

BY HUON HOOKE

# Wine

Scorpo  
Aubaine  
Chardonnay  
2006



**C**hardonnay is the ultimate playground for winemakers. They get to use all the tricks they learned in winemaker's school, such as playing around with different barrel types, different oaks, malolactic fermentations, wild yeasts and much more. Trouble is, they overdo it and Australian chardonnay is often heavy-handed and domineering.

These days, though, many winemakers are striving to make finer, more restrained and, hopefully, more age-worthy chardonnays. These are wines that don't knock you out at first sniff with an assault of flavour: they win you over gradually with their subtler charms. These are at the chablis end of the chardonnay spectrum and are wines I'm more likely to want to drink.

(If your taste is towards the bigger, richer, opulent old-fashioned style of Oz chard, tune in next week and I'll list some of those.)

**Kooyong Clonale Chardonnay 2006, Mornington Peninsula; \$27** The cheapest of several terrific Kooyong chardonnays: taut, delicate, minerally and refreshing. Very lightly oaked. Oysters here.

**Scorpo Aubaine Chardonnay 2006, Mornington Peninsula; \$28** Chalky, minerally, slightly malty aromas; tight and refined in the mouth with an exotic, chablis-like personality. Improves with airing, too. More oysters!

**De Bortoli Yarra Valley Chardonnay 2006; \$30** Youthful, restrained but complex; minerally, faintly buttery/nutty, but lemon/citrus flavours, too. Long and superbly harmonious. Sautéed scallops.

**Bindi Composition Chardonnay 2006, Macedon Ranges; \$45** A richer, fuller wine with some smoky oak and funky complexity. Lively high-altitude acidity drives the palate, which is long and concentrated. Grilled crayfish would go nicely.

**Bindi Quartz Chardonnay 2006, Macedon Ranges; \$65** Delicate, restrained, high-acid cool-climate style with subtle oak and a very clean, dry, food-friendly finish. Marvellously racy. Fresh crab, anyone? **GW**