

short sips

Wine Journal

BY SUZANNE BROCKLEHURST



Wolf Blass in Singapore

Last year marked the 35th anniversary of Wolf Blass Black Label, a blend of predominantly Cabernet Sauvignon and Shiraz that has evolved to sometimes include smaller percentages of either Merlot or Malbec depending on the vintage. No other wine in Australia has been awarded the prestigious Jimmy Watson Trophy as many times as Black Label, which won the trophy for the debut 1973, followed by the 1974, 1975 and 1998 vintages.

Chief winemaker Chris Hatcher was in Singapore in February to launch the limited release 2009 Grey Label, where he gave an overview of the original man behind the name and his role in creating high quality wines during the early years of Australian winemaking.

The tasting of seven wines began with the freshly unveiled 2009 Grey Label Shiraz Cabernet, sourced specifically from the sub-regions of Mount Benson and Robe in South Australia's Limestone Coast zone. These particularly cool areas, which are strongly maritime-influenced, provided superb fruit in what was otherwise a very hot vintage. The wine displayed a high density crimson colour, brooding blueberry aromas, medium-plus body with juicy black fruit as well as lovely fine tannins and fresh acidity to balance the palate. Guests were also treated to three vintages of Black Label – 1993, 2003 and 2007, along with three examples of the Platinum Label, which are based upon single vineyards. By tasting the 1998, 2002 and 2008 Platinum Labels, it became evident that the aim to have power and elegance together has been achieved by the team at Wolf Blass.



inognato APPETITE PAID FOR THE TASTING AT THIS ESTABLISHMENT

Orgo

RATING ★★★★★ | **ADDRESS** #04-01 Esplanade Theatres on the Bay, Roof Terrace, 8 Raffles Avenue | **TEL** 6336 9366

Orgo has received many rave reviews — so we've been told — but our experience at the bar was less than stellar. Upon arrival, we were shown an al fresco table that looked out across the Marina Bay lagoon, and while we appreciated the thought of sitting where we can potentially take in the beautiful scenery at night, the late-afternoon sun in our face was quite unbearable. Drink orders were taken after we moved ourselves to a shadier spot, but not after considerable effort trying to catch the server's attention. A sweet, refreshing melon and honey martini made things a little better, but we were let down by the presentation and quality of the prawn and chorizo skewer, and the enoki mushroom wrapped with wagyu beef. The premium green tea martini would've been a perfect palate cleanser, if not for its overwhelming bitterness. Adding to our chagrin was that the bar refuses to serve tap water; bottled water (which, by the way, is priced at a premium) is the only option. Service, if any, was abrupt and patchy. We'll pass.



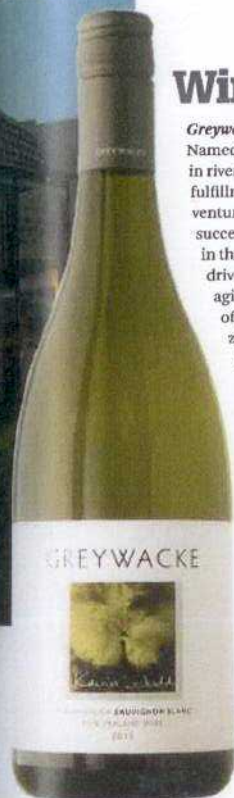
DOMAINE ALAIN GRAILLOT CROZES HERMITAGE 2010
Crushed red-black fruit, fresh plum, spice with chewy tannins and a hint of sweetness in the finish. From ewineasia.com



ALBINO ROCCA BARBARESCO VIGNETO BRICH RONCHI 2006
Baked cherry and strawberry with nuances of florals. Juicy, structured wine with firm tannins, yet manages to remain balanced. From ewineasia.com



MASCIARELLI MARINA CVETIC TREBBIANO D'ABRUZZO 2008
Fruity, flowery and spicy. Clearly recognisable flavours of papaya, golden peach, lavender, honey and vanilla, with a good amount of acidity to balance. From Water & Wine



Wine of the month

Greywacke Sauvignon Blanc 2010

Named after a type of rock sediment found widely on mountains, in rivers and beaches throughout New Zealand, Greywacke is the fulfillment of Kevin Judd's long-held dream. Through this new venture, Judd, a pioneer of winemaking in Marlborough, has successfully captured a true expression of the region, particularly in the Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc 2010. Made in a classic, fruit-driven style with a 10th that underwent wild fermentation and aging in old French barriques, this wine offers attractive notes of papaya, gooseberry, honeydew and peach with some citrus zest. It is ripe and rich on the palate with a lush texture and moderate acidity. From Crystal Wines.



Your private cellar

If you are looking to taste some of the world's top wines without breaking the bank, Hermitage Wine's exclusive wine lounge at One Marina Boulevard offers premium labels by the glass at very approachable prices. Accessible only to members of its newly launched Private Cellar VIP Membership Programme, the wine lounge offers wines such as Jim Barry The Armagh 1996, Avignonesi and Capanelle 50&50 2001, and Chateau Petit Village 1998. Tel: 6438 1120

Exclusive sips

The newly launched FairPrice Finest @ Scotts offers not only a large variety of products, including a premium delicatessen counter run by Friends, but also a walk-in wine cellar offering a good range of fine wines, live oysters from a special oyster tank, a wide variety of cut cheeses, and a dedicated corner for coffee connoisseurs. Among the top selections from its wine cellar are Champagne P. Louis Martin, Alkoomi Blackbutt 2007, and other wines from the vineyards and winery located in the cool Frankland River region in Western Australia, all exclusive to FairPrice Finest.

Meet with Patrice Pinet

The president, general manager and master blender of Courvoisier was in town to launch the Courvoisier Centenary Collection.

BY KENNY LEONG

Do you remember your first sip of Cognac?

The first time I had a great Cognac experience was actually not in France. It was in the Netherlands, where a few Dutch university schoolmates offered me a Courvoisier. Hapless! It was the first time I tasted something of such exceptional quality. I was 19 at that time and it was an amazing experience. In France, it's common to discover wines when you're young, but spirits usually come a little later, when you're about 20 or 30 years old.

Are there secrets to appreciating a glass of Courvoisier?

Oh yes, the way to wine and appreciate Courvoisier is to taste the Cognac with a glass and wait about a minute before you pick up the glass to appreciate the aroma and flavour. It is only when the alcohol smell dissipates that you get the delicate aromas. At Courvoisier we call this the "minute mystique".

How would you enjoy the Courvoisier and Courvoisier 21?

I would enjoy the 15 chilled on the rocks. And why not try it with seafood, or shellfish or with starters. This is preferred for after dinner, or to accompany dessert or with chocolate or a cigar. Or drink it the traditional way, as a digestif.

What do you love most about your job?

It's a great pleasure to taste Cognac batches handed down from my predecessors. We have a large inventory of Cognacs and when we discover that we have a Cognac that has been aged for 20 years, it's always a pleasure to taste it and discover the aromas, especially from Cognacs 20, 30 or 40 years old. And how I am making Cognacs that will be distributed and used by someone else 20, 30 or 40 years later. It's good to enjoy the past and think about the future.

