

The Key Review of Wine

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Honest assessment of all wines



A Key Report Publication issue 32

Several complementary comments about the last KROW and I thank those that sent them. However I would like some views on wine, the wine industry, wine retail and wine writers. How good is Dan Murphy's or First Choice in Australia, what makes your independent wine merchant worth your loyalty. Has Oddbins in the UK returned to former glory? Indeed are the glory days of Oddbins really days of the past and new approaches are necessary?

When I entered the English wine trade in the early 1970s it was with a company that had been around since 1830. It was staffed with male public school nit-wits balanced in their wine bars by working class London girls. In one sense times have changed for the better but in another the supermarket dominance of wine retail has led to the common dominator becoming „common.“ That is offering very drinkable wine at the best possible prices, and who can argue with that?

One likes to think there is a middle road but wine still encourages pomposity in those that know something about it and the pomposity increases in relation to the lack of knowledge possessed (a little can go a long way).

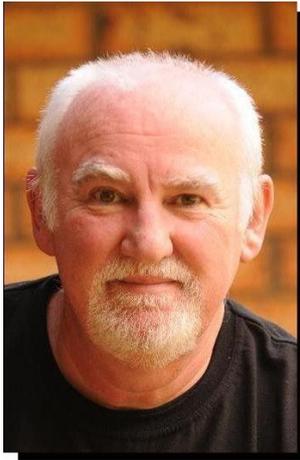
I'm coming to a stage of life where I can almost say I have forgotten more than I know about wine. I live amongst a library of well over 1000 books on wine going back to the 18th century and continue to read daily on the subject. I have to say I find wine writing becoming duller Australia is dominated with wine guides and wineries are absolute bum kissers when it comes to being voted best this or that.

However let's not put all the blame on the writers as wine books do not sell in the volume that makes them attractive to publishers. Which brings us to blogs; many good ones but more bad I would like some opinion on wine writers, books and blogs.

My New Year pledge is to get more Key Reviews of Wine out this year and I hope make it more interesting and you can help with that.

Until next time drink well

Tony



How I mark

Marking wines can be an emotive issue and there is no enforceable rule on what scale should be used. I use the 100 scale for quality rating devised by American critic Robert Parker. The Australian show system uses marks out of 20; several writers use stars or symbols, many out of five. I consider a wine of average quality to be 85 and, believe me, there is nothing wrong with a wine earning 85 points.

In truth, the value of a wine is directly related to the wealth of the drinker. Those with untold millions in the bank may think nothing of drinking bottles worth hundreds of dollars/pounds/Euros, while those with an overdraft and more pressing financial matters might find spending over \$10, £5 or €10 an unjustifiable expense.

With regard to value for money, wine can be divided into two sections: those up to 100 dollars/pounds/Euros and those over. Once a wine is over this amount, then scarcity, fashion or plain pomposity is what you're paying for.

Up to that amount there really is a quality-to-value ratio. The hard part is expressing the value. I've experimented with charts and held long debates about a critic's role in pricing. Many reviewers make no comment; others use symbols. The most honest system I can think of is plain opinion (mine). When I look at the price of a wine, it's the one the winery has sent me. Often they can be found cheaper on special. I judge value for money by comparing wines in the same peer group. When I say "works better with food" it's because I have tasted it on the bench and then with food, as certain wines often taste better in this context.

The Meaning of Top Key

When a wine hits the right spot words don't always come to mind it's just an inner feeling.

Those that affect me in that way have the words **TOP KEY** accompanying them. Note they are not always the ones with the highest scores it's a personal preference.

Sensual Hunter Valley Semillon.....

