









fruit OF THE vine

GRAEME PHILLIPS

A look at a few shirazes from around the country this week. All are screw-capped.





WINE	SOURCE	COMMENTS	FOOD
THORN CLARKE 2008 SANDPIPER SHIRAZ \$17 	Barossa Valley, SA	Deep purple-black, ripe plummy notes and hints of spice on the nose followed by intensely concentrated plum and aniseed flavours on a big, fruit-sweet palate with the glow of high alcohol driving the finish. It's not my style, but if it's yours, you certainly get your money's worth. 15.0 per cent alcohol.	For my money, just one glass of the first three wines would be sufficient to see me through a big, juicy, rare-charred steak. The Cape Mentelle is one of those well-made, flavoursome and nicely balanced drops that would go equally as well with the robust flavours of red-meat braises, a steak and roast beef or a good shepherd's pie. But it's the juicy life, flavour and vitality of the Stein that makes it a much better and more versatile food wine, as good to cut through the richness of braised oxtail as to accompany a cold game terrine or grilled quail.
BROWNS OF PADTHAWAY 2007 T-TRELLIS SHIRAZ \$18 	Padthaway, SA	Made somewhat less in the blockbuster style of the previous wine, but with flavours that are more confectionary than fruity, their choc-minty sweetness boosted by high alcohol and an unpleasantly warm, alcoholic exit and aftertaste. 15.0 per cent.	
SEVENHILL 2008 INIGO SHIRAZ \$22 	Clare Valley, SA	A similar deep purple-black colour as the first wine, but with a much more savoury spice and herbal nose with the ripe, fruit-sweet blackberry flavours nicely countered and balanced by spicy oak and, at this stage, firm and dry, mouth-puckering tannins. The alcohol level is the same as in the previous two wines, but what it says on the label and what alcohol says in the mouth are two different things. Here the alcohol is less obvious and much better balanced. All three of these wines are the product of vintages affected by SA's heat waves. 15.0 per cent.	
ROBERT STEIN 2007 RESERVE SHIRAZ \$30 	Mudgee, NSW	Youthful purple colour, fresh red-fruits and spice aromas with flavours hinting of cranberry sauce and more savoury background notes of soy, the palate fresh, mid-weight and attractively juicy with a balanced and pleasingly long, succulent, food-friendly finish. 13.5 per cent.	
CAPE MENTELLE 2007 SHIRAZ \$32 	Margaret River, WA	Cedary oak and liqueur cherry aromas and flavours, the mid-weight, medium-bodied palate smooth and nicely balanced with soft tannins adding a contrasting touch of graininess to the finish. 14.0 per cent.	
DOMAINE CHANDON 2007 SHIRAZ \$34 	Heathcote, Vic	A restrained nose with subtle hints of cherry plum and pepper, with ripe plums and blackberries initially prominent on the front palate before falling away to more charry oak flavours towards the end and a finish that appears strangely hollow. Perhaps it just needs more time. 14.0 per cent.	



OK



GOOD



VERY GOOD



EXCELLENT



FABULOUS