

PHOTOGRAPHY GRANT HARVEY STYLING TAMARA BOON

HEAT TREATS

Our experts recommend wines for summer sipping: start the festive season with celebratory bubbly, cool down with a chilled white and add some colour with reds that can handle the heat.



TONI PATERSON MW Sparkling wine & semillon

TONI PATERSON is a trained winemaker, Master of Wine and author of the guide *Wine: What To Drink 2006*. She is passionate about complex, balanced wines.

"There has been a definite increase in the quality of Australian sparkling wine in recent years. The wines listed below are all value for money, as well as being wines of great character. Semillon is one of the great grape varieties grown in Australia. It has austerity and fruit purity in its youth, along with the potential to develop great complexity over time."

SPARKLING

SIR JAMES NV Cuvee Brut Pinot Noir Chardonnay, \$14

One of the best-value bubblys. At this price, the combination of balance and flavour is a rare thing and Sir James Cuvee Brut has plenty of both. Generous flavours range from honeysuckle to strawberries, with lemon freshness and a hint of toast. Great for large celebrations.

BROWN BROTHERS NV Pinot Noir Chardonnay Pinot Meunier, \$19

This widely available sparkling wine is excellent value and very well made, with gentle, balanced characters. A blend of the three classic Champagne varieties, it has an intense front palate, a rounded middle and excellent length. The flavours are complex with hints of ripe apple, fresh cream and yeast.

JANSZ NV Premium Rosé, \$25

Don't let the festive season fly by without a couple of glasses of this delicious drop. Sparkling rosé for grown-ups; its exquisite "stained" colour comes from the pinot noir component. The palate is rounded and creamy, with a flavour profile of toasted brioche and almond nougat. Serve straight from the ice bucket.

DOMINIQUE PORTET 2002 Tasmanian Cuvée, \$40

Cool Tasmania shows so much promise for the production of fine sparkling wine. No surprise then that this newly released cuvee, made in partnership with Dalrymple Vineyards, is so good. It's a true aperitif style with fresh lemon and green apple flavours and appealing savoury notes. The finish is crisp and snappy, adding to the classy nature of the wine.

YARRABANK 1998 Late Disgorged, \$45

Produced in partnership with the Champagne house Devaux, this wine is smart, stylish and savvy, with more complexity than just about any other Australian sparkling I have tried. It has spent eight years on yeast lees and thus is filled with bread and toast characters. Best of all, it is bone-dry, allowing for true expression of its subtleties without the complication of sweetness.

SEMILLON

TYRRELL'S 2006 Lost Block Semillon, \$17

This delivers exactly what's needed when the mercury is soaring. The nose is clean, pure and lemon-scented and the palate has excellent weight with honeysuckle flavours. Simplicity and freshness are

its charms. Serve well-chilled with fresh prawns, green salads or whole baked fish.

COCKFIGHTER'S GHOST 2005 Semillon, \$18

This is yet another example of the fine wine produced under this label. Although the wine exhibits all the freshness expected from Hunter Valley semillon, the palate has excellent weight and roundness, making it very easy to drink. It is savoury and textural and has nuances of fresh pineapple and spice. Perfect for alfresco dining.

POOLE'S ROCK 2003 Semillon, \$25

This Hunter Valley release gives us an insight into the delightful characters that form when semillon is aged. Alongside fresh lemon notes is a wonderful smoky complexity that infuses >

PRICES ARE APPROXIMATE AND MAY VARY

Georg Jensen leaf bowl, small \$50, large \$80, from Orrefors Kosta Boda; Ittala Aalto silver bowl, \$260, from Spence and Lyda; Forest candlesticks, \$419 for two, from Orson and Blake; Waterford Crystal Siren lead crystal flute, \$199 a pair



both the nose and palate. Tight, flinty and bone-dry, making it perfect with just about any food.

MOUNT HORROCKS 2005 Semillon, \$27

From the picturesque Clare Valley comes this most perfect wine from Mount Horrocks.

Made by dedicated owner/winemaker Stephanie Toole, this is a wine with strong regional expression, enviable complexity and balance. Subtle oak and fresh cream characters complement a palate laden with spicy pineapple flavours. It shines brightest partnered with

food, so serve with complex white meat and seafood dishes.

