



CAMPBELL MATTINSON

## Wine front



They say in the wine industry that you should judge top producers by their bottom-priced wines, and David Powell's Torbreck wines are the perfect example.

When mega-chef Gordon Ramsay hit our screens a few years ago, I described him to a fellow wine nut as "the Dave Powell of food". Of course, that said as much about Powell as Ramsay. If I had a dollar for every time I've heard someone complain about Powell's prices – or indeed his language – I'd be able to afford a dozen bottles of his top red.

Which is saying something, because Powell's top red, Torbreck RunRig Shiraz, sells for \$250 per bottle. You don't consume RunRig Shiraz; it consumes you. There may well be no such thing as an ugly millionaire, but RunRig Shiraz takes richness and makes it beautiful.

The glory of this shiraz is that it's both immeasurably smooth and seductive. It's a wine to lust after, but not a wine to marry – it would wear you out.

The wine to marry is Torbreck's lowest-priced red, the **Woodcutter's Shiraz 2007** (\$22, from Vintage Cellars). This beauty tastes just like RunRig Shiraz, except with the volume turned up to eight rather than 11. It's called the Woodcutter's because Powell used to work in a Scottish forest, and he reckons this is the kind of red he'd like to drink after a long day chopping wood.

*Campbell Mattinson is the author of The Big Red Wine Book (Hardie Grant, \$24.95).*