

Wine Reviews

Geoff Merrill 2005 Shiraz Grenache Mourvedre

McLaren Vale is the region where Geoff Merrill has been entrenched for many years and this SGM is one of the important styles from there. This has the drinkability of the typical Rhone-like blend but it's not as voluptuous as similar blends from McLaren Vale. It is of medium weight and savoury with some tertiary dusty and leathery traits and is a 'drink soon' proposition with your favourite red meat dish. RRP \$18.99

Yealands 2008 Pinot Gris

Poached stone fruit and juicy apple are the features of this youngster from Marlborough NZ. Add to that a smidge of spicy oak ferment character and creamy layers of texture from lees contact and then some grape sugar to give balance and you have a refreshingly different young white amongst the avalanche of sav blanc from this region. Well worth a try. RRP \$23.99

Wirra Wirra 2009 Hiding Champion Sauvignon Blanc

Named after the Wirra Wirra founder Greg Trott who had a habit of disappearing or hiding, this young white is made from Adelaide Hills fruit and it hides none of the region's typical cool climate traits. Clear and brilliant in condition, the aroma bursts forth with tropical fruit and freshly mown grass and the palate is lively, zesty and stimulating. An exciting find by the panel. RRP\$21.99

Castle Rock Estate 2009 Sauvignon Blanc

We are very impressed by the wines from this small Porongurups (Great Southern) winery and this sav blanc is a pleasant relief from the many Kiwi savvys we've been tasting lately. It has tropical fruit aromas with a waft of lychee and a long palate with mineral crunchiness and clean crisp acidity. Fruit sweetness gives it balance. Try it as a palate awakener or refresher! RRP\$19.99

Deep Woods 2009 Ivory Semillon Sauvignon Blanc

Half of the Ivory and Ebony duo, this blend is an example of how this label has improved with the injection of new vigour and some money from the Fogarty wine stable. Long in the mouth with fresh garden herbs and a little passionfruit, this has a satisfying crisp citrus finish that is lively and invigorating. We would drink it now with a plate of sweet scallops or prawns. A ripper price. RRP \$14.99

Fermoy Estate 2009 Semillon Sauvignon Blanc

From the warmer climes of Yallingup in the Margaret River region, this blend shows the traits of the top end with a fuller rounder palate profile. Semillon is also playing a predominant role with lemongrass, citrus blossom and palate firmness and then sauvignon blanc puts its hand up with a herbal lift. Try it with a fillet of your favourite white fish.. RRP \$17.99

Forest Hill Vineyard 2008 Chardonnay

Expect to find some lemon and nectarine fruit in this with quality oak and a long persistent palate with creaminess, distinctive acidity and oak firmness. It's a little old fashioned in style, but we don't mind one little bit, as it has an intense purity of fruit that provides the strength for the other components. 2008 was a very good vintage in the Great Southern and this is a very good young chardonnay. RRP \$21.99

Heggies 2009 Riesling

This has the consistency we talk about, even though the growing conditions at the lofty height of this Eden Valley vineyard can be frustratingly difficult. Generous in tropical and citrus fruit flavours and quite weighty, this has good structure and length with pebble-stone minerality which will provide for long aging. Try with a bucket of freshly-cooked prawns. Wonderful! RRP \$20.99

Rocky Gully 2008 Riesling

Light straw and brilliantly clear this has an abundance of freshly-squeezed lime juice on nose and a super long light

palate of citrus flavours and cleansing acidity. Made by Frankland Estate in the Great Southern who have been driving the riesling train here for as long as most of us remember. A lovely young drink and extraordinary value. RRP \$16.99

Chapel Hill 2008 The Parson's Nose Shiraz

A parson's nose is a name given to a chicken's bum or to be more discreet, a chicken's tail and when it is roasted up to a crispy finish it can be quite delectable. This wine is not as crunchy but is still very enjoyable with a spicy earthy pepper nose and full-on palate with a concentration of Black Forest fruit, firm tannins and drying finish. Forget the roasted chicken, serve with a roast piece of beef instead. RRP \$16.99

Alkoomi 2007 Frankland River Shiraz Viognier

A bright red/mauve in colour, this red has a distinctive floral spiced nose with vanilla hints and a delightful medium-weighted palate of red berries, finely woven tannins and long length. It shows the quality of an excellent vintage in the Great Southern and the viognier plays an important but subservient role in the act. Scores very well now or will kick goals for another few years. RRP \$20.99

Paringa Estate 2008 Peninsula Pinot Noir

A light red colour introduces you to the wine and then you experience a sour cherry aroma with subtle dusty oak characters. The palate has finely textured fruit, is long in the mouth and a savoury spicy flavour persists through to a firm dry finish. Delightful with a rack of sucker lamb or a duck breast served with a red fruit sauce. RRP \$29.99

Care 2008 Syrah Tempranillo

From the Carinena region of Spain this is a thoroughly modern presentation of a young red that still has a nostalgic edge within the bottle. Past the stylish packaging, the wine shows the strength of syrah (shiraz) and the solid, yet silky tannins, of tempranillo. Ripe red fruit prevails on the palate, yet it tastes cool in the mouth and lingers to an appreciative finish. Good value import! RRP \$19.99

Parker Favourite Son 2005 Cabernet Merlot

We enjoyed this Wrattenbully / Coonawarra blended red for its regional minty nose combined with a palate of wild blackberry fruit, firm crunching tannins, medium weight, integrated oak and long dry finish. Serve with a classic piece of aged beef and fresh veg for optimum enjoyment. RRP \$24.99

Yalumba Menzies The Cigar 2006 Coonawarra Cabernet Sauvignon

No, this is not named after the Havana that many of you would enjoy with it, but the long narrow cigar-shaped strip of famous terra rossa soil that is Coonawarra in the south-east of SA. The red soil, limestone sub-soil and underground aquifer combine to give strength and structure to this classic red with lots of blackberry fruit, tannins, oak and acidity to boot. Will age for a decade, at least. RRP \$29.99

Elderton 2006 Barossa Shiraz

A typical Barossa style shiraz with a deep red colour and a nose of sweet buttery vanilla oak and ripe black fruits. The palate is generous with juicy plums and mulberry, mixed with some chocolate and spice. Not a blockbusting Barossa heavyweight but a solid wine nonetheless. Reserve for lamb shanks and a shiraz sauce reduction. RRP \$29.99

Cape Mentelle 2007 Trinders Cabernet Merlot

You'll soon be sick of us saying how good this red vintage was in WA, but here's another '07 gem. This has Margaret River regional character in spades with its damp forest-floor aromatics, wild berry fruits, fine oak balance and sandy tannins. Yet it's the structure and harmony in the wine that lifts it to another level. Drinks beautifully now and has the capacity to age gracefully. RRP \$32.99