Brokenwood 'ILR Reserve' Hunter Valley Semillon 2005: lemon still dominates the nose but a toast character is starting to develop (marvellous) Its really hard to think of it as five years old as it tastes so very young however like the nose there are elements of depth and deeper beauty starting to emerge. 94 now but I feel 2/3 more to come and worth its \$45
www.brokenwood.com.au

*******TOP KEY*******

Margan 'Aged Release' Hunter Valley Semillon 2005: Soft and seductive on one level, hints of lemon on another and the whole held together with a rod of fine steel, fantastic wine 97 points and cheap at \$35 www.margan.com.au

Thomas 'Braemore' Hunter Valley Semillon 2005: A beautiful gold green colour, classic slightly toasted Hunter Semillon nose, finely tuned length and balance and a dream finish, as with the Margan above its outstanding 96 points and the price is right \$45
www.thomaswines.com.au

Mount Eyre 'Three Pounds' Hunter Valley Semillon 2009: A great Semillon in the making but not drinking too badly at the moment 91 points but several more to come as it ages and outstanding value at \$20 www.mounteyre.com

Tower Estate Hunter Valley Semillon 2010: It's a story I have told many times before Hunter Semillon needs some age to show its beauty. This wine is also \$22 the same price as the McWilliams If the two were on the same shelf I know which one I would pick. The wine is well made and will grow its 89 now with several more points to come. www.towerestatewines.com.au

Scarborough Hunter Valley Semillon 2010: Another young pup, great wine but needs time to settle interestingly it has the most gorgeous slightly lemon nose showing at the moment 89 points with more to come. Another wine at \$22 its beginning to look like an agreed Hunter price; but worth it www.scarboroughwine.com.au

Scarborough 'White Label' Hunter Valley Semillon 2010: The more defined sister of the wine above and almost the same applies in fact its harsher at the moment yet will gain great beauty as it ages 89 now and plenty more properly pushing it to 95 in three/five years; to wait its worth its \$35 to drink tonight its not www.scarboroughwine.com.au

Tulloch Hunter Valley Semillon 2010: It's good but pushing the boundary releasing it so young 88 now with a couple more waiting to come on board as it gains some bottle age even drinking now its worth the \$16 asked www.tulloch.com.au

Thomas 'Braemore' Hunter Valley Semillon 2010: Braemore is an individual vineyard and even at this young age one can see the beauty of the wine however it's only fleeting as the high acid bite soon strips the pleasure away; the only reason to buy this wine is because its only \$27 (properly cheaper by the case) and put it away until 2015. 89 points now with a stack more to come as it ages www.thomaswines.com.au

Margan 'Frizzante' Hunter Semi Sparkling Semillon 2010: Lovely fresh spring flower nose, I often criticise the makers of Hunter Semillon for releasing it to young; now it looks as if Andrew Margan has given them an option this really works fantastic wine 91 points and worth its \$17 www.margan.com.au

Hunter Valley Semillon summary: *As can be seen by reading the reviews Hunter Valley Semillon with five years age is in my opinion one of the worlds greatest wines. It's certainly a vinous experience not to be missed. As for the price they are ridiculously cheap. If you only make one effort wine wise in 2011 then learn more about Hunter Semillon. The drawback as you will also have noted is they are often aggressive and unapproachable when young. Wonderful value if one has a cellar and can put them away but so often disappointing and a turnoff for those that buy them for more immediate drinking. It's a conundrum and one the Valley's makers are well aware of and trying to address. As for consumers the opportunity is still there to buy great wine at very low prices take advantage of it or loose out.*

A semillon trio.....

Peter Lehmann Barossa Semillon 2008: Slight lemon scented nose, plenty of citrus flavour on the palate no great depth but zippy enough 88 and good value at \$12 www.peterlehmann.com.au

Miles From Nowhere 'Limited Lot' Margaret River Semillon 2010: Despite its glorious tasting notes its undeveloped in all departments however there is promise there 88 now with a couple more to come not outrageous at \$23 but considering the competition it becomes expensive www.milesfromnowhere.com.au

Fermoy Estate Margaret River Semillon 2009: Quite a surprise this wine as MR is not

noted as a semillon region when its presented as a straight varietal but this had a wonderful depth of flavour combined with good length; 93 points and worth the \$25 asked
www.fermoy.com.au

