



In field of Rosès, Yalumba's the pick



by john jens

THERE are about a zillion pink wines coming onto the market, some stunning and some not so drinkable. Of the 50 or 70 rosè styles from 2007 and 2008 that we have tasted recently, the best value has been the Yalumba "Y" Sangiovese Rosè 2007.

This has a delightful colour and greater life, length, balance and texture than nearly all of its peers yet it was the cheapest of all at only \$10 to \$12. There is also a hint of well-integrated sweetness (17.3pts).

On the WA front, the two most consistent brands are in the mix once more with the Brookland Valley 2007 (17.3pts) and Moondah Brook 2007 (17.5pts) rosè labels joining the largely sold out Willow Bridge 2007 (17.6pts).

The latter won a gold medal at The National Wine Show in Canberra last year and the new Aldersyde label from Piesse Brook in the Perth Hills (17.6pts) that was also reviewed here recently.

The liveliest of all and the most exciting was the just-released, deeply-coloured Charlie Melton Rosè of Virginia 2008 from South Australia's Barossa Valley.

There is balanced sweetness tucked away among the heaps of fresh and appealing grape flavours on the middle palate that follow the delightful macerated cherry aromatics running riot around the top of the glass.

This is a winner and it would take a very good wine to knock this off as the favoured frontrunner for the title of Australia's best Rosè for 2008.

(17.8 pts and \$20 RRP)

The Liquor Baron's Applecross "Keith Mugford International Cabernet tasting and Moss Wood Wine Dinner" in early June was a marvellous event for several reasons.

Some of the world's finest cabernets were tasted, providing great satisfaction. Woodland's "Rachel" Cabernet Sauvignon 2004 (18.5pts) and the brilliantly reviewed Sandalford Cabernet Sauvignon 2002 (18.6pts), were of such quality that in any other tasting they would deserve to be the wines of the night.

But in this instance they were pipped by the truly great Cullen 2005 Cabernet Merlot (18.7pts) and the 2001 Chateau Cos d'Estournel (18.7).

The Cullen is sold out at the wholesalers and so whatever is left in the stores is it for this great vintage – and this wine is great.

The Moss Wood Cabernet Sauvignon 2005 (19pts) was my wine of the evening – by a whisker – and this too is among the two greatest wines of any sort produced at this iconic Margaret River winery.

The other key factor in this tasting, organised by Vincent Bligh for Greg Brindle's Applecross Liquor Barons and IGA stores, is that only a few people in the trade would have had the courage and passion to have organised such an event.

The Yard Rieslings 2008

Larry Cherubino will release three different Rieslings from his mid-range The Yard series from the high quality 2008 vintage.

The wines are outstanding and superior to his 2007 vintage and will retail for \$25.

The Kalgan River 2008 release is long, lean, dry and aromatic. It will drink marvellously from 2009 until 2016. It sits between the other two in both aromatics and power. (18.1pts).

The Acacia Ridge vineyard at Frankland River has provided the most obvious, long and powerful style of the three and while it is balanced for early drinking it will develop easily until well past 2000. (18.2pts).