



# Fizzy Occasion.

Add some pop to your Valentine's Day with one of these new sparkling wines

WORDS ROBERTA MUIR



**Croser 1999 Late Disgorged** has just been released after nine years on yeast lees, giving it a creamy complex palate. The subtle fruit and freshness, good acidic backbone and dry, savoury finish are due to the cool, humid climate of South Australia's Piccadilly Valley. One of Australia's great sparklers. RRP AU\$50.



**Jacobs Creek 2006 Reserve** combines a hint of creaminess from extended bottle age with the fresh fruit flavours and aromas of cool-climate chardonnay and pinot noir. This wine delivers the value-for-money we've come to expect from the Jacobs Creek label. RRP AU\$20.



**Brown Brothers 2008 Limited Release Prosecco** from Victoria's King Valley (Australia's home of Italian varietals and wine styles) is this popular producer's first prosecco. With a fresh acidity, hints of pear and green apple and lingering citrus notes, it's a perfect aperitif. RRP AU\$18.90.



**Preece Moscato 2009** with just 6% alcohol, is the perfect natural "light" wine. Intensely fragrant with explosions of tropical fruit and a gentle spritz, it's great with fruit desserts, Asian flavours or blue cheese. RRP AU\$15.99.



**Aja (pronounced Asia) Blush** is a simple, slightly sweet, Moscato-style wine designed specifically to match Asian flavours. When the occasion calls for something other than beer (the natural accompaniment to spicy food) this vibrant pink fizz with rose, musk and Turkish delight aromas, and raspberry flavours may be just the thing. RRP AU\$20.



**Tim Knapstein NV Sparkling Shiraz** from South Australia's Clare Valley has an aroma of rich berry fruit over yeasty characters from 18 months spent on lees in the bottle. It has firm, fine tannins from aging in old barrels and a great balance of sweetness on the finish. RRP AU\$23.99.



**Veuve Clicquot NV Rosé in a limited edition Sakura ice jacket** is bound to impress. Pinot noir gives this wine depth, intensity and power, while chardonnay adds a soft elegance and pinot meunier contributes fruity roundness. The neoprene sheath keeps the bubbly at an ideal temperature for up to two hours — perfect for a romantic picnic! RRP AU\$110.

## BUBBLE TALK

Matt Skinner is an international wine writer, consultant and educator who believes that wine is for everyone, and enjoying it is a right, not a privilege. His book, *Thirsty Work*, has been published in 17 countries and 10 languages. We ask him for his take on the world of bubbles.

### What non-traditional varietals are you seeing in good sparkling wines lately?

Locally we're starting to see some great examples of the Italian grape prosecco such as Dal Zotto's and Brown Brothers'. There's also more and more quality Spanish cava being imported.



### What foods do you like to match with bubbles?

Japanese food, where the delicate textures and range of flavours — sweet, sour and salty — are a great match. I'm also a huge fan of great sparkling wine with fish and chips, as the bubbles and high acidity cut through the oil of fried foods.

### What do you think are the best value Aussie sparklers?

Either Banrock Station Brut NV or Jacobs Creek Reserve Pinot Chardonnay NV for sheer value at around AU\$10 a bottle, and then Yarra Burn Pinot Noir Chardonnay NV and Brown Brothers Prosecco 2008 for amazing value and style around AU\$20.

### And what bubbles do you drink when money's no object?

Louis Roederer Cristal 1990. It's tough to get now and costs a bomb, but on the few occasions I've had to drink it, it was close to perfection in a glass.

### Any tips for getting the most from sparkling wine?

Drinking sparkling from the right glass enhances the aromas and flavours; one of my favourite sparkling wine glasses is Plumm's vintage sparkling glass.

### What's your favourite "champagne" cocktail?

A classic Bellini — great white peach purée and prosecco.