Summary: *The Peter Lehman was a glass of wine easy to drink and soon forgotten; in the west the Semillon Sauvignon mix is often the star therefore to find the Fermoy such a good wine was a delight*

The rise of Verdelho

Sirromet 'Above 820' Granite Belt Verdelho 2009: Peachy nose broad in flavour to start but becomes more defined as it travels it hits many pleasant spots on its journey but misses striking the „wow“ bell however it is different and out of the mainstream 89 points and worth its \$17 www.sirromet.com

Tulloch Hunter Valley Verdelho 2010: A zippy wine that needs more bottle age 87 maybe more when it has some age. As to price \$16 will be fine in time but at the moment I would be disappointed if I paid that for today's drinking. www.tulloch.com.au

Tulloch Vineyard Selection' Hunter Valley Verdelho 2010: One shouldn't start with the price but the first question is will this „selection“ wine be \$4 better then the other? Certainly a couple of bucks worth on the nose however on the palate it really depends on ones point of view. Yes it is a better wine so it is worth the money but it needs at least a year to come around so if drinking tonight the answer is no but tucked away then yes. Now I'm confused but hope you get the drift 90 points more to come not bad value at \$20 for the cellar
www.tulloch.com.au

Moondah Brook Western Australia Verdelho 2009: Light top notes well supported with acid not much happening at the moment but it has the backbone to age and develop. A clean interesting white wine now 89 but more to come and value at \$18
www.moondahbrook.com.au

Angove 'Long Row' South Australia Verdelho 2010: Broad flavlours with little definition, I remain unimpressed 83 points and there are a lot of cleanskins under the \$10 asking price
www.angove.com.au

Verdelho summary: *looking back over the notes I feel I may have been harsh when tasting; overall the grape is doing better; that may be due to vineyards ageing or winemakers taking more care; it's a strange grape it holds promise but so often fails to hit the high notes*

The darling of the age; Sauvignon Blanc.....

Second Nature Adelaide Hills Sauvignon Blanc 2010: Certainly Sav-Blanc but less aggressive then many reasonable length and some depth an enjoyable drink 90 points and OK value at \$19 www.dowiedoole.com.au

Nepenthe Adelaide Hills Sauvignon Blanc 2010: A very smart wine with good character but not the over bearing sort that Sauvignon so often exhibits, 91 points and good price at \$19 www.nepenthe.com.au

The Black Chook Adelaide Hills Sauvignon Blanc 2010: Much the same (just a touch softer) then the Nepenthe which must mean they are showing regional character same mark 91 but its better value at \$17 www.woopwoop.com.au

Tower Estate 'Carey Gully Vineyard' Adelaide Hills Sauvignon Blanc 2010: A soft approach via the nose which becomes more defined on the palate no great highs but no big depths very sound „Hills“ Sauvignon Blanc 89 points price is about right for its breed but I would spend \$22 elsewhere. www.towerestatewines.com.au

Wicks Estate Adelaide Hills Sauvignon Blanc 2010: I certainly can't knock it well made

and does all that it should do 90 points and the right price at \$18 www.wicksestate.com.au

One Planet Adelaide Hills Sauvignon Blanc 2009: The gimmick is it comes in a Tetra Prisma Pak (like orange juice or milk) the one planet angle being it helps reduce carbon footprint; Not dismissing the good intentions but pushing them to one side and getting to the wine it's a fairly OK savvy 86 points and \$15 isn't a great deal to give to save the planet if saving the planet is what one wants to do www.oneplanetwine.com

Chain of Ponds 'Black Thursday' Adelaide Hills Sauvignon Blanc 2009: A very good non aggressive Sauvignon nose skips across the palate in a lively fashion with a very pleasing finish; smart wine. 91 points and very good value at \$18 www.chainofponds.com.au

