

TIPPLES

# snapshots

*A pick  
of the month's  
top wines,  
spirits and  
beverages*

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## *The Balvenie 17 Years Peated Cask*

Speyside Scotch distillery The Balvenie released this limited edition expression that is finished in a peated Islay cask last October. Created by Malt Master David Stewart, it is comprised of a marriage of 17-year old Balvenie finished in new oak and 17-year old finished in casks that had previously held an unreleased experimental heavily-peated Balvenie distilled in 2001.

**REGION:** Speyside, Scotland  
**VARIETIES:** Barley, yeast and water

**TASTING NOTES:** The nose on this expression is honeyed malt, which is The Balvenie's signature. Soft oak, and dried apricots and orange liqueur flavours, with some wood smoke notes chasing the fruit. The smoke is more pronounced on the tongue, almost overshadowing the fruit. There is a saltiness in the finish.

**WHERE TO BUY:** \$175 from leading specialist wine shops and bars



## *Moa Five Hop Winter Ale*

The Moa Brewing Company is the brainchild of Josh Scott—of Marlborough's Allan Scott Family Winemakers fame—which was founded in 2003 after years of brewing experimentation. Best described as a New World Extra Special Bitter, this is a 'Brewer's Beer' with a lot going on but with the ultimate aim of balance. In case you're wondering, the word 'Aotearoa' shown above and on the bottle's label is Maori for New Zealand.

**REGION:** Blenheim, Marlborough, New Zealand

**VARIETIES:** A blend of Pilsener, Vienna, Munich and Crystal malts, and Nelson-grown B Saaz and Hallertau aroma hops, brewed with pure Marlborough artesian water  
**TASTING NOTES:** This beer pours with a mammoth, thick, cream coloured head, leaving random bits of lacing and is toffee-like in appearance. Its aroma is crisp, made up of citrus notes along with a big hop hit. There is also a big earthy hop hit on the palate which is well balanced with sweet caramel tones. Well-carbonated and with a decent bitterness, this ale is an absolute pleasure to drink.

**WHERE TO BUY:** Available at selected bars and restaurants



## *Alta Vista Terroir Selection Malbec 2008*

Alta Vista is a family-owned winery founded by the d' Aulan family, while Cuyo is a large administrative and economic region in the central-west of Argentina. While it is not a wine region itself, it does neatly encompass the country's most prolific wine-producing areas: Mendoza and San Juan. For viticultural purposes, the La Rioja region is often included as part of Cuyo.

**REGION:** Luján De Cuyo, Mendoza, Argentina

**VARIETY:** 100% Malbec  
**TASTING NOTES:** Spicy aromas with fresh, ripe fruits and animal notes on the nose. In the mouth, the wine shows liquorice-laced black fruits flavours with toasty cigar box and herbal hints, as well as ripe cassis, boysenberries.

**WHERE TO BUY:** Available at leading supermarkets and specialist wine shops.



## *Avignonesi Vino Nobile di Montepulciano DOCG Riserva Grandi Annate 2006*

Avignonesi has been recognised mostly for its top-ranking Vin Santo, the lusciously sweet red wine from Tuscany, but it is set to capture the world's attention with its dry Vino Nobile di Montepulciano DOCC. Generous investment has allowed the winery to conduct many experiments in the vineyards, the results of which will be seen in the years to come. Their Vino Nobile di Montepulciano DOCC Riserva Grandi Annate is made only in exceptional years. In 2006, the right amount and timing of rain and desirable temperatures allowed the Riserva Grandi Annate to see the light of the world.

**REGION:** Montepulciano, Tuscany, Italy

**VARIETY:** 85% Prugnolo Gentile (a variety of Sangiovese), 15% Cabernet Sauvignon

**TASTING NOTES:** Garnet red colour, with a high concentration of black and red fruits, especially black currant, and intriguing hints of violet. It is a complex wine which can be appreciated with game and meat dishes. Approachable tannins allow for enjoying it on its own.

**WHERE TO BUY:**

Certain Cellars  
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