap

**2009 Wynns John Riddoch Coonawarra Cabernet Sauvignon** The blackcurrant fruit seems to be in layers in this very impressive wine. The tannins and oak input are matched well with the fruit, but don't drink this wine now. It's destined for greatness in the decades to come. (\$100.00)  
14.0% Screwcap

**2010 Pepper Tree Eldersee Road Wrattontully Cabernet Sauvignon** A fresh, intense cassis/leaf style which is linear, fine and dry. This is an excellent expression of the variety. (\$42.00)  
14.5% Screwcap

### Recommended

**2010 Pepper Tree Calcare Coonawarra Cabernet Sauvignon** A big, rich oaky red that tends a little past blackcurrant towards blackberry. This is a wine of substance. (\$42.00)  
14.3% Screwcap

**2009 Forester Estate Margaret River Cabernet Merlot** Shows blackcurrant but a little too leafy on the nose. There's just enough flavour. (\$32.30)  
13.0% Screwcap

## Agreeable

**2010 Koonara The Temptress Coonawarra Cabernet Sauvignon** The comparatively developed colour is a concern. A leafy edge is obvious, and there's barely enough fruit. Short term. (\$24.95)  
13.9% Screwcap

**2009 Koonara Ambriel's Gift Coonawarra Cabernet Sauvignon** Fairly developed colour. Adequate fruit with very obvious oak. (\$35.00)  
13.5% Screwcap

**2010 Cape Mentelle Margaret River Cabernet Sauvignon** Surprisingly developed colour. Too forward and firm. (\$89.00)  
13.5% Screwcap

## Acceptable

**2009 Koonara Angel's Peak Coonawarra Cabernet Sauvignon** Advanced, leafy and lean (\$19.95)  
14.7% Screwcap

**2010 Killerby Margaret River Cabernet Sauvignon** Poor colour. Forward, oaky and lean (\$20.00)  
14.0% Screwcap

## Winewise Half-Dozen

There's great value to be had in this issue's half-dozen. Six gold medal winners from the 2012 Winewise Small Vigneron Awards (including five trophy winners) make up the pack of six. Here they are.

**2010 Toppers Mountain Gewürztraminer**

**2011 Gilberts Mt Barker Riesling**

**2011 The Willows Barossa Valley Semillon**

**2010 Morgan Simpson Wines Plan B Mataro**

**2010 Silkwood Cabernet Merlot**

**2010 Sons of Eden Kennedy GSM**

**\$110.00 plus freight**

NSW/ACT \$11.00 per carton

VIC \$8.00

SA \$11.00  
 QLD to Mackay \$19.00  
 QLD north of Mackay \$22.00  
 NT \$30.00  
 WA \$27.00  
 TAS \$15.00

**To order, contact:**

**Phillips Cellars and Regional Wine  
 Centre, 119 Corio St, Shepparton  
 Vic 3630**

**Telephone: 03 5821 2051**

**Fax: 03 5831 5173**

**Payment by cheque or credit card**

My favourite way of consuming gin of the highest quality is to make a martini as follows:

Dribble a little Noilly Prat dry vermouth into a martini glass. Swirl it around and tip out any that doesn't cling to the sides. Put the glass into a freezer for a couple of minutes. Shake the gin with ice until it is very chilled. Pour the chilled gin into the chilled glass. Add a small twist of lime peel. Enjoy.

## FEVER-TREE

We'd heard a lot about Fever-Tree tonic water and soft drinks, but finding them at the retail point proved difficult. Deb Pearce and I were keen to feature them at the annual meeting of the Cowra Gin and Tonic Society (a gathering of gin-loving wine judges at the Cowra Wine Show), and the importers Rio Coffee, Adelaide came to the party.

First we tasted the tonic waters. The Fever-Tree Indian Tonic Water is delicate, pleasantly bitter and bone-dry, with a light, fine fizz. The Mediterranean Tonic Water is quite different, having lemonade-like aromatics, but similar bitterness and dryness. Both are very refreshing drinks on their own.

Then we tasted the gins. Winemakers David Morris and Tim Knappstein joined us in a spirited assessment of the spirituous beverages. There were too many to report in detail, but top vote went to the Fifty Pounds gin which also happened to be the most expensive.

Fifty Pounds is a genuine London Dry gin which is distilled four times to ensure neutrality and smoothness of spirit which emphasises the botanicals. They manifest themselves in aromas of juniper, very subtle coriander and beguiling florals. This is a "grand cru" gin. It is worth the \$90.00 per 700 ml bottle asking price.



Adding ordinary tonic water to Fifty Pounds gin is almost a shame. However the delicacy and total dryness of Fever-Tree Indian Tonic lifted the aromatics of the gin and combined beautifully with its flavour and ultra-smooth texture. The combination was a raging success.

Although the Mediterranean Tonic formed a good partnership with the Fifty Pounds, its aromatics tended to dominate those of the gin. More of that anon.

Other gins that we favoured were Beefeater Winter Edition (\$70.00/litre), Berry Brothers and Rudd No.3 (\$80.00/750 ml) and Lark Distillery Pepperberry Gin (\$47.00/500 ml).

The Beefeater Winter Edition is a very aromatic gin, showing botanicals of orange peel and juniper. It's perfectly suited to the Fever-Tree Mediterranean Tonic water because both have pronounced citrus characteristics. The Lark Pepperberry Gin also works better with the Mediterranean style. The Berry Brothers And Rudd, being the epitome of a London Dry, demands the Indian tonic water.

I know few winemakers who don't enjoy a G & T, and as far as Deb Pearce and I are concerned, a great deal of sophistication can be achieved by combining the right tonic water with the gin. Standard, commercial tonic waters, although they contain quinine bitters, range from slightly to obviously sweet, and high quality gin demands delicacy and dryness. That's where Fever-Tree comes in.

We also tried other Fever-Tree products. The Ginger Ale is so good that it makes Jack Daniels drinkable. The bone dry, genuinely gingery palate is also ideal for decent blended whisky, but, being a purist, I'd keep it away from the Glenfarclas.

As pure, refreshing soft drinks, we strongly recommend the Ginger Beer and the Lemonade. The former smells and tastes of freshly-squeezed ginger root, and is delightfully refreshing. The Lemonade is actually flavoured with lemons. Both finish dry and are comparatively low kilojoule drinks.

It's seldom we taste non-alcohol beverages, and are moved to write about them, but the Fever-Tree range is a notable exception.

#### **Fever-Tree Importers:**

##### **Rio Coffee Pty Ltd**

22 Nelson Street  
Stepney SA 5069  
Mobile: 0431 640 115  
Telephone: 08 8362 3376  
[www.riocoffee.com.au](http://www.riocoffee.com.au)

**Lester Jesberg**

**Note:** I often source hard-to-find gin from <http://www.nicks.com.au>. All four that we recommend are available from that site.

#### **Other Non-alcoholic drinks**

By coincidence, I recently tasted two sparkling grape juices made by Voyager Estate. Both are excellent and not too sweet or fizzy. The white seems to me to show some semillon herbal character, but the flavour is suitable grapey. The red, looking like a purple-tinted rosé, similarly, is sweet, but not over-sweet, with a gentle sparkle. Flavour-wise it tends to cherry, but was that a hint of cabernet leaf I detected? **LJ**

24 x 330 ml bottles for \$100.00  
<http://www.voyagerestate.com.au/>

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