

# the bullionaire

BULLION 130



We are really pleased to be working again with Kim Buckley, who has recently changed restaurants, to the "One Hated" Black by Ezard. Located in Sydney's Star City Casino, do yourself a favour and have a bite to eat the next time you win a few dollars at the tables, or even if you lose a few dollars. Whatever the occasion, you will always be able to drink something great from the wine list that Kim has put together.

This restaurant is a contemporary take on the "Steak House", so we thought it would be fun to run with this theme and look at wines that are great with meat. Red Wine and meat are considered a match made in heaven as they tend to be on the opposite ends of the taste spectrum. The tannins in red wine give a drying sensation on your palate which counteracts the fattiness (or sweetness) of the meat. Of course there are plenty of examples of red wine and white meat pairings, but whenever in doubt and you have a full bodied red, then stick with a good bit of red meat. For the vegetarians out there, do not despair, these wines are also bloody good by themselves.

Kim has chosen a variety of wines from different regions, but they all

have a texture and weight that make these pretty serious wines and lend themselves to meat, meat and more meat.

Form the South West of France in a region called Cahors, we have the **2008 Chateau du Cedre**. This wine and this region are all about Malbec. Chateau du Cedre is widely regarded as the leading estate in Cahors and whilst this wine is big and bold, it is not over the top. This region was a real discovery for me, as I have tended to associate Malbec with the wines of Argentina. Well no more. It is a fabulous wine that marries the power and elegance I love in a wine.

Kim then chose a wine from a winery that she has only just come back from. One of the importers took a few Sommeliers on a trip to Europe and one of the wineries they visited was Fontanna Fredda in Piedmont Italy. Some members might remember we had a white wine from this producer a few years back (2009 Fontana Fredda Arenis ). Well this time it is the **2008 Fontana Fredda Papagena Barbera d'Alba**. It is quite a mouthful, both in name and wine. Don't be scared by the names on European labels as they generally refer to regions or towns, just like we do here. So for this wine, you have the name of the producer, their brand name (Papagena) and the Grape and town name (Barbera and Alba) Simple really. I have tried a few Barbera d'Alba's in the past, but they have been easy drinking styles, as most producers in this area focus on the Nebbiolo grape variety and Barolo. Well there has been a real resurgence of the Barbera grape variety in the last 10 years and you can see this in this wine. Riper fruit and greater use of French oak have boasted this wine and turned it into a real stunner. You will still have the elegance that we look for in a wine, but it has this magic combination of cherries, chocolate and toasty oak. A great wine

The last red is a classic GSM blend from the home of these blends in Australia, the Barossa Valley. (In Australia GSM, stands for Grenache, Shiraz, Mourvedre) The Barossa has gone through a resurgence in the last 5-6 years as they have toned back on the alcohol, oak and tannins. The Barossa is all about big robust wines, but a lot of people think they went over the top as they chased reviews and rankings from several key media outlets in America. Robert Parker and the US magazine Wine Spectator favoured the big wines the Barossa produced and so when up and coming producers in the 1990's started getting scores of 98 and 99, then doubling their prices and selling out in weeks, everyone else followed. Wineries then focused on big flavours over elegance, and whilst these wines tasted great on a tasting bench, at the dinner table they were a little over whelming. Well, let's be honest, completely over whelming. Also these wines did not age that well, falling apart after 8-10 years. Thankfully those media outlets don't hold the

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# THE WINES

## 2008 CHATEAU DU CEDRE Cahors, South West France



Cahors is a region in the South West of France which is all about red wine, or more exactly, all about Malbec. This is one of the lesser known grape varieties used in the red wine blends of Bordeaux, but it has found its home in the drier climates of Cahors, plus in the new world of Argentina where it is also generating a lot of buzz and excitement.

For a wine to bear the Cahors appellation, it must consist of 70% Malbec, which has prospered in the regions clay and limestone terraces. Here it produces wonderfully structured wines that have a real perfume to them and display a distinctive mineral character. I have not tried too many wines from Cahors, but after tasting this wine, I am hooked and I can understand why these are considered some of the best value wines coming out of France.

Château du Cèdre is widely regarded as the leading estate in Cahors and is home to brothers Pascal and Jean-Marc Verhaeghe. Pascal is a mathematician and perfectionist at heart who came to winemaking later in life. Although his father founded the winery in 1956, it wasn't until a stint in Burgundy that the winemaking bug bit him

and sent him back to the family estate. Since then he has crafted delightful wines that marry the power of Bordeaux with the delicacy of Burgundy, at least in my humble opinion.

