



STEP UP IN QUALITY
\$15 Yellow Tail 2008 Reserve
 Chardonnay
 South-East Australia, various
www.casellawines.com.au

The story: The Yellow Tail is an extraordinary export success in the US, its standard range that sells here for around \$10 at its core with fruit mostly from NSW's Riverina. The reserve steps into cooler Victorian and SA regions – a real step up.
The flavour: A little gingery oak to begin, with reasonably well crafted melon ripeness, comfortable weight and a decent zip in the palate. At this price a very good drop.

RATING: ★★★☆☆
 VALUE: Fair enough
 VERDICT: A crowd pleaser



BREEZILY BRIGHT
\$16 Willow Bridge 2010 Dragonfly
 Sauvignon Blanc Semillon
 Geographe region, WA
www.willowbridge.com.au

The story: Signature stuff from WA's south-west, here 25km from the coast out of Bunbury, elevation and breeze cooling off the grapes while good wine-making offers textural elements often not seen at this price.
The flavour: This blend can wax and wane towards either variety's focal characteristics, and this heads to the herbal/grassy sauvignon side of the fence. Terrific minerality and presence working a treat.

RATING: ★★★★★☆
 VALUE: Good
 VERDICT: Order chicken caesar salad



PUNCHING POWERED
\$19 Hardy's Oomoo 2008 Grenache
 Shiraz Mourvedre
 McLaren Vale, SA
www.hardys.com.au

The story: This triple-treat style can be so many wines in one and here it's just about your all-Aussie blend, the grapes from a range of vineyards and districts around the vales, carefully pieced together for an eminently drinkable red.
The flavour: Good fruit, a touch of oak and a bit of the old blood lip as well as garden herbs make up the aromatic spectrum with middleweight punching power and mouth appeal. One for a Mediterranean feast.

RATING: ★★★☆☆
 VALUE: Look for discounts
 VERDICT: Easy slurping



RED CHALLENGED
\$22 Paulett 2006 Cabernet Merlot
 Clare Valley, SA
www.paulettwines.com.au

The story: A blend of 82 per cent cabernet and 18 per cent merlot, this represents another red side of the coin to the fabulous Paulett group of rieslings - the '05 aged release Polish Hill River riesling just won the best in the world title at the Canberra International riesling challenge.
The flavour: A tasty mix of violet aromas and good berry and plum flavours, softening now with friendly structures, background earthiness and oak. Appealing ease in its drinking.

RATING: ★★★★★☆
 VALUE: Very good
 VERDICT: Beef and black bean