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SUNDAY

Top-value
bottlers
12-13

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Top drops and superb value



This is the second in a two-part series as Graeme Phillips looks back at some of the best-value wines he has tasted this year

FOUR-BOTTLE WINES \$40 AND UNDER

GREYWACKE 2010 SAUVIGNON BLANC, \$24: Pungent, nose-prickling aromas and a palate showing lovely ripe gooseberry, herb and citrus flavours underpinned by hints of minerally savouriness, the acid beautifully crisp and zesty and finishing with a long, lingering, tropical-fruit after-taste. 13.5 per cent.
www.greywacke.com

LEANING CHURCH 2010 SAUVIGNON BLANC, \$26: Fresh, zesty, citrus and ripe guava aromas with slightly peppery herbal flavours on a tight, tangy, beautifully weighted and textured palate before finishing long, clean and refreshingly crisp. Lovely, very complete drinking. 12.3 per cent.
www.leaningchurch.com.au

FROGMORE CREEK 2009 SAUVIGNON BLANC, \$26: A pale, pastel gold colour and a delicious nutty, geranium floral nose, the palate showing intense, concentrated herbal and passionfruit notes on top of developing hints of toast and honey, all beautifully balanced with lively acid running to a long, zippy finish. Lovely drinking. 12.1 per cent.
www.frogmorecreek.com.au

KATE HILL 2010 RIESLING, \$24: A multi-gold medal-winner with fragrant aromas of dried flowers followed by a tight, precisely balanced palate showing delicate citrus and

flinty, minerally characters finishing long, refreshingly crisp and with just the slightest hint of sweetness. 12.0 per cent.
www.katehillwines.com.au

POOLEY 2009 RIESLING, \$26: Lime, herbal, slatey mineral and honey characters on both the nose and palate, beautifully tight, pure and juicy with the mouth-puckering acid just beginning to soften and the palate opening to provide a long, crisply dry finish and a delicious aftertaste. 12.0 per cent.
www.pooleywines.com.au

COAL VALLEY VINEYARD 2008 RIESLING, \$26: A little age here provides a wonderful fragrant and flavour overlay of honeyed richness and complexity to the citrusy fruit flavours, the palate and finish still beautifully tight, firm, crisply dry and lingering. 12.5 per cent.
www.coalvalley.com.au

PETER LEHMANN 2005 WIGAN RIESLING, \$30: Wonderfully attractive floral and lime-leaf aromatics followed by a tangy, citrus-accented palate underscored, softened and filled out by the delicious honeyed flavours and complexity that age brings to top Australian rieslings, the finish still beautifully tight, crisp, dry and lingering. A beauty. 11.5 per cent.
www.peterlehmannwines.com

FROGMORE CREEK 2009 EVERMORE RIESLING, \$38: A love-it or hate-it style where Tassie riesling's normal light and crystalline-

pure citrusy, lime-cordial-like fruit and fresh natural acidity are here complexed by oaky, oatmealy and yeasty characters and a touch of aged honeyiness. It's certainly left-field and comes as a surprise, but I loved it. 13.1 per cent.
www.frogmorecreek.co.au

BREAM CREEK 2009 SCHONBURGER, \$23: Sweet lychee and crushed lantana-leaf nose, the palate more tropical fruity with persistent musk stick, ripe custard, apple and lychee flavours nicely balanced and cut by fresh, cleansing acid. 12.9 per cent.
www.breamcreekvineyard.com.au

MOUNT PLEASANT 2005 ELIZABETH SEMILLON, \$23: A delicious, toast and honey, herbal and citrus flavoured drop, still wonderfully juicy and bracingly crisp, dry, minerally and clean. With its age and development, it's a bargain. 11.5 per cent.
www.mountpleasantwines.com.au

XANADU 2009 SAUVIGNON BLANC SEMILLON, \$28: A citrus-accented style with a touch of tropical fruitiness and barrel-ferment texture and weight making for a soft, generously proportioned palate still with sauv blanc's customary verve and vitality and a lovely crisp, lingering finish. 13.0 per cent.
www.xanaduwines.com