The Chateau du Cedre consists of 90% Malbec, 5% Merlot and 5% Tannat. However this is all about Malbec. Whilst this wine is big and bold, it is not over the top. The colour is almost opaque with copious quantities of layered fruit filling your palate, dominated by chewy rich, black fruit, chocolate and spices. Full bodied with strong tannins, it is a fabulous wine that marries the power and elegance I love in a wine. To achieve this finesse and power at the same time they have scaled back on the use of new oak in recent vintages. The use of older and larger oak barrels has seen the wines from this winery shine in recent years, particularly from the classic 2008 vintage.

### FOOD MATCHINGS

Of course your first point of call is a medium rare piece of steak, but the wines of Cahors, are also perfect with the local food which is based on wild game, truffles, mushrooms, duck and goose. You are looking for big strong hearty flavours to match the structure and tannins of the wine.

### CELLARING POTENTIAL

This wine would easily keep for the next 3-8 years, and it will be drinking at its peak for another 4 years. In the meantime, decant for 20 minutes and you will replicate this aging experience and get to really enjoy this wine right now.

## 2012 MASSENA MOONLIGHT RUN - GRENACHE (57%) MATARO (31%) SHIRAZ (7%) AND CINSAUT (5%)

### Barossa Valley Australia



In earlier selections we have included a few of the great Grenache based wines from the Cote du Rhone in France. I was delighted when Kim suggested we look at a great winemaking team from the Barossa Valley and what they could do with this famous blend. In Australia these blends are respectfully referred to as GSM's and they are delicious. However if not correctly handled they can be dominated by the fruit cake spectrum of fruit flavours and can quickly become over the top if the big and bold Barossa style is not tamed. This Massena wine however is right in the groove and whilst completely different to the wines of the Rhone valley in France, you can see the resemblance in the structure and weight.

Established in 2000, Massena is owned by Dan Standish and Jaysen Collins, who until 2006 were employed full time at other Barossa wineries, Dan as winemaker at Torbreck and Jaysen as General Manager at Turkey Flat. (A pretty impressive set of resumes.)

Their initial partnership was forged over the repetitive nightly drives from the Barossa to the Clare valley whilst working a harvest in 1999. During the drive home they would often crave a soft slurpy wine to wash down a hard night's work. From this idea, they decided to branch out on their own with a little side project and in 2000 they released their first vintage of Moonlight Run and they have never looked back.

They source their fruit from dedicated growers in the North Western Barossa areas of Greenock, Kalimna and Koonunga Hill, all from dry farmed, low yielding vines up to 120 years of age. Gaining access to this quality of fruit is never easy and will make or break any new wine project, but it was their extensive background in the region that helped them out in the early stages.

They tend to specialise in the traditional Barossa Valley grape varieties of Shiraz and Grenache, but they also experiment with a lot of lesser known varieties (Petite Syrah, Barbera, Dolcetto and Roussanne). All their wines however show a real sense of restraint and elegance in comparison to most Barossa winemakers. However, don't be fooled, this wine is full bodied and packed with flavour, but it is always about balance with this style of wine.

This wine is inky black, with a hint of the fruit cake character that I associate with these blends and this region; however it offers so much more. Rich and full bodied it has an underlying earthy meatiness and some spice and black cherries on the back palate that really makes this wine so enjoyable.

### FOOD MATCHINGS

Grilled meats are the way to go with this wine. Steak, lamb chops, pork chops etc. Get a nice char grilled action on the meat, which will perfectly match the fruit sweetness of the Grenache. Then it is just about sitting back and enjoying the food and wine. Hopefully the company is pretty good too.

### CELLARING POTENTIAL

This wine has that real up front juicy, fleshy character that I really like, but it can easily cellar for another 4-5 years. But again why wait, just decant for 15 minutes before you tuck into your char grilled medium rare steak.

## 2011 PAZO SEÑORANS ALBARIÑO RIAS BAIXAS *NW Spain*



I have been waiting for one of the sommeliers to select an Albariño from Spain, as it is a wine style I have loved for a long time, plus there is that cool story that relates to the Australian Wine industry.

