

\$30 AND UNDER



2003 Wallington Cervantes Sparkling Pinot Noir, Canowindra, A\$30

Like many other producers in Canowindra and Cowra, owner Margaret Wallington is in the process of converting her 18-hectare vineyard to certified organic practice; the environmental focus also extends to the energy-efficient, straw-bale winery where this lovely sparkling red was made. The base wine is earthy, robust, warm-climate pinot noir that spent 18 months in barrel before secondary fermentation, and the final result is a beautifully savoury, spicy and sweet-composty purple fizz. MA



2007 Boireann Lurnea Merlot Cabernet, Granite Belt, A\$27

Boireann is Queensland's superstar winery: its tiny (1.5 ha.) vineyard shows better than any other the Granite Belt's potential. Peter and Therese Stark's policy of only producing estate wines was wiped out with the frost that destroyed the 2007 vintage. However, growers' fruit has produced impressive wines, especially the lushly textured Lurnea – a merlot (60 per cent) and cabernet (40 per cent) blend, which shows concentrated blackcurrant and dark plum flavours, soft and velvety texture with fine tannins. PF



2006 Crabtree Watervale Tempranillo, Clare Valley, A\$22

Crabtree is one of the Clare Valley's lesser-known wineries, yet Robert Crabtree has been making excellent rieslings and classic Clare reds for decades. Robert stepped aside recently but not before he introduced the Spanish red variety, tempranillo to the vineyard. The 2005 was good, the 2006 even better. Savoury smells of dark plum, licorice and a hint of sweet spice lead to a mid-weight yet intensely flavoured palate, its fruitiness tempered by a slash of bright acidity. PB



2006 Coombend Pinot Noir, Tasmania, A\$25

Coombend is a well-established vineyard in the East Coast region, which these days is part of the Tamar Ridge group. This is a bolder style of Tassie pinot, with real richness and depth. The aromas recall fully ripe, dark cherry with some earthy and spicy complexities. The palate has fruit sweetness and is smooth and stylish, with layers of flavour and soft tannins. The alcohol is a moderate 13.5 per cent. It's a fine pinot, emphasising ready drinkability but with enough stuffing to develop for two or three more years. HH



2008 Mt Difficulty Target Gully Riesling, Central Otago, A\$30/NZ\$25

This label has a short but distinguished history. Every vintage since 2003 has merited a score of 92 points or more. I buy at least one case a year. It's entirely depleted by the time the next vintage is released despite my resolve to learn about the wine's ageing potential. This vintage is one of the best. Medium riesling with delicately succulent flavours suggesting ripe gala apple, citrus and mineral/slate. Exquisite acidity and an ethereal texture. BC



2008 Pierro LTC Semillon Sauvignon Blanc, Margaret River, A\$28

Although he is recognised as a leader within Australian chardonnay circles, Mike Peterkin is also a pioneer of the semillon-sauvignon blanc blend in Margaret River. This is one of his finest efforts. Its fragrant, lightly herbal and dusty aromas of gooseberry, melon and citrus are deftly backed by suggestions of creamy oak. Long and vibrant, its juicy palate of pristine, crystalline melon and tropical flavour is tightly bound by bright, zippy acids, finishing with a lingering core of pure fruit. JO