



Fighting Gully Road

2010

Aquila

12.5% ALC/VOL

PRODUCT OF AUSTRALIA

750ml



# WINE REVIEWS

Words and photo by Krystina Menegazzo

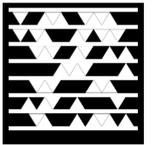


## ABOUT KRYSTINA MENEGAZZO

La Donna del Vino is the pseudonym of this young lady from Melbourne who completed her winemaking degree whilst being a gypsy working in vintages throughout Australia and Italy. Finally she decided to return home and sell wine instead. In her spare time she cooks, eats, drinks buon vino and is a self-confessed Neb Head (someone really into Nebbiolo).

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SCAN TAG TO COMMENT ON THIS ARTICLE (DETAILS ON PG. 3)



## FIGHTING GULLY ROAD 'Aquila' 2010

King Valley & Alpine Valley, Victoria. RRP \$24

I love hearing those whimsical stories about winemakers who become so inspired by some European tippie, that they return and try to emulate this newfound fascination on home soil. The 'Aquila' is an example of one such wine by famed vigneron, Mark Walpole, of Victoria. The inspiration is from none other than the famous French producer *Mas de Daumas Gassac* in southern France, who is noted for crafting wines that can compete with the upper echelon of Bordeaux under a simple *Vin de Pays* (Local Wine) label. The blend that caught Walpole's eye for the 'Aquila' was predominantly from Chardonnay, Viognier and Petit Manseng. It is not every day you are presented with such an intriguing array of white grape varieties and somehow, it just works. Just like being led through the loveliest garden path to a quaint afternoon tea party, the nose captures you with its delicate hints of jasmine flower, lemon, apricot marmalade, gingerbread and vanilla cupcakes. It does not stop there either. It tantalises you further. The generous Chardonnay and Viognier fruit lie upfront on the palate with their divine yolky richness and texture, followed with the completion of this mouth-filling journey by a flinty, dry and definitively clean finish provided by the Petit Manseng.

Not every attempt at mirroring some overseas wine style will work on Australian soil with our diverse climate. The undisputed success of the 'Aquila' however, has proven it can act as its Latin name suggests, soaring high as the 'Eagle' that has risen as a new version of a coveted style one man happily brought home.

## SPINIFEX 'Lola' 2010

Barossa Valley, South Australia. RRP \$20

I think it's inevitable that when drinking this wine, The Kink's 'Lola' comes blasting through your head. According to the lyrics, Lola seemed like a pretty cool chick. Perhaps, like this wine, she was a curious blend of Marsanne, Semillon, Roussanne, Ugni Blanc and Viognier. Such a composite blend might suggest a certain level of complexity, but in fact, Lola is really just a young lady dancing to the music with a twinkle in her eye. Lola took me by surprise initially because of her fit physique. With tart

kiwi fruit lines, she steers away from an Augustus Gloop texturally fat or flabby style of wine. Instead, she frivolously flits from tight lemon sherbet highlights to cashew nut scents, from a mid-palate lemon tart creaminess, to dry wheat notes at the finish. Her youthful, bright acidity twirls continuously underneath all the flavours.

I am clearly not shying away from kooky white blends this month. This was bottled without filtration and retains its young, fleshy fruit flavours of yellow peach cheeks and golden delicious apple. The delightful Lola captures that enviable purity of youth and for \$20, you wouldn't want her any other way.

## TAITTINGER Comtes de Champagne Blanc de Blancs 1999

Champagne, France. RRP \$350

I have a confession to make. The truth is, I am head over heels for an older man. His name?

Bond. James Bond.

Blame the more recent Casino Royale and actor Daniel Craig getting out of the ocean water in a tight pair of blue La Perla bathers. That scene had me transfixed. Understandably.

Champagne is the drink of choice for Mr Bond. Of course, he does a martini every now and then or even a decent bottle of Château Angéus claret. More often than not though, he was to be found seducing his latest female victim with a bottle of Moët & Chandon's Dom Perignon, Bollinger Grande Année or the Taittinger Comtes de Champagne Blanc de Blanc. It's not every day that I get the opportunity to drink fabulous Champagne, but when the opportunity presented itself, I took it. This Champagne of precision and poise was happily consumed over the third installment in Ian Fleming's 007 series, *Goldfinger* (1964). Charmed.

This is an exemplary signature *blanc de blanc* (100% Chardonnay) style from the Taittinger Champagne house, which uses grapes from about six different communes. It has the finest bead in the glass and would undoubtedly make a fantastic breakfast wine with its oh-so-inviting nose of brioche, toast and lemon marmalade. The palate is über-crisp with a searing acidity striding through to a gentle creaminess and soft elegance that rides until the rich, walnut-flavoured finish.

This is opulence in its prime. I like to think that if it's good enough for James Bond, then you're damn right that it's good enough for me.