

## TEMPRANILLO

By Paul Foster

Speaking Spanish to the vines every evening at tapas time is an essential part of the viticultural process, Julie Southern reckons. 'Assuring them that they'll grow to produce wines as great as the reds of the Rioja is what it's about', she says. 'After all, if Tempranillo is Spain's best native variety and is grown widely over the northern and central parts of that country it should do well here at Greenock. Several locals have it.'

Julie, who is a member of the Barossa's historic Kalleske clan, grows Tempranillo with winemaker husband Aaron in the vineyard beside their Epsilon winery on the western side of the Valley. Rewarding their efforts, the recently released '08 wine has attracted positive critical attention. As with most Rioja Tempranillos Aaron's contains some Graciano (about 30%) and it seems he's hit the right recipe. He uses the gentle power of a basket press then ferments the parcels separately. He ages only in old oak and neither filters nor fines. Finally blending for flavour and structure he creates an immediately drinkable, well-built wine.

Meanwhile, Tempranillo is being put through its paces in the Adelaide Hills. The sites are cooler than the Barossa's and the wines are showing their own style. Excitingly, it seems we might have on our hands the magical mix of variety and region that sets the scene for serious wines.

Take the Temprnillo recently released under *The Pawn* label. Like the Epsilon wine it carries some Graciano (though the label doesn't declare it). It is made by the gifted Rebecca Willson at

her family's Bremerton winery at Langhorne Creek from fruit grown by Tom Keenan. The vineyard, which sits in a fold near Macclesfield, looks east down across Langhorne Creek and the picked grapes are trucked there. 'If the finished wine has lushness,' Tom declares, 'try the grapes in the vineyard. The berries are perfumed and spicy, totally seductive' and as proof of his enthusiasm, if proof is required, he reveals he's just planted 'a couple more clones'.

### **Epsilon Barossa Valley Tempranillo Graciano 2008**

Moreish midweight, ripe and round. Red berry and savoury spice flavours with a tobacco underlay. Discreet tannins and acids that keep things fresh. \$25

### **The Pawn Adelaide Hills Tempranillo 2007**

An elegant creature. Perfumed. Complex. Currant/black cherry flavours and, even, olives. Some earthy rusticity. Deep, smooth and long. Grippy finish. \$22

Small volume, both; The Wine Society has The Pawn in its Connoisseurs Collection Dozen.