CULLEN MANGAN VINEYARD 2010 SAUVIGNON BLANC SEMILLON, \$35: Very pale with an

appealing natural yeast funkiness behind its citrus and tropical fruit notes on both the nose and palate, the palate intense, refined, enriched and filled out by a touch of oak before a long, beautifully balanced and refreshing finish. 13.0 per cent.

www.cullenwines.com.au

MOUNT AVOCA 2009 FUME BLANC, \$24: A fairly restrained nose before citrus and lime-marmalade flavours show on a light, elegantly structured palate with subtle oak adding depth, hints of smokiness and an appealing lush texture, the finish dry, clean and refreshed by lovely balancing acid. 12.0 per cent.

www.mountavoca.com

MUD HOUSE 2010 PINOT GRIS, \$22: An aromatic, flavoursome and weighty wine, as you'd expect from a gris style, with spiced pear and nutty flavours on top of a deeper yeasty/earthy complexity, rich and round in the mouth, with good acid cleaning up the finish. 14.0 per cent.

www.mudhouse.co.nz

DERWENT ESTATE 2010 PINOT GRIS, \$26: An attractive coppery blush with freshly cut hay and spicy ripe peach notes on the nose and in the mouth, the palate fresh, light, intense and silkily textured with a nice tangy, food-friendly lift running through to the finish. 13.4 per cent.

www.derwentestate.com.au

HOLLY'S GARDEN 2008 PINOT GRIS, \$26: A bright straw/gold colour with dried flowers and marzipan aromas and lush flavours of fig, nougat, spiced pear and subtle oak, the palate richness cut and beautifully balanced by lovely fresh acidity. A beauty and an excellent food wine. 13.5 per cent.

www.hollysgarden.com.au

STEFANO LUBIANA 2010 PINOT GRIGIO, \$28: A pale golden tinge and slightly closed nose before musk and pear flavours show on a beautifully balanced and wonderfully subtle palate that is richer, less primary fruit-driven and more textured than previous Lubiana releases. 13.5 per cent.

www.slw.com.au

PETER LEHMANN 2005 MARGARET SEMILLON, \$30: A lovely, luminous golden colour with age providing delicious lemon curd, linseed and toasty aromas and flavours supported by the freshness and vitality of good citrusy acid, everything perfectly in balance and a

finish that's very more-ish. 11.5 per cent.

www.peterlehmannwines.com

BROKENWOOD BELFORD BLOCK 8 2006 SEMILLON, \$36: This is just beginning to show the golden luminosity and developed lime cordial, honey and buttery toastiness that age brings to the best Hunter drops. The richness develops despite the low alcohol, while the wine has retained its fresh, citrusy core and finish. 11.0 per cent.

www.brokenwood.com.au

FROGMORE CREEK 2008 CHARDONNAY, \$30: Subtle nutty, oatmeal and caramel/toffee nose and flavours on a lean and tight, beautifully balanced palate that is just beginning to fill out to show delicious butterscotch flavours and a long, silkily textured finish. A wine of exceptional finesse and a few more years in the cellar should be well rewarded. 13.7 per cent.

www.frogmorecreek.com.au

FREYCINET 2009 CHARDONNAY, \$30: A fuller, more forward and, at this stage, more generously flavoured style than the Frogmore, with complex nougat and malty richness underpinning tangy grapefruit and ripe melon flavours, the palate smooth, vibrant and long, again with the promise of even better years ahead. 13.5 per cent.

www.freycinetvineyard.com.au

FROGMORE CREEK 2010 ICED GEWURZTRAMINER, \$26: A gold/straw colour, the nose and palate a delicious combination of gerwurz's varietal spice, lychee and rose water characters filled out by the muscat-like sweetness of dried fruits and fresh lemon zest with lovely, youthful freshness, intensity, length and balance. 10.0 per cent.

