



# Merlot a wine on the move

After a spurt in plantings in the late 1990s the quality of Australian merlot has improved immensely as the vines age and produce better fruit.

And whereas a decade ago critics were often scornful of the Bordeaux variety's quality in Australia, they, and more importantly, the public's appreciation of its rich fruitiness and subdued tannins, are on the move. Merlot sales are spiralling upward as it is seen as more than just a softener for cabernet sauvignon but a delicious drink in its own right.

Here are some merlots I recommend.

**PONDEROSA**: Deep red loamy soils on the Holman vineyard and others nearby grow healthy vines in the heart of the Hunter Valley, and are the source of the fruit in the Mount Eyre Three Ponds Merlot 2010. The varietal expression is a combination of cassis, fruitcake and spice with well integrated French oak. \$22.95.