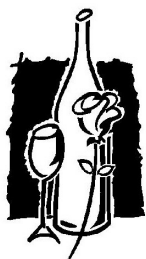


Alex's Newsletter

#21 October 2008



Rose Bay Drive In Liquor

Brokenwood Semillon 2007

The region: Hunter Valley (NSW)

The alcohol: 11.0%

The taste: Crisp, fresh green apples

The price: \$24 or 10% off in a dozen



The Hunter is famous for Semillon (and Shiraz). Here is one of the best examples of a decent Hunter Semillon at a very affordable price.

Semillon is perfect for the upcoming Summer months. It goes well with seafood and fruit, the kind of stuff that comes out in Summer. Plus this one is only 11%, so you can sit there on a hot day and drink away without getting completely hammered.

This wine has some grassy citrus odours to it and crisp green apple flavours on the tongue. It's fresh and very easy to drink, but it goes better with food rather than drinking it alone.

For most people, Semillon is in direct competition with the more fruit driven Sauvignon Blancs, which absolutely everyone drinks these days. Plus, this one is from the Hunter Valley, which also makes it a bit of a hard sell. Hunter wines just don't sell that much in bottle shops.

Despite all that, this wine still ticks over nicely for us. Part of it is that Brokenwood is a pretty well-known brand and this wine is very consistent in quality each year.

If you want to age it, it will develop some nice, toasty flavours too. That style of wine is not for everyone though, so try an aged Semillon and see if you like the flavours.

Every review I've seen of this wine has given it scores in the 90's, thoroughly deserved too!

Brokenwood also makes a few different Semillons, including the top shelf ILR Reserve. If you see them on a wine list by the glass, try a it and see what you've been missing.

Pondalowie Shiraz/Cab/ Tempranillo 2006

The region: Bridgewater on Loddon (VIC)

The alcohol: 14.5%

The taste: Different, smooth, plums

The price: \$20 or 10% off in a dozen



I've written about these guys before, but I wanted to put this particular wine in. We tried it awhile ago with the sales rep and I liked that it was something a little different.

Not many people know Tempranillo, it's one of those reds that's famous overseas but doesn't pop up all that much in most bottle shops.

It's pretty much Spain's national red grape, giving flavours of herbs, plums and tobacco. It's not a style that we see a lot here, but it's becoming more popular as winemakers start to explore the hundreds of grape varieties dotted around the world.

Blending Shiraz and Cabernet has been referred to as Australia's own blend and that's fair enough, we do it particularly well, such as the Yalumba Signature and FDR1A, Penfolds Bin 389 and even Grange in most years has some Cabernet in it.

So this is a variation on a classically Australian style. The Shiraz brings a bit of subtle spice, while the Cabernet brings plum and blackcurrant flavours. The Tempranillo adds some savouriness. The use of American and French oak gives it some subtle toasty, vanilla flavours too.

The exact blend of this wine changes from year to year, depending on which grapes are ripe when the winemakers are ready to go. Sometimes there can be a little bit of Malbec in there too.

It's picking up great reviews too. Grab a bottle for those summer BBQ's that are coming up. It's medium-bodied, so it won't knock you around too much when you're sitting in the sun with a steak sandwich and a glass of red.

Pewsey Vale Eden Valley Riesling 2007

The region: Eden Valley (SA)

The alcohol: 13.0%

The taste: Long, intense flavours of lemon and lime

The price: \$16.50 on special



Past Newsletters

Past newsletters are available online www.rosebaydriveinliquorstore.com.au

Monthly Tastings

Don't forget our monthly tastings. The next one will be moved to the second Tuesday in November, due to the Melbourne Cup. So that's November 11th at 6.30pm. See you there!

And so I continue on my quest to get people to drink Riesling! It's certainly not an easy thing to do. Everyone still has the idea that Riesling is always sickly sweet, which just isn't the case. Sure, some are, but the majority of the stuff that comes out of Australia (that isn't in a cask) is dry or off-dry. In fact, I've been telling anyone who will listen that they should label their wine "Dry Riesling" as some of the makers in NZ are doing.

I brought out this Riesling at the last monthly tasting and some people refused to even try it because they were convinced they wouldn't like it. However, when they smelled the wine in the glass and then, hesitantly, tried drinking it, they were quite surprised to find that they actually liked it... I mean, really liked it. Like they wanted to marry it or something.

The Clare Valley is arguably the most famous region in Oz for quality Riesling, but Eden provides some top value Riesling at great prices too. The wines from Clare are generally more tight in structure and more minerally whereas their Eden counterparts, such as this one, are more fruit driven and often display broader, more mouth-filling flavours.

Look for the intense lemon and lime flavours that are typical of Riesling, with mouthwatering acidity. This is perfect for summer.

Plus, since Rieslings aren't the biggest sellers, you generally get great quality for your money.

Plus, while it's on special, it's at the same price as most mid-range Sem/Sauv Blanc blends. Grab a bottle and try something different, you might just discover that you actually like Riesling.

Saint Clair "Block 6" Sauvignon Blanc 2007

The region: Marlborough (NZ)

The alcohol: 12.5%

The taste: Huge tropical flavours

The price: \$25 on special



Mailing List

We are revamping our mailing list to bring you more offers, more tastings, more info about the wine world and the chance to win wine every month!

To join the mailing list, please send an e-mail to sales@rosebayliquor.com.au or fill in a form in-store. You will receive 2-3 e-mails per month and can opt out at any time. Join now for the chance to win!

Saint Clair only started making wines in 1994, so they're a pretty young winery, but in that first year, all of their wines won awards. Not a bad start!

The guys behind it have a tonne of experience though, so they know what they're doing. They make four ranges of wines and this one falls in the "Pioneer Block" range, which is their second highest after the Reserve range. It is one of nine different Sauvignon Blancs in the range, all from different blocks. They also make some pretty damn good Pinot Noir and Chardonnay, along with a smidge of Pinot Gris, Riesling and Gewurztraminer.

Now then, this wine is ridiculous. In a good way.

It's from a block called the "Oh!" Block, because "Oh my goodness what amazing flavours!" And they're right, this wine is a big, almost over the top Sauv Blanc. The flavours are rich and intense, but still Sauv Blanc. It's as if someone has grabbed a normal Marlborough Sauv Blanc, upped the quality and then turned up the volume.

It normally retails at around \$30-\$35ish and is arguably the best Sauv Blanc in our fridge at the moment. So at this price, it's worth grabbing a case to get you through Summer... well, the first week of Summer anyway.

Don't believe me? Well other customers seem to think it's pretty good. It's not often that someone tries a wine and then comes back to buy a case or two, but we've had a lot of that going on recently with this wine. So clearly it's not just me that thinks it's a good drop. So if I can't entice you with a Semillon or Riesling, here's a wine you simply must try.