Rymill 'The Yearling' Coonawarra Sauvignon Blanc 2010: A very refreshing glass of wine I think better drinking in the Australian summer 88 points and just worth its \$15 but its in tough competition. www.rymill.com.au

Angove 'Nine Vines' South Australian Sauvignon Blanc 2010: A white wine agreeable enough to drink 85 points but there is so much competition out there at \$15 its not good value www.angove.com.au

Angove 'Long Row' South Australia Sauvignon Blanc 2010: Defined nose and crisp enough on the palate no great length or depth 85 and OK price at \$10 or below www.angove.com.au

Evans & Tate 'Gnangara' Western Australia Sauvignon Blanc: Savvy nose but not aggressive; on the full side for Sauvignon but none the worse for that, tons of fruit a very easy going wine that just has enough edge to provide interest 89 points and very worth its \$14 www.mcwilliams.com.au

Evans & Tate Margaret River Sauvignon Blanc 2009: All it should be and a bit more than that, If not my preferred style of drink I have to admire this for its quality 91 points and worth \$23 although I think it might be coming hard to get over \$20 for SB www.mcwilliams.com.au

*******TOP KEY*******

Mitchell Harris Pyrenees Sauvignon Blanc 'Fume' 2009: Yet another cracking wine from this grape made in this region not everyone will like the oak influence but it suited me as it was within bounds. 92 points and I think worth the money \$20 www.mitchellharris.com.au

Mount Avoca Pyrenees Fume Blanc 2010: Sauvignon Blanc with some oak is the simple formula for Fume Blanc but let's not think this a simple wine its flavours are subtle and weave in and around each other as it travels across the palate needs more bottle age say just into 2011 but good wine 91 points and worth its \$22 www.mountavoca.com

Mount Avoca Pyrenees Sauvignon Blanc 2010: Its simple enough on one level but I found a lot going on underneath the trouble being it was hard to pin any one aspect down part was textual and part was developing flavours as it travelled; what the heck I liked it 91 points and very good value at \$18 www.mountavoca.com

Fratelli Yarra Valley Sauvignon Blanc 2010: It's a SB plain and simple 88 points not over priced at \$20 for a Yarra Valley wine but there are a lot of wines from elsewhere at this price and \$5 cheaper that beat it for value. www.fratelliwines.com.au

*******TOP KEY*******

Angullong Orange Region Sauvignon Blanc 2010: A good non-offensive Sauvignon nose; I found hints of apple/pear flavours a clean crisp edge and plenty of length very enjoyable 93 points and very much worth \$17 www.angullong.com.au

Sauvignon Blanc summary: Seven wines from the Adelaide Hills five of them 90 or above. It's not a bad strike rate and the hills are recognised as one of the places best suited to the

variety. However it's the Pyrenees in Victoria that produces a style that that rings my bell all wines 91 or over. All the above wines are Australian and up against the flood of New Zealand imports. What may be a bigger danger to Australian wines is the ever lowering price of NZ wine due to over production. The danger for New Zealand is the dumping of inferior wines to clear stock. Its looking as if in 2011 it will be difficult to sell a Sauvignon Blanc over \$20 and the good wines will be eclipsed by the mediocre; I'm off to find a good Chardonnay.

The odd couple

Dowie Doole McLaren Vale Chenin Blanc 2010: Very clean very crisp and flavours bubbling along under a harsh coat of youth a good wine let loose far too soon. 87 now more to come if buying tonight for drinking tonight I would be disappointed at parting with \$18 but if putting away for a year properly not. www.dowiedoole.com

Crittenden Estate 'Los Hermanos' Tributo a Galicia 2009: it is Australian, the grape variety is Savagnin and the region is King Valley in Victoria. It's a grape variety that can go great guns in Australia this example is more austere than many others I have tried but that is no bad thing it is a very European taste I wonder if it will appeal to all, however it appealed to me 91 points pushing price barriers at \$30 www.crittendenwines.com.au

Just Cabernet.....I think

At the recent 2010 Wrest Point Royal Hobart International Wine Show, **Moondah Brook West Australian Cabernet Sauvignon 2008** won three trophies: Best Cabernet Sauvignon; Best Red Wine; and the Chairman's Trophy for Best Wine in Show. A report in the local paper (The Mercury) quoted Chief Judge John Ellis as saying the stand-out variety this year was cabernet sauvignon.

