



**Sunday Telegraph**  
**Sunday 3/1/2010**  
**Page: 108**  
**Section: Insider**  
**Region: Sydney Circulation: 639,354**  
**Type: Capital City Daily**  
**Size: 173.05 sq.cms.**  
**Frequency: -----S**

Brief: DEFINEWINE



IT'S been a little-known fact for yonks, but when the super-premium Adelaide Hills winery Petaluma released its debut chardonnay three decades ago, the fruit that powered this flagship white came from faraway Cowra.

Having been an early fan of Cowra chardonnay, Petaluma's then winemaker, industry visionary Brian Croser, had no hesitation in making the contentious call.

There's no doubt out Cowra way that it was Croser's early faith in the chardonnay grown in the spectacular Lachlan Valley that kick-started the region's rise to prominence.

To this day, Croser remains one of Cowra chardonnay's biggest fans.

Chardonnay definitely still rules the roost in these parts, but varieties such as semillon, viognier, shiraz, cabernet sauvignon, tempranillo and sangiovese are making their marks among the 40 vineyards flourishing at Cowra, Canowindra and Billimari.

To keep pace with the rapid emergence of neighbouring Central Ranges fast-tracker Orange, Cowra winemakers have joined forces to showcase their front-line bottlings.

Visit [www.winesofcowra.com.au](http://www.winesofcowra.com.au) for details of wineries, special tastings and culinary events.

The 2008 Cowra Estate Chardonnay and 2008 Kalari Chardonnay (both \$17) are first-rate examples of the region's signature wine. Fruit-driven and elegant, they more than hold their own with chardonnays at similar price points.

The 2009 Windowrie The Mill Verdelho, 2008 Toms Waterhole Semillon (both \$18) and the 2007 Mulyan Viognier (\$20) are attractive white alternatives.

Experienced wine judge Nick Bulleid says shiraz made a huge impression on him at the 2009 Cowra Wine Awards.

"Common words in my notes were rich, ripe, soft, stylish, balanced — not terms I'd have associated with Cowra reds in the past," Bulleid reports.

Three to track down are 2008 Swinging Bridge, 2008 Gardners Ground (both \$20) and 2008 Pig In The House (\$25). The 2005 Spring Ridge Cabernet Sauvignon (\$19) and 2004 Wallington Petit Verdot (\$20) are other notable wines for consideration.

[john@thefordhamcompany.com.au](mailto:john@thefordhamcompany.com.au)



**ALMA SCHILD RESERVE**  
 2008 Chardonnay (\$20)

A stylish, elegant Barossa Valley treat driven by fresh, tropical fruits in tidy harmony with oak.

**ALKOOMI FRANKLAND RIVER**  
 2009 Semillon Sauvignon Blanc (\$18)

Rich tropical, spicy flavours combine to deliver a rousing palate experience.

**MADFISH GOLD TURTLE**  
 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon (\$28)

Debut Margaret River release with blackberry flavours and French oak.