**ALLIANCE WINE**
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**Domaine Billaud-Simon Chablis 2010, Burgundy, France, £11**
This shows lovely focus and precision. On the palate, the wine reveals an impressive intensity and concentration of wet pebbles, stony pineapple fruit and peppery, chalky green apple notes. A wonderfully vibrant, fresh style that offers excellent value for money. GS

**Hartenberg Estate The Stork Shiraz 2007, Stellenbosch, South Africa, £25.90**
A decadent, almost exotic bouquet of stewed dark cherries, kirsch, créme de cassis, and black plum. The palate is full-bodied and silky smooth with seamless sweet tannins and layers of luscious blueberry pie and purple fruits. Opulent and impressive. GS

**Mount Edward Pinot Noir 2009, Central Otago, New Zealand, £19.31**
Not many Grüners overdeliver for the money, but this one does. All the hallmarks: spice, white fruit, pepper and salt flavoured, at a list-friendly price. CL

**Marjan Simcic Opoka Merlot 2006, Goriska Brda, Slovenia, £34.05**
Pronounced nose of black and blue berries and jam, followed by a leathery, smoky expression. Explosive plum character with spice and blackcurrant flavour. Harmonious texture, soft and fresh with impressive length. JS

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**HOME ON THE RANGE**

**OUR FAVOURITE LINE-UPS**

**Raats, South Africa**
Sourced from bush vines with an average age of 35 years, Raats Original Chenin Blanc 2011 (£6.72) is rich, crisp and fresh, with wonderful melon and a fruity depth. The palate follows with creamy yellow fruit, fine acid balance and concentration. One of the best value Chenins from South Africa. The Raats Cabernet Franc 2008 (£13.60) is yet another impressive Cab Franc from Bruker Raats, showing attractive lifted black fruit fragrance, herbs, pepper, cedar and raspberry. Exotic spice notes follow on the palate, wrapped in layers of blackcurrant and redcurrant depth. Well-defined acids, spicy oak texture and a super, creamy finish. Young, but will reward cellaring. GS

**Steinmühle, Rheinhessen, Germany**
This small family-run winery showed a selection of wines at Gerron Wine Agencies’ Germany Unplugged tasting, starting with an easygoing Sylvaner 2010 (£8.15), all sheep and fruit on the nose. It benefits on the palate from a little residual sugar, alongside some fresh acidity and a mineral edge. A 2010 Westburgunder (Pinot Blanc) (£8.35) has even more sweetness — enough to push it into Asian food-matching territory. It nevertheless features some fresh lemon-lime fruit, with that acidity carrying through to the finish. Winemaker Axel May also showed a 2010 Spätburgunder (Pinot Noir) (£9.30), a gentle and approachable wine. In May’s own words, ‘an everyday Pinot’. CC

**IN MY CELLAR**

**VANESSA CINTI**
45 Park Lane

**Harry Peterson-Nedry**
Chehalem 3 Vineyards Pinot Noir 2009, Willamette Valley, Oregon, USA
This wine shows how great Oregon can be without being pretentious. Blended from three estate vineyards — Ridgecrest, Stoller and Coral Creek — this Pinot reunites all the best characteristics of the different fruit ripeness and soils. Intense and seductive, with black fruits and notes of gingersnap and black pepper. The balanced acidity will stand up to a great bone-marrows flan.

£30, Wine Source, 020 3036 0255

**O’Shaughnessy Cabernet Sauvignon, Howell Mountain 2007, Napa Valley, USA**
Lauded as the best vintage this estate has produced, this wine is plump with fresh dark berries, chocolate and spices. Not a shy wine at all. Located on the top of Howell Mountain with a spectacular view, the grapes get the right amount of sun and soil. Perfectly balanced between ripe fruits and soft tannins. Spoil yourself in the cold winter with a glass of this wine and a juicy rib-eye.

£75, Wine Source, 020 3036 0255

**Ca’ del Bosco Chardonnay 2007, Lombardy, Italy**
Maurizio Zanella, the founder of Ca’ del Bosco, is showing us that Lombardy can produce excellent still wines. A round and intense Chardonnay with notes of hazelnut and green pear, lemon zest and a hint of vanilla. These flavours will linger on the palate forever. A glass of this with a scallop carpaccio will make you think you are lounging at your villa overlooking Lake Como.

£39.20 (2008 vintage), Eurowines, 0870 162 1420

**Prager ‘Hinter der Burg’ Grüner Veltliner 2008, Wachau, Austria**
I love this Austrian wine as much as I love my Austrian chef, Wolfgang Puck — a lot! The vineyard is situated on the south-facing slopes flowing down to the Danube river. Notes of green apple and white pepper complete this light, crisp and elegant wine. Perfect any time of the day, but especially on your lunch break. Try it with our spicy tuna and avocado tartare and it will make the rest of your day a walk in the park... Hyde Park, of course.

£13.85, Fields, Morris & Verdin, 020 7819 0360