Having tried the wine I was amazed and then ashamed because I had missed all the glory of it. I asked Constellation Brands Australia if I could have a bottle to re-try and they kindly complied.

It's a nice wine, even a good wine, but certainly not (in my opinion) a three trophy wine. If this was the best Cabernet Sauvignon in that show, it must have been sitting among some dreadful entries. www.moondahbrook.com.au

Angove 'Long Row' South Australian Cabernet Sauvignon 2008: Maybe age is befuddling the brain but I think I have been tasting Angove Long Row cab for over 20 years; as far as I can recall its always been of an acceptable standard and often above that. This 08 vintage is no different it looks good in the glass smells good on the nose and tastes fine in the mouth; it is a standard all producers should aim to achieve as their opening offer, it's a \$10 wine that satisfies not only the taste buds but the pocket as well 90 points and very worth its price which is often below \$10 www.angove.com.au

Brands Laira 'The Patron' Coonawarra Cabernet Sauvignon 2006: Beautiful nose clean and pure cab hint of blackcurrant hint of cigar box very tight in the moth but showing classic Cabernet character be it Bordeaux or Coonawarra outstanding wine not yet at its peak worth its \$75. 94 points now with I think up to three more points to come as it ages. www.mcwilliams.com.au

Brands Laira 'Blockers' Coonawarra Cabernet Sauvignon 2007: Powerful on the nose and sharp on the first sip settled some as it travelled but still a wine that makes a statement; I remain unsure on how this will develop 90 points and hard to gauge the price as there are several Coonawarra Cabernets around \$27 that will give it a challenge www.mcwilliams.com.au

Head Heels Coonawarra Cabernet Sauvignon 2008: Its not great Coonawarra cabernet, but its very far from bad; plenty of everything just blurred by a green leaf edge to the wine; worked better with food. 88 points value at \$12 www.bertonvineyards.com.au

Zema Estate Coonawarra Cabernet Sauvignon 2008: The heady perfume of good Coonawarra Cab rices out of the class long before its near the nose its incredibly inviting a hint of mint both on nose and in the mouth sets this vintage apart from previous Zema vintages still a small amount of oak showing but that will disappear and is not unattractive; 93 points and very good value at \$28 www.zema.com.au

Mr Riggs 'Outpost' Coonawarra Cabernet Sauvignon 2008: Wonderful Coonawarra cab on the nose, starts well but fell in a hole in the middle of the palate it should come good but I found it disjointed from middle to end however giving it the benefit of doubt 90 points and see what comes; still not bad value at \$25 and good value if it meshes together. www.mrriggs.com.au

Majella Coonawarra Cabernet Sauvignon 2008: Very gorgeous drop I could go on but why bother 93 now but a couple/three more as it gets some bottle age very good value at \$33 www.majellawines.com.au

Rymill 'The Yearling' Coonawarra Cabernet sauvignon 2008: „Spice“ is a classic shiraz description, I didn't get it on the Rymill Shiraz (review elsewhere) but I did on the Cabernet, which may say a lot about my tasting ability. Plenty of interesting flavours tumbling around the mouth no great depth but still an exciting wine 92 points and very much worth the mere \$15 asked www.rymill.com.au

Kingston Estate Limestone Coast / Mt Lofty Ranges Cabernet Sauvignon 2009: A very juicy number that hit the right spots not great but very good 91 points and very good value at \$14 www.kingstonestatewines.com

