

Mountain Pass Pinot Noir 2008 Victoria

21 Jul 2009 by Jancis Robinson

£5.48

This little bargain was spotted by Richard Hemming when he tasted a range of wines on offer from Wine Rack, the posher wine shops in the beleaguered British Thresher group (which has just lost its head wine buyer and seems to be currently in the throes of yet another reorganisation and, perhaps, recapitalisation).

Let us circumvent, for once, the massive issue of why it is so difficult to make any money selling wine on the British high street and concentrate on the wine itself. It is a special bottling created for Wine Rack by the admirable [Yering Station](#) of the Yarra Valley, one of Australia's cooler wine regions (but not so cool that it was not the focus of last February's bush fires). Its supposed regular price is £10.99 (which it is not worth) but from tomorrow until 8 Sep it is being offered as 'half price', just £5.48 – which really does make it a bargain.

The Yarra Valley, where all the fruit for this wine is grown, as Thresher's former buyer Jonathan Butt insisted to me, despite that Victoria appellation on the label, is one of Australia's most reliable sources of Pinot Noir and this has been made with the usual light touch. There is certainly no enormous concentration, nor any obvious oak influence, but it is a lovely, perfumed, easy, relatively delicate rendition of the red burgundy grape with, as Richard pointed out, quite enough freshness to make you want to go back for a second glass. Just 13.5% alcohol, it is ready to drink this minute and I cannot imagine that it will improve. So, go buy, and drink.

The wine was blended from various different leftovers – sorry, parcels – of wine by Butt and the new head winemaker at Yering Station Willy Lunn (seen in this [Yarra devastation](#) video). He began his winemaking career as a cellarhand at Petaluma, where he stayed for 15 years before working, in two separate stints, with Rollin Soles at the Petaluma-owned Argyle winery in Oregon, which can't have done any harm for his understanding of Pinot Noir. He also worked for two years at Shaw and Smith in the Adelaide Hills.

You could enjoy this light, soft red with fresh goat's cheese or, unusually for a red wine, just on its own.