



A Reserve Yellow Wallaby From Yellow Tail

Posted by [drinknectar](#)

Yellow Tail makes a reserve wine? This was my thought and the question I heard several times over when I told people I was reviewing Yellow Tail wine. According to the print material, "The fruit used is taken from Australia's premium cool climate regions to maintain elegance, finesse and length of flavor. Great wine begins with the best grapes for [yellow tail] Reserve. You can taste the difference." This is what I wanted to determine, could you taste the difference?

Over the last 30 years the Casella family has taken [Yellow Tail](#) from small production to over 11 million cases, making them one of the largest wine exporters in the world. In 2001 the little yellow wallaby was introduced to the US in an agreement with W.J. Deutsch. Americans fell in love to the sip of 8.5 million cases making Yellow Tail one of the most recognized wine brands in the US.

At prices between \$12-\$15 the five Yellow Tail Reserve wines (Pinot Grigio, Chardonnay, Merlot, Shiraz, and Cabernet Sauvignon) are about twice the price of the non-reserve line. I'll admit I had my share of Yellow Tail magnum bottles of Shiraz from Costco. The fruity and slightly disjointed wine used to work as a standby from time to time (especially in my early wine exploration days). Now, however, I've discovered that a step up in price is well worth the drinking experience. I'm pretty curious to see what twice the price gets the consumer.

The reserve packaging is a picture of great branding. The use of a black label and silver foil wallaby convey quality while maintaining a tie to the core brand elements. The bottles seem to be slightly weightier as well. After receiving the wine, my step-son walked in the room and said, "oooh, these must be expensive." He's a pretty astute and observant 13 year old and has a keen eye for design and marketing. After noting the name, he said, "Oh, they're only Yellow Tail." Interesting...



The NectarView:

2008 Yellow Tail Reserve Merlot – The 100% Merlot is from six regions in Australia, mostly King and Alpine Valley. The various fruit spent between 6-12 months in a range of new and used American and French oak barrels. With a soft burgundy rust color in the glass, the wine was fairly translucent. The nose on the wine was fairly woody like water logged wine soaked piece of cedar. Some underpinnings of sour red fruit graced the nose to. In the mouth the wine is soft and slightly unassuming with presentations of sour cherry on the mid palate. Hints of vanilla poke through the light tannin finish. At \$12-\$15 this is a drinkable wine but in comparison to the [Velvet Devil on the Under \\$10 Team](#), I'll pass on this one 3-/5.



3-/5 Pleasant wine, no off flavors,
lacks balance and/or OPR (80-83 pts)

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2008 Yellow Tail Reserve Shiraz – The 100% Shiraz is from the Langhorne, McLaren Vale, Padthaway, Barossa and Wrattenbully areas in South Eastern Australia. The fruit spent varying amounts of time (6-12 months) in new and used American and French oak. In the glass the wine is similar in tone to the Merlot but with a darker center. Slightly less translucent but could be the same wine to the untrained eye. A traditional aroma profile for what I've experienced in Yellow Tail Shiraz offering off scents of dark fruit and pepper. In the mouth the wine is fairly large and squishy with well balanced play of blackberry, blueberry and pepper spice. The oak components are more subtle and offer more layered flavor to the profile. While still on the simple side, the bold and rich flavor will appeal to a large audience. Having had my fair share of non-reserve Shiraz, at \$12-\$15 this is definitely a step up in flavor and quality. 3/5



3/5 Solid effort, good OPR,
Worthy of trying (84-86 pts)

2008 Yellow Tail Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon – A multi-regional blend of 100% Cabernet from various sources in South Eastern Australia. As in the other two reserves, this fruit in this wine spent 6-12 months in new and used French and American oak. The Cabernet is thick in the glass with hints of ruby and rust color around the edge of the glass. The aroma profile suggests a well thought out combination of dark fruit, oak and hints of mint. I really enjoyed the nose of this wine. In the mouth the wine is big on fruit and big on oak. The superstar in this wine is the presentation of mint. The finish is average with moderate tannin. In comparison to other \$12-15 price point Cabernet Sauvignon, this certainly can stand with them. The subtle differences in like/dislike could be a matter of preference and not quality. 3/5



In summary, the reserve line of Yellow Tail provided a decent step up in quality and flavor from the regular line. These wines could be a natural next step in people's evolution of expanding their palate without breaking the bank. The brand familiarity certainly helps in moving people up. Each of the wines, in retrospect, seemed to offer a similar mouth feel and flavor component with the subtle difference being the finish. On each bottle there is a two word description of the wine, i.e. "Dark and Spicy" "Bold and Thick," my brief description of the reserve line is, "Better not Stunning." If you see these wines at or around \$10, give them a try for a comparison to what you know of the non-reserve line.

**Wines were provided as an industry sample with the intention to review*