McWILLIAM'S 2000 Mount Pleasant Lovedale Semillon, \$49

This simply stunning wine from the old Lovedale vineyard is a classic example of aged Hunter

semillon. The palate is tight and mineral, with layer upon layer of flavour including nuts, toast, lime and hay. Serve with simple foods such as pan-fried white fish to allow the wine to truly shine. The 2001, out soon, is also divine, though slightly more youthful in nature.

and zesty, fresh lime. Balanced and approachable, some richer tropical fruits through the finish and rippling acidity that carries over flavour long and fine. Perfect with a fragrant thai salad.

CHARDONNAY

X&Y 2006 Chardonnay, \$17
Impressive, exuberant debut from value-priced Margaret River label. Nectarine, orange and apricot aromas. Captivating mix of richness and intensity shows in the juicy fruit flavour, with some fig and nutty complexity. A summer quaffer, or serve with grilled marron.

STARVEDOG LANE 2003 Chardonnay, \$23

Cool grapefruit citrus, lemon essence and skilled winemaking are the hallmarks of this complex Adelaide Hills wine. The palate has an edge of mineral cut and fresh fruit, with layers of texture and oak influence settled into tight formation. Try with pan-seared scallops, sage and rocket.

OAKRIDGE 2005 Chardonnay, \$24

Oakridge's wines have stepped up into the Yarra Valley's first division. This hits the mark with

direct stone-fruit aromas and just enough savoury spice and custard complexity. Smooth and even palate, delivering ripe peach and orange; savoury and crisp through the finish, bristling with youthful intensity. Try with roast pork belly salad.

BINDI 2005 Composition Chardonnay, \$45

From Victoria's Macedon Ranges, Bindi sits at the top of Australian chardonnay. Lemons, nectarines, pears and peaches are overlaid with carefully applied winemaking and spicy oak, all perfectly integrated.

The palate flows long and fine, bound by fresh quartz acidity; draws a balance between power and elegance. It caters to a broad range of cuisines.

CULLEN 2004 Chardonnay, \$59

Top-class chardonnay is on full show. An intense yet graceful wine with exotic complexity and savoury winemaking laid across piercing grapefruit aromas. The palate is cleverly sculpted around ripe stone-fruit, offering layer upon layer of flowing texture and sturdy, persistent flavour. Deserves a platter of roast spatchcock.



NICK SCOTT Riesling & chardonnay

NICK SCOTT is a wine writer who has recently finished editing an education guide for the industry body Wine Australia. He makes riesling and shiraz with his brother, Tim, under their label Twofold.

"Summer wines need to be refreshing and there's nothing better than a crisp glass of riesling, easily the freshest, best-value glass of wine going this summer. Australian chardonnay is in the midst of a quality renaissance, offering more style and value than ever before."

RIESLING

PAULETT 2006 Polish Hill River Riesling, \$18

This displays brazen, savoury-lime peel, some slate, with plenty of depth and character. Mouth-watering and fine palate, showing purity, lime zest and lightly spiced pepper through the cut-stone soil characters. Impressive intensity, strength and balance. A neat foil for salt and pepper calamari.

RAVENSWORTH 2006 Hilltops Riesling, \$18

Creates a fine, restrained, chalky impression with savoury aromas, gentle florals, lime blossom, spice and steely austerity. Lime and mandarin flavours sit amid bright, fine acidity with a cleverly crafted balance of elegance and intensity. Try with freshly shucked oysters.

ST HALLETT 2006 Eden Valley Riesling, \$19

Reliably excellent and widely available. Striking grapefruit citrus aromas; bright, deliciously expressive riesling fruit, finer flinty quartz mineral, florals



Riedel Vinum Chardonnay stemware, \$94 each; Georg Jensen leaf dish, \$50, from Orrefors Kosta Boda

and bath salts. Fresh, crisp and linear on the palate, mandarin and grapefruit flavours are bolstered by tingling acidity. Great with grilled whiting.

