



**YERING STATION**  
**CHARDONNAY 2006**  
95 POINTS, \$23

S | 13

Tom Carson is one of many cool-climate chardonnay makers to pick grapes earlier to reduce alcohol, and to decrease the amount of new oak used. That said, this is intense, bringing strong stonefruit, melon and citrus cool-climate characters, augmented by barrel ferment and lees inputs on the long palate.

From: Yarra Valley, Victoria  
Drink: Now-2011  
With: Chinese-style baked fish  
[www.yering.com](http://www.yering.com)



**VOYAGER ESTATE**  
**SAUVIGNON BLANC SEMILLON 2007**  
95 POINTS, \$24

S | 12.8

Voyager over-delivers across the range. A blend of 55 per cent sauvignon blanc and 45 per cent semillon, the fragrant, delicate bouquet moves from a tropical to passionfruit to citrus spectrum, repeated on the long and fine palate, also reflecting its modest alcohol.

From: Margaret River, WA  
Drink: Now-2010  
With: Tempura  
[www.voyagerestate.com.au](http://www.voyagerestate.com.au)

white wine

# Over \$20

With 205 wines vying for selection and only a handful out of contention (mainly through cork-related issues), this was as difficult a task as any this year. While I have spread the varietal net to include four rieslings, three semillons, two sauvignon blancs, two sauvignon blanc semillons and a viognier, the heart of this group is the eight superb chardonnays, still grossly under-represented if quality were to be the sole yardstick.

PHOTOGRAPHY CHRIS CRERAR



**FRANKLAND ESTATE**  
**ISOLATION RIDGE RIESLING 2007**  
96 POINTS, \$27 S | 12

Judi Cullam is a tireless champion of riesling and terroir, thus it's fitting that this exemplary wine should come from estate vines nearly 20 years old. Strong aromas of lemon and lime, plus touches of spice, all followed by a powerful and intense palate, with dominant citrus flavours and great length.

From: Frankland River, WA  
Drink: Now-2017  
With: Asparagus terrine  
[www.franklandestate.com.au](http://www.franklandestate.com.au)



**HOWARD PARK RIESLING 2007**  
96 POINTS, \$25 S | 12.5

Year-in, year-out one of Australia's best rieslings and it has a future as long as that of the Bay of Fires thanks to its screwcap. As usual, it has flawless aromas and flavours of passionfruit, lime and apple, the palate long and perfectly balanced, the aftertaste as fresh as a spring day. One of the champions of Great Southern riesling.

From: Great Southern, WA  
Drink: Now-2020  
With: Seafood antipasto



**BAY OF FIRES TIGRESS RIESLING 2007**  
96 POINTS, \$26.50 S | 11

Riesling, sparkling wine and pinot noir are Tasmania's trump cards and will withstand the challenges of climate change better than most. Floral hints of lime and passionfruit on the bouquet lead into a vibrant palate stacked full of those flavours, running through to a long, perfectly balanced finish. Natural acidity underwrites a long future.

From: Tasmania  
Drink: Now-2020  
With: Tasmanian salmon carpaccio



**ASHBROOK CHARDONNAY 2006**  
96 POINTS, \$29 S | 13.5

Fifty per cent barrel-fermented in new French oak and given six months in that oak; the rest fermented in stainless steel. Bright green-yellow and a complex bouquet, with deliberate funky aromas like white burgundy. Grapefruit and nectarine drive the palate, with the oak well balanced and integrated.

From: Margaret River, WA  
Drink: Now-2012  
With: Grilled spatchcock  
Phone (08) 9755 6262



**TOWER ESTATE SEMILLON 2006**  
95 POINTS, \$26 C | 10.5

Made from 30-year-old hand-pruned vines and hand-picked grapes, one of only a couple of Hunter Valley semillon makers still persisting with corks. Bright, light straw-green, it is an exceptionally intense wine with a cascade of citrus, grass and mineral flavours running through a very long palate to a zesty finish.

From: Hunter Valley, NSW  
Drink: Now-2013  
With: Sautéed scallops  
[www.towerestatwinos.com.au](http://www.towerestatwinos.com.au)



**OAKRIDGE FUME BLANC 2007**  
95 POINTS, \$29 S | 11.5

An unfashionable name denoting whole bunch-pressed juice, 100 per cent barrel-fermented with wild yeast. From the cool upper Yarra, which has provided the gooseberry and passionfruit flavours matching the textural complexity derived from the barrel fermentation. Sophisticated winemaking by David Bicknell.

From: Yarra Valley, Victoria  
Drink: Now-2009  
With: Hollandaise sauce  
[www.oakridgestate.com.au](http://www.oakridgestate.com.au)



**HEGGIES**  
RESERVE CHARDONNAY 2005  
96 POINTS, \$34.95 S | 14

Most discussion on new burgundian clones concerns pinot noir but it is arguable the chardonnay that arrived about the same time is better. Here clones 76, 95 and 96 produce a dazzlingly clear wine, with a seamless flow of fruit, oak and acidity, the finish and aftertaste exhilarating.

From: Eden Valley, SA  
Drink: Now-2013  
With: Abalone  
[www.heggiesvineyard.com](http://www.heggiesvineyard.com)



**SHAW & SMITH**  
M3 CHARDONNAY 2006  
97 POINTS, \$38 S | 13.5

Whole bunch-pressed grapes, partial barrel fermentation and maturation for 12 months, part wild yeast, long lees contact and partial malolactic fermentation. Super-fine and elegant, seamlessly married, nectarine and citrus fruit the primary driver through to a long, lingering finish.

