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# betterwine

You can keep up with name changes and join a club



## WHAT'S IN A name?



Some years ago the Australian government agreed to take European place names off our bottles in exchange for allowing our wine and other agricultural goods to be sold over there. You may remember Houghton's White Burgundy, one of our best value and tasty white blends. 'Burgundy', a defined area of France, had to go. Now it tastes just as good under the label White Classic. Great Western Champagne? Sorry, can't use 'champagne'; now it's just Great Western. Names like Moselle, Chablis, Beaujolais, Graves, Sauternes and Hermitage (yes, it was on Grange) have all been removed from Aussie wines.

Up to now it hasn't been a big problem; brand and grape names have taken over and nobody seems confused. But now the last of the changes have been signed off and they're more challenging. Say farewell to port, sherry and tokay, wines we've been making superbly for over 100 years. How do you replace those names? Well, you spend a million dollars on research, then finally announce: port is tawny, sherry is apera (a-PAIR-a) and tokay is topaque (toe-PAIK). Coming soon to a bottle near you!

### A venerable vinous society

A few factors over the past decade have changed the way we buy wine. The huge surplus of grapes (finally shrinking due to recent extreme weather conditions) introduced us to cleanskins – well-priced quaffers. Next, the internet allowed us to buy online for convenient home delivery. And now the global financial crisis has us all after bargains.

There are many websites you can go to for wine. Among our faves are: [wineselectors.com.au](http://wineselectors.com.au), [liquormerchant.com.au](http://liquormerchant.com.au), [cellarmasters.com.au](http://cellarmasters.com.au), [cleanskins.com](http://cleanskins.com) and [getwinesdirect.com.au](http://getwinesdirect.com.au). All offer amazing bargains as well as good deals on top labels. You can't taste before you commit, but there shouldn't be too many disappointments.

There's one more address to note, it's more than just an online retailer and well worth checking out – [www.winesociety.com.au](http://www.winesociety.com.au)

A respected wine club, The Wine Society was established in 1946. It has retail shops in Sydney and Melbourne, a fine tradition of tastings and dinners nationwide, wine-education courses, a regular magazine and emails for its members. The society sells the brand names you know and also its own special selections which you can trust as good wine at great prices.

## better bottles

### Houghton The Bandit Shiraz Tempranillo, \$16

An unusual blend from Houghton of WA which gives a lively mouthful of lovely red fruit; soft and savoury, it lingers on the tongue.

### Capel Vale Debut Verdelho, \$17

'Fresh, fruity and exuberant' is how they describe this wine. A delicious full-flavoured white which goes well with Asian food.

### George Wyndham Semillon Sauvignon Blanc, \$15

Here's a beauty with seafood. A bright bunch of tropical-fruit flavours kept balanced with a crisp, refreshing and zesty lemony finish.



Words: Ian MacTavish; photography: iStockphoto