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BY **HUON HOOKE**

Wine

2005 Cape Barren Grenache Shiraz Mourvèdre



Red wines made from the various grape varieties whose home is the southern Rhône Valley of France – loosely termed “Rhône blends” – are among the best value reds. They are usually fruit-driven as opposed to oak-influenced, quite high in alcohol (14.5 per cent to 15.5 per cent), released young, and moderately priced – probably because they’re not very trendy.

The core grape is grenache: a soft, sweetly fruity variety which nearly always benefits from the addition of shiraz to provide backbone. Mourvèdre (mataro) is often also used for extra depth, complexity and tannin. These are rustic wines to serve with hearty country foods, but not usually haute cuisine. Here are some current favourites:

2005 Cape Barren Grenache Shiraz Mourvèdre, McLaren Vale, \$23 Spicy, pepper and licorice aromas; rich palate stiffened by shiraz; very deep flavour, well structured and classy. 92/100.

2005 Hewitson Miss Harry Grenache Shiraz Mourvèdre, Barossa, \$23 Cherry/plum and subtle spice; very ripe sweet berry fruit flavour, smooth and soft, rounded and gentle. 91/100.

2005 La Curio The Nubile Grenache Shiraz, McLaren Vale, \$19 Meaty, dusty/earthy char-oak and smoke. Some raisiny ultra-ripe notes and very robust. Big, solid, gutsy. 90/100.

2005 Wyndham Estate George Wyndham Shiraz Grenache, SA, \$20 Deep colour, shiraz-driven, big and plummy/spicy; good concentration and structure. 90/100.

2006 Kalleske Clarry's Grenache Shiraz, Barossa, \$20 Dry spices, fresh earth, a hint of oak; savoury palate with drying tannin finish. Plenty of depth. 89/100. **GW**