From: Adelaide Hills, SA  
Drink: Now-2012  
With: Sweetbreads  
[www.shawandsmith.com](http://www.shawandsmith.com)



**CLYDE PARK**  
RESERVE CHARDONNAY 2006  
96 POINTS, \$44 S | 13

This is 100 per cent barrel-fermented and matured for up to 14 months in French oak and marries finesse and complexity, which is never easy. Finely focused citrus and melon fruit is enfolded in a fine web of oak, the palate long, the aftertaste lingering.

From: Geelong, Victoria  
Drink: Now-2011  
With: Avocado and prawn salad  
[www.clydepark.com.au](http://www.clydepark.com.au)



**LEO BURING**  
LEONAY DWK17 RIESLING 2007  
95 POINTS, \$36.95 S | 11.5

The greatest riesling brand in Australia in historical terms, with a track record to the mid-1960s, spanning both the Clare and Eden valleys. This is the brand leader, the bouquet with lime blossom and spice, then a fine and elegant palate full of lime juice, finishing dry.

From: Eden Valley, SA  
Drink: Now-2017  
With: Soft shell crab  
[www.leoburing.com.au](http://www.leoburing.com.au)



**CAPE MENTELLE WALCLIFFE**  
SAUVIGNON BLANC SEMILLON 2005  
96 POINTS, \$40 S | 13

Pushes the envelope with wild-yeast fermentation, maturation in new and used French oak and full malolactic fermentation. It has greater depth and richness than other Margaret River blends, though time in bottle also helps: a beautifully balanced and poised wine, strongly reminiscent of white bordeaux.

From: Margaret River, WA  
Drink: Now-2011  
With: Milk-fed veal  
[www.capementelle.com.au](http://www.capementelle.com.au)



**YALUMBA THE VIRGILIUS**  
EDEN VALLEY VIOGNIER 2006  
96 POINTS, \$44.95 S | 14.5

Yalumba says this is the pre-eminent white wine of its portfolio. It proclaims its class and power on the first whiff of the bouquet and makes an emphatic varietal statement on the palate with pear, apricot and musk, tied together by citrusy acidity. Barrel fermentation adds texture and structure.

From: Eden Valley, SA  
Drink: Now-2010  
With: Pork neck  
[www.yalumba.com](http://www.yalumba.com)



**OAKRIDGE 864 CHARDONNAY 2006**  
96 POINTS, \$49 S | 13.5

Yet another wine to showcase the exemplary winemaking skills of David Bicknell, fermented in large French oak barrels using wild yeasts. It is a superbly built wine, created with white burgundy in mind but relying on high-quality fruit, tightly controlled oak inputs, then minimal interference, resulting in seamless line and flow.

From: Yarra Valley, Victoria  
Drink: Now-2012  
With: Fresh Tasmanian salmon  
[www.oakridgeestate.com.au](http://www.oakridgeestate.com.au)



**GEOFF WEAVER FERUS LENSWOOD SAUVIGNON BLANC 2005**  
96 POINTS, \$38 S | 13

Majestically breaks all the rules by spectacularly improving since it was bottled and shows that sauvignon blanc can be fashioned into stunning complexity. It was 100 per cent barrel-fermented in French oak and spent 12 months on lees, had no acid added, and is elegant through to its long, fresh finish.

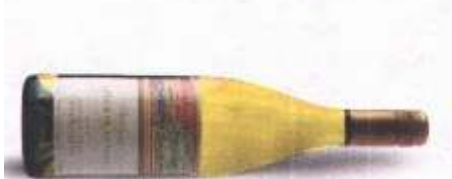
From: Adelaide Hills, SA  
Drink: Now-2010  
With: Salmon risotto  
[www.geoffweaver.com.au](http://www.geoffweaver.com.au)



**BROKENWOOD ILR SEMILLON 2002**  
95 POINTS, \$45 C | 11.3

Brokenwood switched to screwcap after this vintage. Its only regret was not doing it sooner, as up to one-third of the ILR (winemaker Iain Leslie Riggs) releases were discarded each year because of oxidation. Pale, bright green-straw, this is a superbly fine, crisp and delicate wine, still to fully show its wares, with honey and toast to come.

From: Hunter Valley, NSW  
Drink: Now-2013  
With: Sauteed scallops  
[www.brokenwood.com.au](http://www.brokenwood.com.au)



**LEEWIN ESTATE ART SERIES CHARDONNAY 2004**  
97 POINTS, \$92 S | 14.5

A sigh of relief greeted the release of this under screwcap. Earlier this year I wrote that the fruit sings: white peach, nectarine and grapefruit are the sopranos, barrel ferment and partial malolactic fermentation the orchestra. It has since moved into an even higher register of perfection.

From: Margaret River, WA  
Drink: Now-2019  
With: Margaret River marron



**TYRRELL'S SINGLE VINEYARD HVD SEMILLON 2001**  
96 POINTS, \$42 C | 10.7

The vineyard was planted in 1908 on the free-draining, sandy soils common to almost all the great semillon vineyards in the Hunter. Classic semillon, both in terms of its maker and vines, starting to pick up honey and lemon notes, toast in the background, on a base of freshness and finesse.

From: Hunter Valley, NSW  
Drink: Now-2015  
With: Blue swimmer crab  
[www.tyrrells.com.au](http://www.tyrrells.com.au)



**PENFOLDS YATTARNA CHARDONNAY 2004**  
97 POINTS, \$120 S | 14.5

This is the jewel in the crown of Penfolds' white wines, always intended to sit alongside Grange. It shares many of the flavours of the Leeuwin, seamlessly integrated with quality French oak and perfectly balanced acidity. The screwcap will check the unduly rapid development of some of the earlier releases.

From: Cool-climate blend  
Drink: Now-2019  
With: Truffled pheasant  
[www.penfolds.com.au](http://www.penfolds.com.au)