www.frogmorecreek.com.au

DE BORTOLI 2008 NOBLE ONE, \$33: With more than 300 gold medals, De Bortoli's Noble One has long been at the forefront of Australian botrytised dessert wines. A burnished bronze/gold colour, this is lusciously sweet, rich and deep glaze apricot-flavoured, the richness cut and balanced and the finish freshened by tangy acidity. 10 per cent.

www.debortoli.com.au

HOLM OAK 2009 PINOT NOIR, \$32: A powerful, complex and yet elegantly structured wine with

appealing char and wild earthy elements backing the cherry and black-plum-like fruit, the palate intense, fleshy, nicely balanced and beautifully silky with superfine tannins rounding out the finish. 13.5 per cent.

www.holmoakvineyards.com.au

GREY SANDS 2008 PINOT NOIR, \$40 (CD): An appealing earthy nose, the big, richly textured palate too showing more savoury depth and funky complexity rather than straight, simple fruit, with flavours intriguingly suggestive of slightly mephitic game, mushroom and undergrowth before plum and dark berry fruits make their appearance towards the finish. An out-of-left-field style that many true pinotphiles will love. 14.6 per cent.

www.greysands.com.au

FREEMAN 2007 RONDINELLA CORVINA SECCO, \$30: Big, bold and beautiful. A powerful, concentrated and amazingly balanced, supple and elegant amalgam of sweet/sour cherry fruit, aniseed and deep savoury flavours all handling the big alcohol with ease. 15.0 per cent.

www.freemanvineyards.com.au

GRANT BURGE 2008 THE HOLY TRINITY GSM, \$40: Scented and flavoured by sweet, ripe plum, dark chocolate and coffee in a typically fruit-driven Barossan style with a palate that's silky smooth, only medium weight yet nicely concentrated and intense. Despite a sweetish finish, this is one of the best, best-balanced and food-friendliest Holy Trinities I've seen. 14.5 per cent.

www.grantburgewines.com.au

ZEMA ESTATE 2006 CABERNET MERLOT, \$25: Age has mellowed rather than wearied this 60:25:9:6 blend of cabernet sauvignon:merlot:cabernet franc and malbec. Still a vibrant red/purple with attractive cassis-like aromas before a nicely rounded and elegantly balanced palate showing sweet briar and berry flavours offset against tannins that are still firm, savoury and pleasingly drying. Good value and an excellent food wine. 14.0 per cent.

www.zema.com.au

CAPE MENTELLE 2008 SHIRAZ, \$40: Dense purple/black with dark berry, spice and foresty notes on both the nose and palate, medium-bodied, smoothly textured and with good depth of flavour, finishing long and nicely dry with firm, perfectly

integrated tannins. 13.5 per cent.
www.capementelle.com.au

FIVE-BOTTLE WINES

GLAETZER-DIXON FAMILY 2010 UBERBLANC RIESLING, \$24 :

Juicy, vibrant, spicy green apple, ginger and citrusy lime flavours, with lovely clean acid providing a sherbet-like lift and freshness, the palate lean, precise and nicely concentrated, finishing long, crunchy and refreshingly dry. 11.3 per cent.

www.gdfwinemakers.com

CRAIGOW 2008 RIESLING, \$28: At

three years of age, it's still very pale and with just the first suggestions of what the future will bring. Simply a deliciously flavoured, tight and precisely structured wine that will live for ages and get even better. 11.8 per cent.

www.craigow.com.au

BREAM CREEK 2008 RIESLING

VGR, \$24: Beautifully aromatic, deeply flavoured and lushly textured, with the medium fruit sweetness now enriched by attractive aged honey and caramel characters, the palate and finish still wonderfully fresh and tangy. Delicious wine. 11.8 per cent.

www.breamcreekvineyard.com.au

STEFANO LUBIANA 2009 PINOT

GRIGIO, \$29: Good varietal aromas of freshly sliced Nashi pear, the palate deliciously lean and focused, faintly spicy and musky with a lovely crisp, savoury-dry finish and aftertaste. 12.5 per cent.

