

CORKED

## Under \$18

**GRANT BURGE BAROSSA VINES SHIRAZ 2003**  
\$14-\$15

Grant Burge's Barossa Vines wines are great value. They manage to avoid the sweet style of red that increasingly populates the sub-\$15 spots on wine shop shelves. This shiraz has an attractive nose of spicy, syrupy berries with earthy touches and a hint of vanillin oak. It tastes smooth and satisfying with good length and soft tannins.

**Ageing?** Drink over three years.

**Food ideas:** Lasagne; beef olives.

**Stockists include:** McCoppins, Fitzroy; Fletchers, Essendon.

**Rating:** ★★★★★ \$\$\$

**TULLOCH VERDELHO 2004**  
\$13-\$15

Verdelho has a long history in the Hunter Valley, and it's been enjoying some popularity in recent years as an early-drinking "alternative" white wine. Tulloch's version is a plain, wholesome wine with tropical and apple fruit notes, and a smooth, ripe palate that hints at sweetness in the middle, finishing soft. A crowd-pleaser.

**Ageing?** Drink over two years.

**Food ideas:** Good chicken sandwiches; Malaysian prawn curry.

**Stockists include:** Cheapaway Bottle Shop, city; Dan Murphy stores.

**Rating:** ★★★☆☆ \$\$



## \$18 to \$30

**BAY OF FIRES RIESLING 2004**  
\$24-\$27

Tasmania is a great place for riesling, so it's not surprising that Hardy's Tassie outpost Bay of Fires does a good job with it. This youngster is mineral and interesting on the nose, with herb, lime and cumquat aromas, leading to a surprisingly ripe, round, persistent palate. Its softness is counterpointed by a long, dry finish.

**Ageing?** Drink over three years.

**Food ideas:** Pad Thai noodles; sushi.

**Stockists include:** Dan Murphy stores.

**Rating:** ★★★★★ \$\$

**TIM ADAMS SHIRAZ 2003**  
\$23-\$25

Tim Adams reds show more regional personality than some other Clare Valley reds, and this is a good example. It's a ripe-blackberry-scented wine with hints of licorice to it, and a nice lick of subtle oak. In the mouth, it's generous and complete, an attractive combination of balanced, ripe fruit, smooth texture, soft tannins and long flavour.

**Ageing?** Drink over six years.

**Food ideas:** Porterhouse steak; braised veal.

**Stockists include:** Hawthorn Fine Food and Wine; Rathdowne Cellars, Carlton North.

**Rating:** ★★★★★ \$\$

**Ratings**

★★★★★  
A superb example, a near perfect wine of great character, worthy of the big occasion and the best company.

★★★★☆  
First class, a wine of distinction not far below the top rating.

★★★★  
A very good wine of real style and personality.

★★★☆☆  
Good quality, a cut above average.

★★★  
A sound, agreeable wine without faults or nasty bits.

**Value**

\$\$\$  
A wine with a price tag that makes it a steal.

\$\$  
Reasonably priced relative to quality.

\$  
A price tag that stretches things.

## Indulge yourself

**TORBRECK THE STRUIE 2003**  
\$48-\$55

The Torbreck wines from the Barossa have achieved cult status, fuelled in no small way by an American thirst for big Aussie reds. To my mind, this, their mid-range shiraz, is often more likeable than their super-expensive wines. It has spicy plum and berry fruit, velvety texture and subtle oak, and it finishes fine and long.

**Ageing?** Drink over five years

**Food idea:** Fillet of beef.

**Stockists include:** Randall the Wine Merchant, Albert Park; Strathmore Cellars.

**Rating:** ★★★★★☆☆ \$\$\$

**PYRENEES VIGNERONS RESERVE SHIRAZ 2002**  
\$49.90

This Pyrenees red uses grapes from 13 of the district's winemakers. It opens with a very regional nose full of savoury, mint and eucalypt aromas, as well as raspberry and blackberry fruit characters. The palate is medium-bodied with minty berry flavour, and excellent silky texture, finishing soft and friendly.

**Ageing?** Drink over five years.

**Food ideas:** Roast lamb.

**Stockists include:** Randall the Wine Merchant, Albert Park and Geelong.

**Rating:** ★★★★★☆☆ \$\$\$

