

# The North Hampshire Wine Society Blog



## 'Australia'

Presenter: Nigel Gibbes

27 March 2013

A presentation of Aussie wines showcasing some of the classic regions.  
All prices below are those quoted by The Wine Service and are inclusive of VAT

### The wines

#### Whites

- 1. Brown Brothers Chenin Blanc 2011, Victoria** 11% £8.33  
Off dry rounded ripe palate, quite a full mouthfeel though only 11% alcohol. Clean as a whistle sharp acidity. Unoaked and zesty. Generally much liked around the room. Drink young.
- 2. Tyrrells Old Winery Chardonnay 2008 (Hunter Valley/McLaren Vale)** 13% £9.52  
Grapes from two classic regions – Hunter Valley (NSW) and McLaren Vale (South Australia). *Massive* mineral nose, and my notes say 'lime cordial'. Greenish yellow colour still, 'legs' apparent, rich. Surprisingly a slight spritz on the palate, fresh for its age though with obvious buttery oak. Really needs food. Oak is upfront certainly, but big fruit balances it. Slight bitterness on the finish, length pretty decent for the price. Tyrrells 'Old Winery' range is their entry level but there are some good wines in the range.
- 3. Ferngrove Karri Oak Semillon Sauvignon Blanc 2011, Frankland River, Western Australia** 13% £10.09  
Bright clean Sauvignon nose, very pale colour with greenish hint. Cool climate style, a good example of what Western Australia does so well. Rich weighty palate due to ripeness of fruit, but touches of green pepper and lovely acidity provide the counterpart. A slightly steely character. Length and balance.
- 4. Mitchell Watervale Riesling 2010, Clare Valley, South Australia** 13% £12.88  
Really impressive example of one of Australia's signature wines – Clare Valley Riesling – in a superb year (2010) with great ageing potential (5-8 years minimum and possibly quite a bit longer). 40 year old vines. Classic Aussie Riesling lime sherbert notes, but toasty too. A big fruity palate with some development just starting. Very complex palate and the finish just goes on. A bargain at the price. My notes say 'lime accentuated in the glass as it warms up'. Star wine of the evening for me.

## Reds

### 5. Tyrrells Old Winery Pinot Noir 2010, SE Australia 13% £9.52

More fruit than farmyard! Vanilla nose, very little development or vegetal character. Some tannic backbone but the tannins are soft and approachable. A slightly jammy nose. Minimal (French) oak is used here – an early drinking wine. 450,000 cases produced.

### 6. Riddoch Cabernet Sauvignon 2008, Coonawarra, South Australia 13.5% £13.28

There was some discussion about the scarcity nowadays of reasonably priced (or any!) Coonawarra Cab in the major outlets. Sainsbury's late lamented own label version (produced by Katnook) has long disappeared and although Waitrose still has Katnook there aren't too many others left in the big outlets. This one has a big minty nose – absolutely classic – with vanilla and a little spice. Cool climate so relatively restrained, and the tannins are reasonably prominent. Quite some life left in this one?

### 7. Wakefield Promised Land Cabernet Merlot 2009, South Australia 13.5% £10.67

A warmer climate wine with a bigger palate, rounder and warmer. Quite a different style to wine 6 – riper and fuller. Some debate as to people's favourite of the two – pleasingly it wasn't a walkover for this wine despite its more crowd-friendly immediacy. Several (myself included) preferred wine 6 as having the greater complexity and ageing potential.

### 8. Mitchell Peppertree Shiraz 2008, Clare Valley, South Australia 14% £16.06

96/100 from James Halliday would probably give away the style of this wine if you didn't already know! This is *big* - although being Clare Valley it is still relatively cool climate. Clare Valley Shiraz is another a classic style, and the best examples have the potential to last for years. This one could (Nigel said) possibly go to 2030. A restrained nose but explodes in the glass - the pepper is more evident on the palate. Very black, with French/American oak nicely integrated, tannins softening up nicely but with time to go yet. Not bad for £16!

A really good evening, showcasing the characteristics of 'real' Aussie wine. There has always been a quality conscious element despite the general dumbing down of Aussie wine for the perceived 'mass market' over the past decade or so, but the quality resurgence is tangible at all levels now and it's good to have a reminder of the diversity of styles and characterful wines produced in Australia.