

A yummy rare red and a rosé with attitude

It is worth trying the wines made from less well known grapes.

By Valmai Hankel

Sick of shiraz, cabernet, merlot, pinot? Want to drink something different? There are at least five red varieties – lemlberger, trollinger, tinta amarella (aka trincadeira), montepulciano (all from Europe), and malian – which in Australia are uniquely or almost uniquely grown and produced in South Australia (most of this information comes from *The Australian and New Zealand Wine Industry Directory*, 2006 edition, which, like any other directory, is inevitably out of date as soon as it's published).

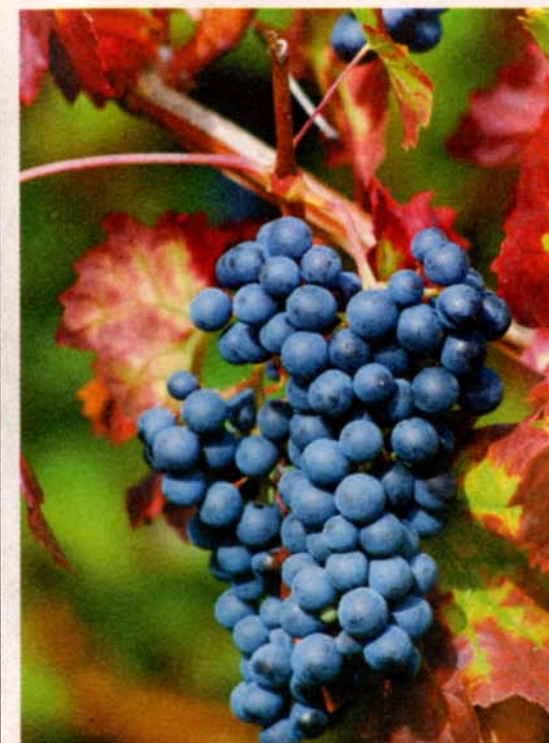
When Larry Jacobs and Marc Dobson bought Hahndorf Hill Winery in 2002 they acquired small patches of two German red varieties, lemlberger and trollinger. These plantings remain the only ones recorded in Australia. Trollinger is also known as the table grape, black hamburg, famous as the world's oldest and largest living vine, planted in 1768 at Hampton Court and still thriving. It used to be grown as a wine grape in South Australia in the 19th century, but went out of fashion together with a lot of others.

Lemlberger is grown widely in Austria, where it's called blaifränkisch. While Hahndorf Hill has made both varieties separately in the past, the current wine, 2005 Hahndorf Hill Winery Adelaide Hills Trollinger & Lemlberger Rosé (about \$17), is a 50-50 blend, bright Lorraine Lea rose-petal in colour, delightfully dry, refreshing, and very yummy and moreish. Quaff it with Thai tucker or on its own. (Phone 8388 7512, or website www.hahndorfillwinery.com.au).

Under their First Drop label, Matt Gant, recently resigned from St Hallett to concentrate on First Drop Wines, and John Retsas from Schild Estate, have released 2006 Lush Barossa Trincadeira Rosé (about \$19 from Edinburgh Cellars, 8373 2753, or www.firstdropwines.com). "Label" is the wrong word for the attractive clear glass bottle with its silk-screen-printed belle époque design of a white twirly motif. I found the wine garnet-coloured, cherryish, with just a hint of sweetness, aptly lush, and most slurpable, a rosé with attitude. I could find little about the

South Australia vineyards include some rare and little-known varieties.

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trincadeira grape until Matt Gant told me it's a synonym for another variety obscure in Australia, tinta amarella.

In her entry for tinta amarella in her authoritative *Vines, grapes and wines*, Jancis Robinson briefly mentions trincadeira as a synonym in the south of Portugal and says that it is used in red port where its "strong suit is colour rather than flavour".

Gant gets his grapes from 30 to 40-year-old vines grown at Light Pass. "It's great for tawny port because it ages quickly. It has terrific aromatics, so I thought it would be a good variety for rosé", he says. ■