LEO BURING 2006 Mount Barker Riesling, \$28

The best of several 2006 Buring rieslings, sourced from

a well-established dry-grown WA vineyard. Shows terrific sweet spices and estery fragrant aromas with fine citrus oils bubbling through, creating a zesty, fragrant impression. Savoury palate with pure lime oils laid down as a base for other characters; dry and distinctive with a pristine,

chalky finish. Great with seared tuna steaks.

GROSSET 2006 Watervale Riesling, \$35

Elegant. Bright pure aromas of sweet lime blossom perfume and musk-scented florals. Fine and taut palate with gentle mineral cut, more musk flavour,



SALLY GUDGEON Sauvignon blanc & summer reds

SALLY GUDGEON has won the Mark Shield Wine Writing Award and contributed to *The Age's* Epicure section.

"Sauvignon blanc is aromatic, crisp, fresh and one of the most recognisable varieties. It's easy to drink, suits a range of different cuisines and there's no shortage of exciting styles out there. When it's very hot, don't be afraid to chill your reds before pouring them and experiment with the serving temperature. As a rough guide, the lighter styles can cope with a big chill, whereas heavier reds need just a light one."

SAUVIGNON BLANC

EVANS & TATE 2006 Gngagara Sauvignon Blanc, \$12

A zesty, tropical, highly aromatic style of sauvignon blanc that is a blend of fruit from WA. The nose is bursting with lychee and passionfruit notes, with underlying hints of herbs and grass. Refreshing on the palate, with its racy acidity and clean citrus flavours.

MONTANA 2006 Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc, \$17

New Zealand's Marlborough sauvignon blanc has taken the world by storm. Montana is one of the benchmark styles and fruit is sourced from different sites, giving this wine a complex aroma and flavour profile. Tropical notes of passionfruit and nectarine mingle with lemongrass and capsicum, >



Gordon Ramsey white wine glasses by Royal Doulton, \$70 a boxed pair; Georg Jensen Vertica tray, \$260 and Vertica bar set, \$295, from Orrefors Kosta Boda



Orson and Blake rattan placemat, \$35; Rosendahl stopper, \$45, and pourer, \$58, from Jarass; Riedel O series stemless glassware, \$21.50 each

crisp and vivacious in the mouth. Match with antipasto.

WIRRA WIRRA 2006 Adelaide Hills Sauvignon Blanc, \$24

Sav blanc is the most widely grown variety in the Adelaide Hills, producing some of our finest examples. This combines tropical characters of guava and pawpaw with aromas of green beans and tomato leaves. Rich, textured palate with vibrant acidity and mineral notes. Match with goat's cheese.

CHESTNUT HILL 2005 Sauvignon Blanc, \$25

The cool climate of Mount Burnett, Victoria, produces exemplary sav blanc in the mineral/herbal/citrus spectrum. The '05 has hints of dill and gooseberry on the nose, and the palate is full and creamy with lively acidity, crisp citrus flavours and impressive length

and structure. Serve with barbecued chicken.

DOMAINE HERVÉ SEGUIN 2005 Pouilly-Fumé, \$38

Some claim France's Loire Valley sets the pace for sauvignon worldwide. This is extremely stylish, flinty, bone-dry; restrained tropical fruit aromas mingle with gooseberry and nettle. In the mouth, it's length and structure that impress. It's taut, mineral and delicious. Match with smoked trout.

SUMMER REDS

DE BORTOLI 2006 Windy Peak Pinot Noir, \$14

Made by Bill Downie, this pinot has vibrant fruit, and complexity from smart winemaking techniques: 100 per cent fermentation with wild yeast, cold maceration and a small whole-bunch component. A lighter style, with lively

summer berry fruit aromas and flavours but lots of texture. Serve with char-grilled tuna.

CASELLA 2005 Yendah Sangiovese, \$16

Italy's most-planted variety can produce savoury, supple, food-friendly wines. This easy-drinking Clare Valley wine has classic sangiovese aromas of cherry and spice, as well as characters of dark chocolate and plum jam. Pleasantly rustic and earthy palate. Try it with tomato and basil pasta.

PONDALOWIE 2005 MT Unwooded Tempranillo, \$25

Plantings of the Spanish grape tempranillo are growing rapidly in Australia. Ponderow, near Bendigo, makes some of the most exciting versions. The MT has fragrant dark berry fruit and a supple and juicy palate. Serve slightly chilled with tapas.

