

WORDS WINE EDITOR DAVID SLY

# THE RIGHT WHITES

WHILE THE FRESH, CLEAN FLAVOURS OF NEW RELEASE WHITE WINES TASTE LOVELY THROUGH THE WARMER MONTHS, MANY ARE WORTH KEEPING IN THE CELLAR SO THAT BEAUTIFUL DEVELOPED CHARACTERS CAN BE SAVOURED AT A LATER DATE.



## **Knappstein** **2009 Ackland Vineyard Watervale Riesling** **2009 Hand Picked Riesling**

Winemaker Julian Langworthy, having moved from Coonawarra to take the head winemaking role at Knappstein Winery in Clare, has been celebrated nationally as a consequence of these two wines – high water marks of a uniformly magnificent riesling vintage across Clare and its neighbouring districts. The Ackland vineyard in Watervale has a long history of producing excellent fruit, characterised by a fine perfume of lemon and orange blossoms, with rich lemon and lime juiciness offset by a lean spark of minerality, while the Hand Picked Riesling, sourced from four vineyards, displays outstanding purity of primary fruit flavours and zingy citrus freshness. Buy both, stick them in the cellar, then treat yourself to see how they grow and age gracefully with slightly different personalities. **Screw cap. Ackland Vineyard \$33. Hand Picked Riesling \$20.**

## **Good Catholic Girl** **2009 Teresa Riesling**

Outstanding as the 2009 Clare vintage is, plenty of differentiation still exists between styles embraced by different producers. Julie Barry, daughter of the late Jim Barry, has teamed with winemaker Ben Jeanneret to produce a big, feisty beast of the vintage. It has all the region's typical big lemon and lime characters – pith in the fleshy middle body and dry citric acid in the long finish – but also much more than the average Clare offering, with whiffs of orange marmalade and even white peach hints on the nose, and lots of slatey minerality among the rich lime finish. It'll be fascinating to see how this develops over time. **Screw cap. \$25.**

## **Tim Adams** **2008 Semillon**

Largely forgotten by consumers, semillon, at its best, has a beguiling complexity – and artisan Clare winemaker Tim Adams achieves the lovely combination of rich maturity and vibrant freshness in this wine, with its crisp, clean flavours and lifted dry straw nose being nicely balanced by significant but not hefty palate weight. Bearing the influence of 75 per cent of the fruit having been fermented in French oak and then stored for another five months in French oak hogsheads, the luscious body of stone fruits and juicy lemon is filled out by a trace of honey. Despite this early sign of maturity, it's all still bound firmly by a seam of acid, ensuring rich, juicy lime flavours at the finish. **Screw cap. \$23.**

## **Turkey Flat Vineyards** **2009 Butchers Block White**

While the heady combination of Rhone grape varieties marsanne (57 per cent), viognier (32 per cent) and roussanne (11 per cent) suggests an overly rich wine, this delicious blend is instead characterised by the attractiveness of its delicate nuances. It boasts the fresh citrus vigour of grapefruit and lemon with the complexity of a nicely rounded mouthfeel derived from fermentation and some maturation in French oak. Leave this wine in bottle for a while and the fruit will turn golden, slithering into a hip-hugging corset of honey and butter characters around the firm fleshiness of ripe stone fruits. Very sexy indeed, with this rich meld of flavours continuing to develop for the next few years. **Screw cap. \$24.**

## **Shaw and Smith** **2008 M3 Chardonnay**

Signs of a chardonnay revival in Australia are being led by several elegant wines of finesse and poise – distinctly different in style to the broad, oaky chardonnay of decades past. Shaw and Smith continue to refine their M3 chardonnay through fussy vine clone selection to ensure greater fruit purity, and restrained oak treatment. The change in style results in an engaging blast of citrus pucker, while wild ferment yeasts add complexity to the body. A strong spine of refreshing green apple acid ensures great flavour length in a deep, textural palate. It all suggests good maturing prospects, so while this wine has enticing qualities now, its best years still lie ahead (a recent tasting of the outstanding 2006 vintage showed a seductive toasty edge to its firm peach and citrus flavours). Patience will be rewarded. **Screw cap. \$38.**

## **Mountadam** **2009 Eden Valley Pinot Gris**

Treatment of this grape is greatly muddled among Australian winemakers, with many confusing both name and style between the lean, acidic Italian mode of pinot grigio, or the riper, more fleshy texture of the French inspired pinot gris. Con Moshos at Mountadam has a definite view: his long ripening fruit is developed in the rich French style, with a distinctive copper tint to the pale wine colour indicating good skin contact with the juice, and the influence of lees stirring in old French oak barrels giving solid body to the lovely rounded pear, nectarine and melon flavours, all kept firm by crisp green apple and fresh lemon acids. If this sits for up to four years in the cellar, the luscious textural qualities will become even more pronounced. **Screw cap. \$25.**