



Chris Shanahan

Chris Shanahan is a wine and beer judge, former liquor retailer and freelance writer.

### Kalleske Clarry's Grenache Shiraz Mataro 2010

Barossa Valley, South Australia

\$16.20-\$18

★★★

The Kalleske family settled in the Barossa in the mid-19th century and today seventh-generation Troy Kalleske makes the wine named for his grandfather, Clarry. He tended the vines from the 1920s to the 1990s. It's a luxurious, friendly blend – highly aromatic and densely packed with juicy, vibrant mouth-watering fruit flavours. Grenache probably contributes the floral aromatic high notes, while shiraz and mataro (aka mourvedre) contribute body and tannin structure, respectively. It's a rollicking regional speciality to enjoy over the next four or five years.



### Campbells Pedro Ximenez 1997

Rutherglen, Victoria

\$35

★★★★

A glass of the lovely, delicate 1991 vintage prompted last week's feature story on Campbells' unique dry white – made from Spanish sherry variety pedro ximenez. A week later samples arrived: the not-yet-released 2007 vintage, under both cork and screwcap, and the currently available, at cellar door, 2004 (\$25.90) and 1997 (\$35). The small tasting revealed a journey from tartness and austerity in the 2007, to the fresh, delicate honey notes of 2004, to the still fresh, but mellow, richer, toast-and-honey of the 1997. It's a curio, for sure, but a delightful one enjoyed by most people at the tasting.



## wine of the week

### Alkoomi Jarrah Shiraz 2007

Frankland River, Great Southern, Western Australia

\$39-\$44.70

★★★★★

Because shiraz reveals its beauty in so many different ways in Australia, it's become our signature variety. Alkoomi's wonderful flagship – named for the towering jarrah trees *Eucalyptus marginata* native to the area – comes from a gravelly site planted to vines more than 40 years ago. This is deeply layered, elegant shiraz of a rare dimension – built on intense, varietal cherry-and-spice flavours, bound by fine, soft oak and fruit tannins. It's an understated wine of many parts, in perfect harmony, looking youthful at four years and destined for a long cellar life.



### Ross Hill Chardonnay 2009

Orange, NSW

\$27-\$30

★★★★★

Terri and Peter Robson established Ross Hill in 1994 and planted chardonnay on their home block in 1996. In 2008, Greg and Kim Jones joined the business "to build the Ross Hill winery and plant further higher elevation vines on the slopes of Mt Canobolas". Winemaker Phil Kearney then joined the team and in 2009, produced the first wines to be made on-site. The wines include this wild-yeast, barrel-fermented chardonnay from the home block – a rich, bright, fine-textured chardonnay with a core of sweet, nectarine-like varietal flavour, looking very young at two years.



### The Islander Estate Vineyards Old Rowley 2006

Kangaroo Island, South Australia

\$37

★★★★

Frenchman Jacques Lurton grows and makes his grenache, shiraz, viognier blend on an 11ha vineyard, planted on Kangaroo Island in 2000. It's a surprisingly fine, elegant and savoury wine, given the blend – so often in Australia grenache tends to a musky, even confectionary character; and the white viognier can be intensely apricot-like and oily textured. Instead we have a lighter coloured red, of light to medium body with a lean, savoury, spicy palate and persistent, fine, tannic finish.



### Rosso di Montalcino (Castello di Romitorio) 2007

Montalcino, Tuscany, Italy

\$38.50-\$55

★★★★★

This is sort of uber chianti – a magnificent, elegant red made from the sangiovese grosso variety, grown at Montalcino, near Siena, Tuscany. Brunello di Montalcino, also made from sangiovese grosso, is one of Italy's great wines and Rosso di Montalcino is its slightly lesser, cellar mate. The colour's medium and limpid and already showing signs of age – though this is common for sangiovese. The aroma and palate, though, are all excitement with sweet, tobacco-like, earthy and gamey flavours underlying a firm, sinewy tannin structure. It's an elegant, unique wine that grows in interest, and, suddenly, regrettably, the bottle's empty.



★ uninteresting or flawed – do you sell beer? ★★ good, basic, fault-free wine – a qualifier ★★★★★ enjoyable and true to style – don't mind if I do

★★★★★ a beautiful wine that pushes all the buttons – another bottle please ★★★★★ a glorious wine of rare dimension