Robert Stein 'Reserve' Mudgee Cabernet Sauvignon 2008: It's a classic style of Mudgee and a style of Australian Cabernet that made the world take note; however times are moving on and it has a heaviness about it that has become staid; its far from a poor wine in fact rather good just lacks excitement 91 points and I would look elsewhere to spend \$35 www.robertstein.com.au

Quilty 'Running Stitch' Mudgee Cabernet Sauvignon 2009: Powerful and intense with still a hint of oak showing it's good and will have a legion of fans but I'm looking for more elegance in my Cabernet 92 points and good value at \$28 [website due soon](#)

Shaw Vineyard Estate Canberra Cabernet Sauvignon 2008: I found this a very good expression of the Cabernet grape; it's better with food then on its own a grown up style of wine 91 points worth \$25 www.shawvineyards.com.au

Barwang 'Hilltops' Cabernet Sauvignon 2008: The notes say „flavours of cassis and liquorice“ and I go along with that; its not a rich wine but one with edge and worked well when taken to the table, for me a good wine as I like that sour touch others may find it a little sharp; 91 points great value at \$20 www.mcvilliams.com.au

*******TOP KEY*******

Best's Great Western Cabernet Sauvignon 2008: a classic Cabernet hint of blackcurrant on the nose and a very slight hint of mint that I find a local character and love it. It's a rich style of wine and very drinkable at the moment yet still has several years of life in it 93 points and great value at \$25 www.bestswines.com

Mount Avoca Pyrenees Cabernet Sauvignon 2008: Defined Cabernet nose not a great wine but it has some interesting characters that are worth pondering whilst sipping 91 points and good value \$23 www.mountavoca.com.au

Taltarni Pyrenees Cabernet Sauvignon 2007: Full on power that scythes its way across the palate. Its saving grace is what follows; the second wave of flavours is rather special still a young wine and it will be good to see in five years but 93 now more to come and worth its \$40 www.goeletwineestates.com

*******TOP KEY*******

Mitchell Harris Pyrenees Cabernet Sauvignon 2007: It's a nose I find hard to describe but damn its one I like, a tight wine to start that becomes more expansive as it travels; extremely elegant and so very enjoyable to sip and contemplate; also works well at the table 93 points and maybe more to come as it ages but will keep an open mind very good value at under \$25 www.mitchellharris.com.au

Brown Brothers 'Patricia' Victoria Cabernet Sauvignon 2005: Sourced from several vineyards across Victoria a lot of effort has gone into making this wine. Without a doubt its Cabernet Sauvignon and its resemblance to a Bordeaux red quite remarkable; I have no hesitation is saying its very good wine but I do not find it a great wine interesting to a point but for me its over-made appears to have been too much fiddled with. Anyhow rates 93 points but expensive at \$56 www.brownbrothers.com.au

Shingleback McLaren Vale Cabernet Sauvignon 2007: If I was an honourable sort of bloke I would tell the Davey family (owners of Shingleback) to cease sending samples. However if I did that then I would have to tell many others also not to send samples. The Davey's belong to an ever increasing group of Australian wine making families that consistently release top quality wine; need more be said this vintage is a good as others 93 points and very good value at \$25 www.shingleback.com.au

d'Arenberg 'The High Trellis' McLaren Vale Cabernet Sauvignon 2008: As I have said before I think McLaren vale Cab's have a special place as do Margaret River, Coonawarra and Bordeaux; the d'Arenberg is a richly textured wine that appears simple on top but has complexity underneath if you care to look for it; if not then sit back and enjoy 93 points and fantastic value at under \$20 www.darenberg.com.au

Dowie Doole McLaren Vale Cabernet Sauvignon 2008: Apart from some raw oak still showing this is a lovely wine 91 points and worth its \$25 www.dowiedoole.com

Possums Vineyard McLaren Vale Cabernet Sauvignon 2006: Needs air (as did the Shiraz) it's stinky to start with, not as rich as many McVale Cabs and not overly complex 89 points pricy at \$25 www.possumswines.com.au

