

WELCOME *CHANGES*

Drummond Club member **Simon Calabria** loves talking about wine. Here are some of the standout reds he recommends you uncork this winter.



**Yalumba's
FDR1A Barossa
Cabernet Shiraz
2006 (\$40)**



**Majella
The Musician
Coonawarra
Cabernet Shiraz
2008 (\$18)**



**Spinifex
Taureau
2007 (\$34)**



**Greenstone
Heathcote
Shiraz
2007 (\$35)**

When it comes to food and wine, I just love the change of seasons. Based in Melbourne, the crisp mornings and cool evenings that arrive around Easter truly mark the end of summer. It's at this time that the flavours we crave also start to change. There's a move from fresh, light summer foods to those more likely to be labelled 'comfort': slower cooked meats and warmer and earthier flavours. The weather also demands we change our selection of wines.

During autumn, I look for white varietals with a bit more texture (such as chardonnay, viognier, pinot gris) and some with age—preferably riesling and semillon. With reds, I tend towards those of medium weight—Spanish and Italian varietals such as tempranillo, sangiovese and nebbiolo as well as pinot noir and cooler climate shiraz.

As we move from autumn to the cold of winter I look forward to finding new hearty reds (shiraz, cabernet sauvignon, durif and old vine grenache and mataro/mouvedre) as well as rediscovering some old favourites. Last winter I was particularly impressed with **Yalumba's FDR1A Barossa Cabernet Shiraz 2004 (\$37)**. It's rare to find current release wines with bottle age and the 2004 FDR1A shows lovely development and highlights the magic of this quintessential Australian blend. Look out for the just released 2006 vintage.

Inspired by the style of the FDR1A, I keenly sought other cabernet/shiraz blends and discovered **Majella The Musician Coonawarra Cabernet Shiraz 2008 (\$18)**. One of my favourite makers in Coonawarra, I normally opt for the straight Majella Cabernet Sauvignon or Shiraz. Perhaps without the same ageing potential as the single varietals, the 2008 Musician displays elegant black fruits, herb notes, and fine tannins. Unquestionably Coonawarra, a gorgeous drink and good value.

Another maker to consistently impress me over the past few vintages

is Spinifex—a producer of blends from old Barossa vineyards. My winter pick is the **Spinifex Taureau 2007 (\$34)**, a blend of tempranillo, carignan, cabernet sauvignon and graciano, all juicy red and dark fruit characters, with savoury hints and great palate depth. Grab a bottle for a hearty casserole; it's also my pick to drink curled up in front of the fire.

A bit like playing a new golf course for the first time and only remembering one or two standout holes, often you come across a new winery where only one or two of the wines grab your attention. Not so for Greenstone Vineyard from Heathcote. I enjoyed all their current reds, and it's the **Greenstone Heathcote Shiraz 2007 (\$35)** that I recommend. Made in limited quantities, it displays spice and elegance with the unmistakable dusty tannins from Heathcote. Not a big brooding winter red, but one that drinks beautifully and reminds me of the shiraz-based wines from the Rhone Valley in France.

With good current release wines, it can be easy to forget the wonderful characteristics of aged wine. A big bold red on release will often benefit from some time in the cellar. Even with only an extra year or two, these wines display more elegance and complexity. Great winter drinking. If you've got your own cellar you'll understand what I mean. If not, look at your local wine shop for current releases with a few years age (such as the FDR1A) or re-released cellar stock, and older vintages on restaurant wine lists. Otherwise, it's never too late to start a cellar—buy some extra bottles of an old favourite or a new find, and hide them for a year or two.

Prices shown are RRP per bottle.

Simon operates Winecall, an internet/mail order-based wine business. For more information go to www.winecall.com.au