



WINE NEWS WORDS **MAX ALLEN**

Wine Dux 2005

Oakridge vigneron tops elite wine-judging class and brings further kudos to multi-award-winning label.

Winemaker David Bicknell of Oakridge in the Yarra Valley has been awarded the Qantas Scholarship for finishing Dux of the 2005 Len Evans Wine Tutorial. Only 12 applicants are selected from hundreds of national and overseas aspirants each year, with many describing the prestigious five-day intensive course in wine judging as the best vinous finishing school in the world. This personal triumph comes on the back of the 2003 Oakridge Chardonnay winning two trophies at the Yarra Valley Wine Show – bringing its total haul to three trophies, six gold medals, four silver medals and

four bronze medals. It's a lovely, restrained wine that exemplifies Bicknell's approach to emphasising texture, subtlety and finesse.



NATURE CALLS Now there's another reason to visit Tahbilk in Victoria's Nagambie Lakes region: as well as the historic buildings, established vineyards, old-fashioned wines and spectacular setting, Tahbilk has opened a Wetlands and Wildlife Reserve. Visit www.tahbilk.com.au for more.

BEER FROM A WINERY

Refreshing, aromatic, complex, Bee Sting Honey Wheat Beer is the first to emerge from the new Barossa Valley Brewing company, based at the Chateau Yaldara winery at Lyndoch. Visit www.beesting.net.au for more.





TOP DROPS OF THE MONTH



BARGAIN

**2005 Lindemans Bin 65
Chardonnay, South Eastern
Australia, \$7.**

While most budget chardonnays seem to get sweeter and fatter, this old stalwart is more restrained, subtle and drinkable than ever.

Drink with fish and chips on the beach.



RED

**2005 Mitolo Jester Sangiovese
Rosé, McLaren Vale, SA, \$22.**

A brilliantly thirst-quenching wine that treads a very fine line between a rosé and a not-quite-so-light red. Heaps of raspberry and cherry fruit, juicy acidity and a dry, snappy, tangy finish. Lovely summer drop.

Drink at a picnic.



ONE FOR THE CELLAR

**2003 Charlie Melton
The Father in Law Shiraz,
Barossa/Clare, SA, \$25.**

A blend of Barossa and Clare shiraz, with the latter's violet-scented, licorice-like tannins holding the former's black fruit in check. Should get interesting in the next five years.

Drink with osso buco.



IMPORT

**2004 Bortoluzzi Pinot Grigio,
Venezia Giulia, Italy, \$30.**

If you're wondering, after trying all the Aussie examples around, what 'real' pinot grigio should taste like, try this: smells of grapes and a touch of spice, but is dry, minerally and nutty in the mouth.

Drink with seafood antipasto.



WHITE

**2005 Penfolds Cellar Reserve
Gewurztraminer, Eden Valley,
SA, \$30.**

This is a wonderfully complex, spicy, floral, tightly structured, and really seriously good gewurztraminer.

Drink with ginger-steamed snapper.



SPARKLING

**1998 Anderson Sparkling Shiraz,
Rutherglen, Vic, \$27.**

Undergrowth. That sweet, muggy smell of wet soil underfoot. A touch of truffle. Lots of warm, soft black fruit and chocolate. Not too sweet. A lovely, complex sparkling shiraz that will get better with cellaring.

Drink with roast Greek lamb.

FOR STOCKIST INFORMATION SEE P166.