



Something for all tastes

Char-grilled steak demands a robust red, such as this Aussie – but sometimes you can't beat a good beer

I F YOU HAVE a mental picture of the average Aussie as a loud, brash, coarse individual, Dave Powell fits right in. A conversation in a restaurant tends to turn ears blue at the adjoining tables. Mind you, he is built like Jamie Heaslip, so objections are few.

Immediately obvious, however, is that he is an intelligent man who puts thought into his wine making. Powell has no formal training in wine and dismisses Australian wine colleges as far too technical. He prefers to learn from other wine makers and to experiment. He founded his Torbreck winery in 1992 and has been successful, growing rapidly and receiving deserved plaudits from many influential critics.

Based in the Barossa, Powell fashions big, rich wines, perfect for robust food. He avoids the excessive oakling and over-extracted fruit of many of his competitors. He prefers to buy in old oak barrels and let the fruit do the talking.

The reds come in at 14.5% to 15% alcohol, but retain a certain elegance. "I don't give a shit about alcohol levels," he says. "People need to get over themselves. You can't make light reds in the Barossa; it just tastes green. So long as the wine is balanced, it is fine with me."

Powell makes a range of reds, and a tasty white Roussanne Marsanne, too. But it is the reds that really shine. Here's a great one to accompany steak.

BARBECUE TIPPLES

Torbreck The Struie 2006, Barossa Valley, 15%, €30.95 The Torbreck Woodcutter's Shiraz has been recommended many times here; it would make perfect barbecue fare. But if you feel like pushing the boat out, this wine delivers masses of soft ripe plum fruits, great length and a real elegance. The balance is perfect, so you don't notice the 15% alcohol. **Stockists:** O'Briens.

Brooklyn Lager, 5.2%, €1.99 for a 33cl bottle Most of us drink lager once the sun comes out, and don't think too much about it. Brooklyn Lager is streets ahead of the standard offerings. Mild hoppy flavours with sweetness on the centre-palate, and a dry finish. Delicious.

Domaine de Peltchaut, Harmonie de Gascogne 2009, Vin de pays des Côtes de Gascogne, 12%, €9.95 Made from an eclectic mix of Ugni Blanc, Colombard, Sauvignon, Chardonnay, Gros and Petit Manseng, this is a wonderfully fresh, exuberant wine, a mouthful of succulent melon and apple fruits. Light in alcohol, and nicely rounded, you could do worse than buy a case or two for the summer months. **Stockists:** Mitchell's, CHQ Building, IFSC, Glashule and Rathfarnham; Anderson's, Glasnevin; Bin No 9, Goatstown; Hole in the Wall, Castleknock.

Lustau Jarana Fino Sherry, 15%, €9.95 per half bottle, €17.50 per bottle Light fresh wine with a mix of salty almonds and tangy fruits, finishing bone dry. Serve well chilled as an aperitif or with cold soups. **Stockists:** Mitchell's, CHQ Building, IFSC, Glashule and Rathfarnham; McCambridge's, Galway; Redmond's, Ranelagh; Brechin and Watchorn, Ranelagh; Terroirs, Donnybrook; McCabe's, Blackrock; Florrie's, Tramore; Jus de Vine, Portmarnock; Wine Boutique, Ringsend; Hudson's Pantry, Louisburgh, Co Mayo; Myles Doyle's, Gorey.

THE PERFECT BLOODY MARY

Half fill the glass with ice. Add a 50ml measure of vodka, fill the glass with tomato juice, adding a good dash of Tabasco, a couple of dashes of Lea & Perrins, a good twist of black pepper and a dash of lemon juice. There are those who add beef bouillon, fresh horseradish and celery salt, but I can't be bothered. Serve with a stick of celery.

jwilson@irishtimes.com

Publication: Irish Times Magazine

Date: Saturday, June 05, 2010

Page: 13

Extract: 2 of 2

Circulation: 106926

Author:

Headline: Something for all tastes