LETHBRIDGE 2004 Indra Shiraz, \$38

The owners of Lethbridge, Geelong, run their vineyards on biodynamic principles, and the quality of the fruit shines through in their wines. Their flagship shiraz ripples with dense, complex aromas of blood plums, black pepper and cinnamon. In the mouth it's rich, concentrated and multi-layered, with impressive length.

HENSCHKE 2001 Lenswood Abbotts Prayer Merlot, \$70

There's small proportions of cabernet sauvignon and cab franc in this blend from Henschke's high-altitude Adelaide Hills vineyards. One of this wine's outstanding features is its evocative fragrance of violets and summer forests. A wine of enormous finesse, with layer of flavours and fine tannins. Match with eye fillet. ➤

SUMMER SIPPING WINE



Cylinda tray by Stelton, Jarass, \$235



PETER FORRESTAL *Semillon sauvignon blanc, other whites & rosés*

PETER FORRESTAL is the author of *Quaff*, columnist for Perth's *Sunday Times* and contributes to many wine publications. He is founding editor of *Australian Gourmet Traveller WINE*.

"The best of semillon sauvignon blanc show a brightness, vibrant and intense summery fruit flavours that are unique to Australia. There's a distinct modernity, perhaps even a fashion statement in delights such as the other white varieties and rosés. They are among the trendiest wines that you'll find anywhere in the country."

HOUGHTON 2006 Sauvignon Blanc Semillon, \$11

For the past five years, this has been Australia's best value-for-money white. Fragrant green bean aromas, intense grassy pea flavours balanced by some tropical fruit characters. Vibrant yet soft and appealing, and finishes with passionfruit notes.

SCARPANTONI 2006 Ceres Rosé, \$14

This pink has been consistently good for the last four vintages. Made from gamay, it's fragrant, shows intense strawberry and raspberry flavours with a hint of rose petal, and is silky smooth. Sweetness is balanced by refreshing acidity. Try it with a warm salmon salad.

CORIOLE NEBBIOLO 2006 Rosé, \$16

The quick, gentle crush of the grapes means that nebbiolo's pronounced tannins are not a

feature of this wine; its primary fruit characters reveal enticing floral aromas, wild strawberry, raspberry and peach flavours. Silky smooth texture, excellent balance, then a pleasing dry finish. Ideal with veal carpaccio.

JANE MOSS 2006 Semillon Sauvignon Blanc, \$22

This is an exquisite example of the blend from Margaret River – wonderfully fragrant, bursting with direct and pristine pea and green bean flavours. Gooseberry and lychees notes dance on the edge. Limited availability. Fine with a delicate chicken salad.

JIM BARRY 2006 Silly Mid On Sauvignon Blanc Semillon, \$20

Brilliant packaging from the cricket-mad Barry boys. A pleasantly smart white; clean, fresh and intense with ripe tropical fruit flavours and some passionfruit that lingers. A wine to sip while watching the Ashes.

STARVEDOG LANE 2005 Pinot Grigio, \$20.50

Fresh, clean and lively, gently fragrant with cool stone-fruit following through to the palate. A vibrancy, almost crunchiness, lifts the wine before it finishes with lingering dry acidity. Try with pasta and a creamy sauce.

MURRAY DARLING COLLECTION 2005 Murray Cod Vermentino, \$22

An excellent example of the dry white that excels in warm Sardinia; savoury, mineral with lemon zest and refreshing, cleansing acidity. Try with roast chicken and a green salad.

CAPE MENTELLE 2006 Sauvignon Blanc Semillon, \$25

My favourite expression of the blend. Bright green pea and fresh garden herb flavours with hints of gooseberries and lychees. Piercing purity of fruit, cool mineral edge, a hint of

complexity, and refreshing, zesty acidity that cleanses. Deserves a plump WA marron.

GROSSET 2006 Semillon Sauvignon Blanc, \$30

A marvellous blend of Adelaide Hills sav and Clare Valley sem: the former's vibrancy and fruit intensity balances the latter's weight. Intense, cool, nectarine, white peach and lychee. Tight, fine, vibrant, finishes with taut, racy acidity. Perfect with confit of ocean trout.