www.slw.com.au

ROSS HILL 2010 PINNACLE

SERIES PINOT GRIS, \$30: Very pale straw colour with distinct spicy, smoky, yeasty, honey aromas and similar flavours layering a mid-weight but complex and richly intense palate balanced and underlined by a fine line of crisp, fresh acidity finishing long and very more-ish. 12.5 per cent.

www.rosshillwines.com.au

BROKENWOOD 2006 BELFORD

BLOCK 8 SEMILLON, \$36: Both the nose and palate have that quite delicious, sweet/sourness suggestive of lemon curd, herbs and honey, beautiful flavours that make your mouth water, with relatively low alcohol and juicy acidity making for a wonderfully light, crisp and refreshingly dry finish. A beauty that will get even better. 11.0 per cent.

www.brokenwood.com.au

BREAM CREEK 2008

CHARDONNAY, \$25: Attractive green/gold colour with fragrant aromas of citrus and ripe peach followed by a beautifully weighted and balanced palate showing grapefruit and delicious lemon curd flavours, with the citrusy notes providing a long, crisply refreshing finish. Lovely drinking and exceptional value. 13.7 per cent.

www.breamcreekvineyard.com.au

CULLEN KEVIN JOHN 2009

CHARDONNAY, \$105: Attractive pale green colour with lovely nectarine, peach and grapefruit flavours providing a fresh lift to deeper yeasty, oatmeal and subtle oak notes, all beautifully woven together in a wine of great finesse, complexity and real individual character. Beautiful drinking. 13.5 per cent.

www.cullenwines.com.au

WINSTEAD ESTATE 2007 PINOT

NOIR, \$30 (CD): A deep, black cherry colour with complex aromas and flavours of dark plum, spice, wood smoke and hints of earthy undergrowth, the smoothly textured, mid-weight palate a wonderful meshing of power, elegance, depth and intensity, with the flavours building in the glass to a dry, savoury, firmly tannic finish and a long, lingering aftertaste. 13.5 per cent.

www.winstead.com.au

BREAM CREEK 2009 PINOT

NOIR, \$34: A lovely, perfumed and pure-fruit flavoured pinot, soft and silkily textured with glace cherries and floral notes on top of more savoury characters, the finish long, soft and beautifully balanced. A young wine that's already very much

together, one that no doubt will age and develop but is now drinking at its freshest best. 13.6 per cent.

www.breamcreekvineyard.com.au

ELMSLIE 2007 PINOT NOIR, \$42:

Spicy black plum nose mixed with smoky, foresty complexities and a deep, underlying French-like earthiness with similar flavours on a silkily textured, harmonious and fully mature palate, the finish intense, beautifully balanced, succulent and lingers for ages. Beautiful drinking. 13.2 per cent.

elmslie@bigpond.net.au

FROGMORE CREEK EVERMORE

2007 PINOT NOIR, \$65: The palish colour doesn't prepare you for the quite wonderful depth, multi-layered flavours, refined power and elegance of this wine which, despite its age, is only now beginning to hit its straps and still has many years ahead of it. A cracker. 13.5 per cent.

www.frogmorecreek.com.au

GREY SANDS 2006 MERLOT, \$35

(CD): Not as plump or fruit-driven plummy as many merlots, instead it is elegant, mid-weight and finely structured, showing its cool climate credentials in the purity and depth of its herbal/minty, black olive-like fruit, the drive and freshness of its balancing acid and the wine's delicious life, vitality and food-friendliness. This is what a food wine is all about and, while great drinking now, it still has plenty of time ahead of it. 13.7 per cent.

emailinfo@greysands.com.au

TAHBILK 2005 1860 VINES

SHIRAZ, \$160: Off 140-year-old vines vintaged in Tahbilk's 150th birthday year, this is a stunning combination of intensity, restrained power, elegance, balance and length, everything you could possibly want in a shiraz without the head-butting alcohol and fruit-extract sweetness of so many Australian old-vine shirazes. Pricey but absolutely delicious and a great food wine. 13.0 per cent.

www.tahbilk.com.au