Grant Burge 'Corryton Park' Barossa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon 2005: Very complex nose and one I found hard to pin a bit of this bit of that and maybe a touch of thingy, can't do better (sorry) I found the palate the same it was all over the place with a bitterness in the background it didn't ring my bell 88 and very pricy at \$40 www.grantburgewines.com.au

St John's Road 'Line & Length' Barossa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon 2008: Its very Barossa and the accompanying notes I agree with, „Layers of plump juicy ripe fruit, dense in texture and supported by cassis and dark chocolate,“ no need for me to add except 92 points and very good value at \$22 www.stjohnsroad.com

Peter Lehmann Barossa Cabernet Sauvignon 2007: It's a \$12 wine, should I be so harsh? Yes as there are a lot of \$12 wines out there this is an insipid drop 84 points; I know its only \$12 but I would have been disappointed had I parted with it for this wine www.peterlehmann.com.au

Koonowla 'The Ringmaster' Clare Valley Cabernet Sauvignon 2007: Cool blackcurrant faint hint of mint on nose no great depth to the wine but it „s constant from beginning to end well balanced with the right cabernet flavours good length as well 92 points and great value at \$22 www.koonowla.com

Evans & Tate Gngarara Western Australia Cabernet Sauvignon 2009: Black fruits nose, much more defined then its partner the Gngarara Cab/Merlot blend and I think a far better drop 91 points and worth its \$14 www.mcwilliams.com.au

Barwick Estates Western Australia Cabernet Sauvignon 2008: This works fine as a solo variety (unless there is something else in there not stated) anyhow a good clean well made wine with some interesting character 91 points and worth \$15 www.barwickwines.com

Tic Tok Mudgee –Frankland River Cabernet Sauvignon 2008: A very elegant wine with some class beyond its price bracket \$18, 91 points. www.oatleywines.com.au

Vasse Felix Margaret River Cabernet Sauvignon 2007: The standard offering now in its 36th year 94 points and value (for those that can afford it) at \$38 Note its half the price of the Heytesbury but far from being half the wine www.vassefelix.com.au

Fermoy Estate Margaret River Cabernet Sauvignon 2008: This didn't do it for me it came across in lumps or parts of flavours one barging into another in a clumsy fashion 86 points and I think pricy at \$29 www.fermoy.com.au

Howard Park Leston Margaret River Cabernet Sauvignon 2008: Classic blackcurrant nose, not a sweet wine but hits the sweet spot; drinks incredibly well now although has the structure to live a good few years yet 94 and value at \$40 www.howardparkwines.com.au

Evans & Tate 'Redbrook' Margaret River Cabernet Sauvignon 2007: I was disappointed with the nose not as Cabernet defined as I expected nor did the wine ring enough bells as it travelled; it is very broad in flavour I can only get to 89 points and would be disappointed if I parted with \$40 for it. www.mcwilliams.com.au

Mad Fish 'Gold Turtle' Margaret River Cabernet Sauvignon 2008: Defined Cabernet nose and nice and tight on the palate slowly unfolds quite a classy wine 94 points very worth \$30 www.madfishwines.com.au

Howard Park 'Abercrombie' Great Southern-Margaret River Cabernet Sauvignon 2008: 93 now but several more to come as it ages at \$85 its pricy and not for drinking this weekend but put away for five years it will reward patience. www.howardparkwines.com.au

Cabernet Sauvignon summary: *I headed it with 'I think' because as far as the information I have all the wines are pure Cabernet Sauvignon, however by law they need only be 85 percent so some may well have a touch of this or that mixed in. What a journey over a dozen regions and so many versions of style, the wines from Howard Park Vasse Felix, d'Arenberg, Shingleback, Mitchell Harris, Bests, Majella and Brands all affording great enjoyment. wonderful bracket to taste. The next edition on KROW will contain Cabernet blends*