MILLBROOK 2005 Estate Viognier, \$31.50

Millbrook specialises in viognier and makes three very good examples. Most impressive is the Estate: delicate, fresh and lively with apricot kernel flavours, impressive depth and weight, lingering viscosity and a long, gentle finish. Try with poached fillet of white fish and a delicately spicy sauce. 🌐

Dish upon a star

Top chefs cook up a generous helping for the Starlight Children's Foundation.

WORDS NEIL PERRY

CHRISTMAS IS A TIME for giving, but it is also a time of reflection and kindness. So as I reflect on the year, I can honestly say I'm proud to have been able to work with a group of exceptional people to raise money for the Starlight Children's Foundation.

In September we held the second Ultimate Dinner at Rockpool in Sydney to help keep the Captain Starlight Lounge open for another year in both the Westmead and Randwick Children's Hospitals.

The chefs involved were fantastic. It may have taken a lot of phone calls and emails to organise the dinner, but it took just one call to get them to excitedly commit to the project. Heston Blumenthal from the Fat Duck (UK) and Thomas Keller from The French Laundry (US) – two of the greatest chefs on the planet – joined a handful of our own stellar cooks in Tetsuya, Guillaume Brahimi and Catherine Adams, plus of course me, to cook this brilliant meal. (Tets is so famous here and around the world that he is simply known by one name – the Bono or Elle of the cooking world.) I must also thank the 100 wonderful guests who paid \$2000 each to be there.

We had amazing help from Qantas, which flew the superstar chefs here; the Park Hyatt, which showed them what a great city Sydney is to stay in; Vittoria Coffee, which funded all the produce that couldn't be donated; Australia's and the world's best winemakers; and produce suppliers and growers from around the country.

Thomas, Heston and I cooked and spent time together. It was absolutely one of the greatest weeks of my cooking life. All of the chefs involved were generous to a fault and nothing was too much trouble. Heston and Thomas shared lots of great ideas and techniques with my team and inspired them to greater heights.

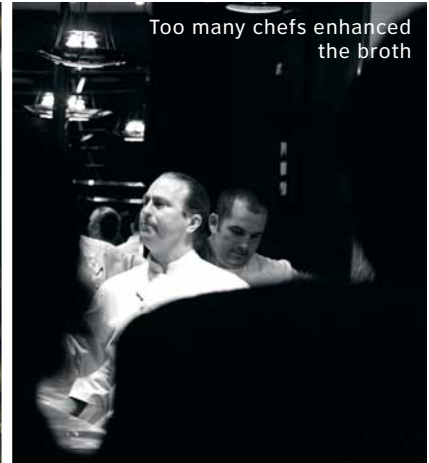
The guests were treated to real Michelin three-star food. It was a level of cooking that we cannot afford to do every day here in Australia. We could never charge what this type of cooking is worth; it would be hard to stay in business.

The menu involved truffles and caviar and great intensity of effort and flavour. Heston used 180 whole quails minced to

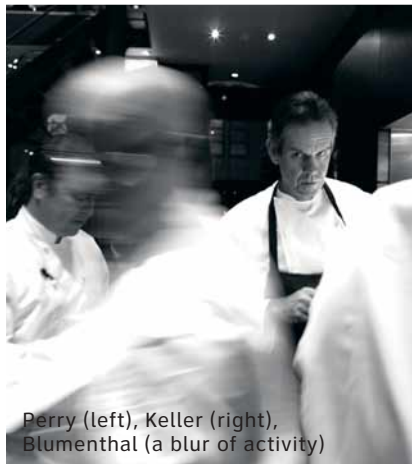
make a stock and then made that into a jelly. And that was only one-tenth of the ingredients in that dish! It was amazing to watch it come together. Thomas used equal intensity in his lobster dish.

It was a fantastic experience for all involved. Bring it on next year, so once again we can make the lives of brave children and their families a bit brighter at Christmas. 🌐

📍 Sydney chef and restaurateur Neil Perry designs Qantas Business and First Class menus. For recipes and cooking tips visit www.neilperrychef.com – for Ultimate Dinner menu details see the website's news/events section.



Too many chefs enhanced the broth



Perry (left), Keller (right), Blumenthal (a blur of activity)

