

Put to the test Six good drops

Bargain of the week

THE WINE SOCIETY CLASSIC
BRUT NV \$13

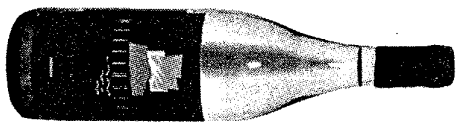
This is a light but attractively flavoured bubbly that offers good value for money. It's faintly pink in colour and smells pinoty, with candy, meringue, confectionary aromas and a soft, straightforward taste with a little age development, finishing with some sweetness. **Drink with smoked oysters.**
Stockist The Wine Society, city, 1300 723 723.



Top Aussie white

WELLINGTON CHARDONNAY
2000 \$28.80

A fine chardonnay that shows typical Tasmanian fresh acidity and smoky, roasted hazelnut aromas and a crisp, dry, well-balanced structure. It's lively in the mouth and lingers long on the finish. It's still fresh for its four years and will hold on for several more. Best over the next year or two. **Drink with Tassie scallops.**
Stockist Relish Tasmania, city, 9292 2009.



Top Aussie red

PERTARINGA OVER THE TOP
SHIRAZ 2001 \$33

Typical McLaren Vale richness and 14.5 per cent alcohol here. It smells of vanilla, chocolate and licorice. It's soft and sweet with opulent fruit but isn't especially structured. A hint of over-ripeness perhaps and it's fleshy, supple and silky on the tongue. Drink now to 2011. **Drink with osso bucco.**
Stockist Summer Hill Wine Shop, 9798 7282.



Retail watch

Brands of Coonawarra is producing superb wines across the board, year after year, and its standard shiraz and cabernet are almost certainly the best value in Coonawarra. The 2001 shiraz is a top example, with intense clove, pepper and nutmeg spices coupled with deep but elegant palate structure. It's properly ripe and the tannins are just right: smooth and abundant without being domineering. It's nominally around \$24 but Camberra's Candamber, at www.discount-wines.com and 6251 4247, is selling it at \$17.95.

Best sweet white

TAMAR RIDGE JOSEF CHROMY
SELECTION BOTRYTIS 2001
\$29/375ml

This trophy winner is riesling, with a dash of sauvignon blanc, and it smells intensely of floral, limey riesling with plenty of botrytis adding complexity. The palate is focused and very intense, perhaps finishing a trifle firm, but with excellent length. **Drink with summer berries.**
Stockist Chippendale Cellars, 9310 4167.



Best import

DOLLUM MENDOZA MALBEC
2001 \$25

This smells of secondary aromas including smoked meats, dried herbs and toasty oak, with developed fruit flavours of good intensity, line and length. It's tautly structured but has a degree of richness, too. Fine tannins and complex flavours that are well balanced and very food friendly. **Drink with kassler.**
Stockist Ullimo Wine Centre, 9211 2380.



For the cellar

BEST'S THOMSON FAMILY
SHIRAZ 2001 \$70

This is a seriously good shiraz of concentration and structure, built for the long haul. The toasty coconut, oak and smoky, dark berry aromas are yet to show bottle-age and the palate is rich, with density and fluffy tannins, in good balance. Should age into a succulent red; best 2006-2026. **Drink with aged cheddar.**
Stockist Redfern Cellars, 9698 1795.

