

SPECIAL FEATURE

HEADING NORTH
When in Brisbane, avail yourself of the Cru Bar's exemplary wine list.

CRU BAR & CELLAR, BRISBANE

(07) 3252 1744, www.crubar.com

My colleague and *GT WINE* contributor Ken Gargett considers Cru Bar one of Brisbane's best assets, which I couldn't agree with more. A brilliantly constructed list, with a particular focus on mini-verticals of seriously tempting wines, make this the go-to option for anyone chasing a bit of vinous nourishment in Brisbane.

R BAR, ADELAIDE

(08) 8230 0100, 171 O'Connell St

You'll have to seek it out, there's no street signage and entry is through a non-descript door in a lane, but once you do you'll find yourself drawn into the wonderland world of R wines. Either a bar masquerading as a city cellar door, or the other way round, this fabulously funky new addition to Adelaide's drinking scene showcases the dazzling range of wines from Chris Ringland, a striking and diverse collection that stretches from ancient vineyards in the Barossa all the way to Spain.

THE DEANERY, MELBOURNE

(03) 9629 5599, www.thedeanery.com.au

If you've ever scanned a restaurant wine list and thought "my cellar is much better than this", The Deanery may be the place for you. A bar, restaurant and professional wine-storage facility rolled into one, The Deanery allows clients to enjoy their own wines alongside some of Melbourne's finest food. And it's a whole lot cheaper, and safer, than stashing a chef in your own cellar.

THE POT, ADELAIDE

(08) 8373 2044, www.thepotfoodandwine.com.au

A cracking wine list becomes even more user-friendly on evenings early in the week. Choose anything that takes your fancy off the list and pay half the price for half the bottle. What remains becomes an ever changing, always interesting by-the-glass selection for the other patrons. A very sensible way to make us all drink more widely and one we'd like to see adopted elsewhere.

MUST WINEBAR, PERTH

(08) 9328 8225, www.must.com.au

The current holder of the Best Wine Bar List award in the *GT WINE*'s Australia's Wine List of the Year Awards remains our favourite place in the west for a seriously exciting drink. We're particularly smitten with the intimate Champagne Lounge, a coolly elegant bar within a bar, and it's stellar line up of more than two dozen great marques.

Eye-catching Labels

SOME YOUNG PUNKS

(08) 8842 3773, www.someyoungpunks.com.au

Vintage comic books and the gritty-glam aesthetic of pulp fiction cover art provide the inspiration for a suite of the most eye-catching labels in the business. The flashy livery is supported by exciting winemaking drawing on Clare, Barossa and McLaren Vale fruit to create wines as good as they look.



AD HOC

(08) 9382 2379, www.larrycherubino.com

Larry Cherubino's entry level Ad Hoc range draws on the distinctive characters of WA's classic regional styles for naming and labeling inspiration. Hence the widely planted Mendoza clone's tendency to vary in berry size within a bunch leads to Hen and Chicken Chardonnay, riesling's demure side is celebrated in Wallflower Riesling and the remoteness of Frankland River turned on its head with Middle of Everywhere Shiraz. All this illustrated by beautifully designed labels and the wines are exceptionally good too.

CRITTENDEN ESTATE LOS HERMANOS

(03) 5981 8322, www.crittendenwines.com.au

Sketches of Spain in both wine style and packaging from the hugely talented Rollo Crittenden. Tempranillo in the Joven style, and the wine formerly known as albarino now called Tributo a Galicia, adorned with labels that take inspiration from a distinctively Iberian kind of naive art. A clever example of packaging giving stylistic cues to what's inside.

TOMFOOLERY WINES

0404 889 416, www.tomfoolerywines.com.au

The motto here is "the coming together of all things foolish" and while Toby Yap and Ben Chipman may be good-time Barossa boys par excellence there are serious skills behind all the fun. Beautiful Carrollesque illustrations adorn a range of well-crafted wines worth watching.

DUCKS IN A ROW

0413 445 534, www.ducksinarow.com.au

Following a great tradition of famous Australian artists creating labels, John Olsen's frogs on Leeuwin Estate riesling perhaps the best known, new outfit Ducks In a Row have turned to Mirka Mora for her distinctive touch. The great vinous gallery grows ever larger.

SAMUEL'S GORGE

(08) 8323 8651, www.gorge.com.au

The official line is the label is a clever collage, combining lots of small photographic snippets to recreate the stunning vista from the winery's perch high on a hill. But in reality it more closely reflects the blurred vision of thirsty cellar door visitors who find they just can't leave.

FIRST DROP

0420 971 209, www.firstdropwines.com

Despite appearances, Matt Gant and John Retsas have a strong sense of style

