

TONY LOVE



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WINE

Best of chardonnay set

From classy bargains to the most majestic white variety of all, Australian chardonnay is looking and tasting better than ever

ANNIE'S LANE HARVEST COTTAGE 2015/Chardonnay

Region: Adelaide zone
Value: Crazy
Best with: Fettuccine carbonara



\$15

★★★★★

Firstly, a quick deciphering of the Adelaide zone, which covers Annie's Lane home ground of Clare and south to the Barossa, Eden Valley, Adelaide Plains, Hills, and the greater Fleurieu region. From such huge Treasury Wine Estate resources there's some decent chardonnay pedigree in this cheapie, a richer style with buttery peach fruit notes, some oak maturation yet with balance, precision and a refreshing bottom of the glass zing.

BLACKBILLY 2014/Chardonnay

Region: Adelaide zone
Value: Very good
Best with: Coorong mullet, caper sauce



\$23

★★★★★

Another with Adelaide zone denomination, here from a southern maritime-influenced vineyard that has been enhanced by pretty smart winemaking techniques to develop depth and density over time. The influence of barrel fermentation brings subtle oak senses and a more textured, creamy feel to otherwise ripe stone fruit flavours, grapefruit zest and citrus pith in the finish. A step up on others at this price range.

BALNAVES 2013/Chardonnay

Region: Coonawarra
Value: Solid
Best with: Pork chops, creamy mushrooms



\$32

★★★★★

Recently awarded the best chardonnay trophy at the Limestone Coast Wine Show, this wine shows great command of the vineyard-winemaking relationship, where the ripeness of the fruit engenders freshness and energy yet still rises to be full of flavour and delicate savoury oak notes, while the pith and mineral feel developed by all the current leading edge techniques has resulted in a wine of great poise and pleasure. One of the Coonawarra's white-hot secrets.

VASSE FELIX 2015/Chardonnay

Region: Margaret River
Value: Good
Best with: Crab pasta



\$37

★★★★★

One of the West's top set of chardonnays, this is the core, middle range flanked by the Filius at \$28 and the famed Heytesbury at \$80. There's a good deal more intensity and drive in the palate here than the Filius, and the purity of the fruit spectrum is mesmerising, aided by a suggestion of lime juice that adds extra energy to the palate while revealing subtle background oak. A mighty fine chardonnay fan's chardonnay.

STARGAZER 2015/Chardonnay

Region: Southern Tasmania
Value: Top shelf
Best with: Pan fried whiting



\$45

★★★★★

Samantha Connew's Tasmanian collection gets better and better every vintage, this single vineyard, Coal River Valley chardonnay a highlight of the season. Defining the modern era of winemaking in this variety, wild ferment, judicious barrel use, and fabulous mouth-refreshing acidity drive the wine while all the wonderful fruit flavours of white peach and nectarine with grapefruit juice tang are exemplary.

TAPANAPPA TIERS 1.5M 2015/Chardonnay

Region: Adelaide Hills
Value: Specialised
Best with: Best camembert



\$55

★★★★★

Hills pioneer Brian Croser has returned to his original winery in Piccadilly, a stone's throw literally from his revered Tiers Vineyard. Of three fine chardonnay iterations, ranging from \$39 to \$79, this comes from a small close-spaced section, clonally selected — we're getting into deeply serious wine craft here — where the result is distinctively different, the flavours concentrated, the acidity tight, and the mouthfeel superfine. Oh, and mighty tasty to boot.

DRINKS WITH MIKE GRIBBLE



A festival of froth marks spring in the city

Puzzled by beers in plethora? Churlish over having to choose a Champagne? Saturday's annual Beer&Bubbles in Vardon Ave, city — built from scratch by East End Cellars' Michael and Margie Andrewartha, below — might ease conniptions and give clarity to confusion.

It's a microcosm of where good beer and bubbles is at in South Australia.

Makers big and small — from Coopers to Mismatch Brewing, and Pol Roger to Simon Greenleaf — will pour to dispel myths and win fans.

Last year's noon-5pm event conjured a convivial hubbub.

This year word has spread.

"We are seeing a lot more beer and cider producers wanting to showcase their handcrafted beverages, and this is the perfect way to

reach an educated, interesting section of the market," Michael Andrewartha says.

Brewers joining the throng this year are SA's Big Shed Brewing Concern, Clare Valley Brewing Co, Pikes, of Clare, and Melbourne's West City Brewing and WA's Colonial Brewing and Phoenix Beers.

They'll join Pirate Life, Hills Cider, Mismatch Brewing, Prancing Pony, Young Henrys, Stone & Wood, Four Pines, Moritz, Hawkers, Vale Brewing and super-cool Lobo Cider.

But if beer and cider are but a sideline to your tastes, get among great SA wines by the likes of McLaren Vale's Alpha Box & Dice or food by Nola, Mother Vine, Soi 38, Iberia and Tasting Room.

Or check out the

Champagne art of disgorging as Simon Greenleaf, from the Adelaide Hills, freezes and pops yeast plugs in the Methode Traditionale style. You beauty!



TICKETS ARE \$35 + BOOKING FEE, EVENTBRITE.COM.AU, EASTENDCELLARS.COM.AU



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