



Handy tips for festive tippling

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WHEN it comes to one of those big occasions, and you don't want to hammer the wallet too heavily, De Bortoli's Windy Peak range can usually be relied on to provide the goods.

There are around a dozen wines under the Windy Peak label, so there's just about something for every taste, including chardonnay, shiraz, pinot grigio, sangiovese, pinot noir, a rosé and pinot noir chardonnay sparkling.

The 2008 Sauvignon Blanc Semillon sourced from Victoria's Yarra and King valleys is one of the standouts of their more recent releases.

It has a nice, grassy bouquet and gooseberry and grassy varietal characters on the palate from the 85 per cent sauvignon blanc, and citrus notes from the semillon.

One of those buy-now, drink-now wines, this one is light-bodied and will go well with a range of food, in particular Thai and Vietnamese dishes and most seafoods.

At just \$14.99 it's good value if you need a few bottles on some occasion.

One for lunch

WITHIN a couple of decades of being planted to grapes in the 1890s, Koonowla, in South Australia's Clare Valley, was producing 7000 cases of wine a year.

A disastrous fire and challenging times in 1926 resulted in the property being switched to grain and wool production.

Then Andrew and Booie Michael bought it in 1991 and restored it to its original purpose of winemaking.

With highly regarded winemakers David O'Leary and Nick Walker on board, they're producing exceptional wines, including a value-priced Ringmaster series.

The ripe and luscious Ringmaster 2006 Shiraz further profited from 18 months in French and American oak.

It's a steal at \$15 – and goes well with a rack of lamb.



The Ringmaster 2006 Shiraz goes well with lamb.