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Sydney's beaches of the

April 2010



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POLICEWOMAN

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fan you should really try this. The makers recommend you drink it with a mushroom risotto, duck or pork sausage, but I'll just have it with my usual barbecue night rare steak and caramelised onions, thanks. Rated 92 points by Tyson Stelzer, that's about where I'd put it too.

To win a bottle of the *Big Blind*, check out the *First Drop* website and tell me the name of their other *Single Vineyard Semillon*. E-mail your entries by the end of April to arussell@me.com.

Wine Of The Month: First Drop 'Big Blind'

ALEX RUSSELL
Wine Guru



The Region | South Australia
The Vintage | 2008
The Price | Around \$35
www.firstdropwines.com



The Story: A few weeks ago I met Matt Gant, the winemaker behind the First Drop label. I was impressed with just how much he knew about the different regions and styles of the world, but then I had a look at his resumé. He's worked in Spain, Italy, Portugal, the United States and New Zealand, and was a winemaker at St Hallett in the Barossa. He's now in his 22nd vintage down in South Australia, bringing all of that international exposure and experience to the First Drop label by making wines from grapes like Arneis, Albarino, Nebbiolo, Barbera, Montepulciano and Touriga Nacional. You'll also find a couple of Barossa Shirazes in there and some McLaren Cabernet makes it's way in too.

Often wines that are made from the lesser-known grape varieties, such as the ones mentioned above, are a challenge to sell. Fortunately, First Drop have got a marketing guru in their midst in the form of John Reissas. The wines bear names like Moth-

er's Milk, Mother's Ruin and Lush, and the best word to describe the labels is simply 'sensational'. In fact, each of the labels have a story to tell themselves. With so many producers out there these days, winemakers need a point of difference to sell their wines so clever marketing is very important. Still, there are also a lot of rubbish wines out there with pretty labels so proceed with caution.

First Drop have also got all sorts of information on their website including 'visual tasting notes', which are clips of them talking you through the wines – a novel idea, but very clever. And be sure to check 'The Vault' to find out about their top shelf wines too.

The Wines: These wines are pretty damn impressive. Never tried Nebbiolo or Barbera before? Pick yourself up a bottle of the 'Big Blind' (it's a poker thing) and give them a go. Sourced from the Adelaide Hills, the fruity Barbera blends in with the savoury Nebbiolo to create a serious wine that you can belt down easily if you want, though it's well worth putting a case in the cellar for 5 or so years. It's a little bit spicy (think cloves) with lots of red berry flavours, particularly juicy raspberry. If you're a Shiraz

Oceans Bar Cocktail

Mojito

60ml Havana white rum
5 lime wedges
6 mint leaves
10ml sugar syrup

Method

1. Muddle limes with sugar syrup in a Boston shaker
2. Add white rum
3. 'Clap' mint leaves in your hands to release aroma and drop in shaker
4. Add ice and SHAKE!
5. Pour into a highball glass and top with soda
6. Garnish with crushed ice and a mint sprig

Enjoy this classic at Oceans bar every Thursday for only \$10!