Rias Baixas (pronounced Ree-ass By-shass) is the premier white wine region of Spain, planted almost exclusively to one variety - Albariño (90%). Since gaining its own DO classification in 1988, Albariño and Rias Baixas have taken the wine world by storm. And Australia is no exception. Most wines lists you see will have an Albariño from this region and in most cases more than one.

The area is dominated by soils that are largely granite, with some chalk and clay elements – even the posts for supporting the grapevines are made from granite instead of wood. The earth offers lots of minerals but few nutrients, perfect for wine-growing. The slopes encourage good drainage, important given the high rainfall of the area. The neighbouring Atlantic Ocean provides not only rain but also humidity, so canopy management to encourage air circulation is vital. Fortunately, late summer is usually the driest part of the year,

providing perfect ripening conditions for harvest in October.

Pazo de Señorans is a small estate, founded in 1989 that produced its first vintage in 1990 and has quickly won a reputation for its consistently high quality. The winemaker, Ana Quintela has been with the company for twenty years, overseeing production of some 30,000 cases, 15% of which come from the property's own vines, supplemented by fruit from around 200 small contract growers.

This Pazo Señorans Albariño is a standard setting example of top quality Albariño. From harvest to the bottle, the grapes are handled with almost loving care: they are picked by hand, delivered to the winery in small 18kg boxes, crushed in a pneumatic press and fermented in stainless steel vats. The wines are aged for long periods in stainless steel tanks, in order to ensure the wines acquire great character and complexity.

Lovely aromas of pear and melon are present on the nose, but it has this subtle lanolin character that I associate with older Hunter Semillons that takes the wine to another level. There is also the nuttiness and minerality that really shines in this wine. Some Albariños can be a little flabby, as the region is pretty hot, but this wine has a laser like acidity. Full bodied and packed with flavour it is a very serious wine.

### FOOD MATCHINGS

Albariño wines have a roundness and a level of acidity, which allows them to pair beautifully with a wide range of cuisines. While they are exceptional with fresh fish and seafood of all kinds, they are also delicious with chicken, pork and veal dishes as well as a variety of cheeses. Albariño from Rias Baixas also refreshes and cools off the palate, making it an ideal accompaniment to many spicy cuisines from around the world, including Indian, Chinese, Thai, and Vietnamese food. So whilst it is not the perfect match with a big piece of steak, it does go with a most of the white meats.

### CELLARING POTENTIAL

This wine is in the zone right now. It will certainly cellar for another 1-3 years, but there is no need to wait. Drink up and maybe think about getting a case – I have!

## 2008 FONTANA FREDDA PAPAGENA BARBERA D' ALBA *Piedmont- Italy*



Fontana Fredda is located in the heart of the Langhe district in Piedmont and has a winemaking history dating back to 1878. Here the marriage of food and wine is front and centre and the estate is spectacular with its own hotel, Michelin star restaurant and truffle forest all located at the winery. Italians really know how to live!

Piedmont is Italy's westernmost region, with borders on Switzerland and France and is hemmed in by the Alps and the Apennines, which explains why its name means "foot of the mountain." Although it ranks sixth among Italy's regions in terms of production, Piedmont is considered a giant of their wine industry and is admired above all for its red wines. It is also home to the famous White Truffle and a Mecca for "Foodies" around the world.

The winery is large and, quite frankly spectacular, including a series of majestic 19th century brick-built cellars. It is one of the larger producers in the Piedmont region and a great example of what can be done when state-of-the-art technology and tradition are suitably matched.

Alba is a town and sub region within Piedmont and Barbera is the name of the grape variety. All around Alba there are the kind of rolling hills which have come to symbolize the Piedmontese landscape. Barbera vines thrive in the chalky, limestone-rich clay soils here, with the best Barbera d'Alba wines sourced from hillside vineyard sites close to the town of Barolo.

Barbera is number 2 on the totem pole of grape varieties in Piedmont. Nebbiolo is #1 and used to create the famed wines of Barolo and Barbaresco. Dolcetto is #3 and is the easy and early drinking red wine of the area. Barbera like most 2nd children can get overlooked. But this is not the case in this wine.

In recent years producers have taken two steps to bring the grape into the spotlight. The first was greater ripening, in most cases attained by planting the grape in choicer sites. The second key to success was to age the wine in French oak. Barbera makes dark wines that are low in tannins – an unusual combination, since both colour and tannins come from the skin of the grape, and the opposite of the orange-tinged, paler Nebbiolo with its immense, weighty tannins. New French oak lends wine tannins of its own, giving this newer style of Barbera the balanced structure it needs to support the added richness.

