



The G-spot

A clutch of southern winemakers have united to create a collection showcasing the diversity of their beloved grenache, reports **TONY LOVE**.

“**GRENACHE CAN** play many characters, from rosé at one end of the pendulum swing to big, rich complex reds at the other end.

Layered with spice and earthy tones, sometimes even meat and blood-like nuances, this is the territory where McLaren Vale’s Cadenzia project comes alive, a collection of individual winemakers showcasing grenache-based wines and their subregional and artisanal distinctions.

This year, six wineries have joined the Cadenzia collective, their wines carrying that name badge on their separate labels: d’Arenberg, Dog Ridge, Tapestry, Gemtree, Yangarra and Oliver’s Taranga.

The first two are from the 2005 vintage, the rest ‘06.

You can see what the fuss is all about in the Vales, where all wines are on tasting at their cellar doors, while those without their own venues, Yangarra and Dog Ridge, are available at the Salopian Inn restaurant.

Grenache, in the warm, spice and savoury style, works well at the table, too, and the Salopian is one of two restaurants offering Cadenzia flights of three matched to a specially created dish.

The Salopian Inn’s new chef, Billy Dohnt, has crafted a char-grilled Fleurieu venison rump with potato dauphinoise, caramelised beetroot, braised witlof and game jus to go with a flight of Gemtree, Yangarra and Dog Ridge. (Gemtree’s own cellar door is right next door to the restaurant.)

At d’Arry’s Verandah, chefs Nigel Rich and Peter Reschke are offering Normanville lamb lollypops (frenched cutlets) with warm tabouleh, labne, pistachio and fig crumble to meet the subtleties of three other Cadenzia grenaches, d’Arenberg’s own, Tapestry and Oliver’s Taranga.

Each wine offers a subtly different take on what grenache can offer, depending on the influence of source blocks and, in two of the participants, the other varieties in a blend. There are the brighter fruits of the higher foothill vineyards of Dog Ridge, compared with Yangarra’s lower, sandy blocks near Kangarilla - its version blended with shiraz and mourvedre for a stylish red licorice-leaning style. D’Arenberg also employs the same trio of varieties for a warm spice and earth version with soft texturals, while Gemtree replaces the mourvedre content with tempranillo, which shows great varietal character in the blend for a warm and generous wine.

Tapestry has taken a lighter to medium-bodied approach with some sweet vanillin in the midst of its red-cherry-style palate, while Oliver’s Taranga “small batch” label offers a complex, darker fruit style with great depths and intensity from start to finish - a class act and standout example of how well Grenache can dress. If you can’t get to McLaren Vale to see these wines on home turf, two city-Italian restaurants have jumped on the Cadenzia train. Chianti Classico offers a wine flight of the d’Arenberg, Yangarra and Gemtree wines, while Number 10 Cucina and Bar in North Adelaide’s O’Connell St is presenting all six of this year’s participants in a special dinner on Saturday, April 19, where the winemakers will tell all about their passion for the variety.

It’s \$110 for five Italian courses which show how flexible grenache can be, mixing with dishes that range from sugar-cured trevally, smoked kangaroo to apple-braised pork as well as rabbit terrine.”

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