

Perth Now

Bellarmino is the jewel of the Great Southern

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FRESH: Winemaker and operations manager Di Miller at Bellarmino's Pemberton vineyard.

Source: PerthNow

BELLARMINO has quickly become one of my favourite wineries, and I'm not alone in my praise.

Led by winemaker Di Miller, the wines have consistently maintained a high standard of quality, with esteemed wine writer James Halliday another big fan of her work.

The wines are elegant, with incredible structure, flavour, finesse and balance.

They are made for immediate enjoyment but, with careful ageing, will develop even better in years to come.

With vineyards in the cooler-climate wine region of Pemberton in WA's south-west, **Bellarmino** (<http://www.bellarmino.com.au>) is really shining, with interesting interpretations of various varieties, including three rieslings and a ball-busting petit verdot.

The latter is a case in point.

As a late-maturing variety in the relatively cool Bordeaux region, the grape is struggling but, in parts of Australia, is gaining momentum as a stand-alone wine.

Bellarmino's 2008 Petit Verdot has won gold medals as well as best overall red wine at the Pemberton Wine Show - a real achievement by any means but particularly for such an obscure grape as the PV.

Quite simply the wine is a knockout, it's funky, sexy, inky and big.

Growers and winemakers in Australia are experimenting with straight petit verdots and are very much in the pioneering stage.

But Miller seems to have nailed it immediately. As she has with the rest of the Bellarmine stable.

Bellarmino 2009 Shiraz

\$35, 15%, 95pts

A rich and ripe shiraz from the cool climate of Pemberton, with fine tannins and savoury berry flavours that burst across your palate. Deep purple red in colour, this is a proven hit time and time again. Will age for at least 10 years.

Bellarmino 2010 Riesling Dry

\$20, 12.5%, 94pts

This wine consistently makes my top white wines of the year – not just for quality but bang for your buck. A wild ride of zesty citrus flavours, it's a delight to drink. Structured, balanced, fresh and ripe. Enjoy it now but its stocks will rise sharply in the next few years.

Bellarmino 2008 Pinot Noir

\$22, 14.5%, 94pts

Lovely spicy, savoury flavours going on here with the usual great length and balance that all Bellarmine wines exhibit. Spicy oak and cherries on the nose, dark fruits and fine tannins on the palate. One of the better pinots from the Great Southern.

Bellarmino 2008 Petit Verdot

\$35, 15%, 96pts

Re-tasted recently, this still remains one of my all-time favourite wines. Bold, inky, sexy, it's impeccably structured with huge flavours of rich berries. It can only get better with age, the hard part is not drinking it now.

www.bellarmino.com.au