Fermentation for this wine took place in stainless steel vats, with frequent pump overs to extract colour and tannins. It then underwent malolactic fermentation in French oak barrels and remained there for 12 months. After bottling the wine was cellared for another 12 months.

French oak is a strong feature of this wine on the nose and palate, but it complements the fruit and makes the wine all the more impressive. Opening with dark, rich, currant fruits, (Cherries, liquorice, smoke and milk chocolate) it has a slightly earthy undertone on the nose. The dense palate is full rich and long with a spicy savoury twist. A wine that makes you want to grab that second glass.

### FOOD MATCHINGS

You are looking at red meat here, but rather than BBQ'd steak, you will want to look at roast beef or roast lamb. You can also match with roast chicken and pork. If you wanted to go for the more traditional match of osso buco you will find the tomato based sauces are a match made in heaven.

### CELLARING POTENTIAL

From the 2008 vintage and now almost 5 years old, this wine is drinking really well right now. You could safely cellar for another 3-5 years, but when drinking in the next few months decant this wine for 10-15 minutes and enjoy with a nice bit of lean beef.

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power they once did, and the Barossa is starting to head back to the styles they produced before the 1990's. This is a roundabout way of saying, that I am now really enjoying the wines from the Barossa again. The wine Kim has chosen is the **2012 Massena Moonlight Run**, a GSM blend from the great 2012 vintage. We have looked at a few Grenache based wines from the Rhone Valley before, so I was really thrilled when Kim chose this wine from an up and coming producer. Massena is a new project started by a couple of winemaking friends and whilst they focus on what the Barossa does so well (Shiraz and Grenache) they are also experimenting with a lot of other grapes from Italy and Spain. Keep an eye out for their other wines, as they are sensational.

A white wine in a selection that is focused around red meat was always going to be a little tricky, but Kim has done it. Sure this wine will be better with white meats, but it has great texture and weight. She has chosen the **2011 Pazo Señorans Albariño from Rias Baixas**. This is the premier white wine and region from Spain. You probably have tried one of these wines before as they are the darling of the sommelier set, with almost every restaurant showcasing the variety and region on their list. The wines have this pear and melon thing going on, with a nuttiness and minerality that is just sensational. This Pazo Senorans is one of the better producers in the region, and was also one of the wineries that Kim visited on her trip to Europe (Lucky girl)

There is also a great little story about **Albariño** and Australia. **Albariño** was a grape variety that a lot of Aussie winemakers were experimenting with in the late 1990's, as they looked for wines that could handle a warming climate. A real buzz was starting to build about these wines. All was going well, until a French wine expert visited a vineyard and declared that the variety everyone thought was **Albariño**, was in fact a native and obscure French grape variety called Savagnin. It looks like the government body that brought in the vine cuttings from Europe were sold the wrong vines.

A simple mistake really, but one that has caused a lot of problems. You see the producers that were labelling and promoting their wines as **Albariño**, could no longer label their wines as this variety. And so began the story of Australian Savagnin. Actually a great wine style, try the Tscharke "Girls Talk" Savagnin if you want a good example – A dry white wine with great acidity and that nuttiness that I really like.

The wines from this pack offer real value for money. The three imported wines would normally retail between \$45-\$50, but thanks to Kim and our growing buying power we have been able to secure these sensational wines for our packs. Go Kim and go Bullion!

I hope you will enjoy these wines as much as I have.

**Matt** – The Bullionaire



*Stu Freeman and Matt Eagan – Bullion Cellars*



## ABOUT THE SOMMELIER

**Kim Bickley**

*Head Sommelier, Black by Ezard – Star City Sydney*

Kim Bickley is the head Sommelier for the "One Hat" restaurant at Star City, Black by Ezard and she is also an active committee member of Sommeliers Australia NSW chapter.

A CMS Certified Sommelier, who finished in the top eleven students in Australia to be certified by the Court of Master Sommeliers in Australia in 2008, Kim is also an enthusiastic wine show judge, a Len Evans and Sommeliers Australia Tutorial Scholar and was one of the first, of only two Australian scholars, of the International 'Landmark Australia' Tutorial 2010.

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