

food & wine

GRAPE EXPECTATIONS: MAX CRUS

The harder they come...and go

What a revelation
Slum Dog

Millionaire. India's poverty is conveniently ignored until the next movie, *Sixty Minutes* or Mumbai terrorist attack interrupts our television dinner, before we quickly change channels to some dancing- eviction program. (Who decided those two go together?)

Then just when you thought it was safe to ignore poverty again, along comes a hard rubbish collection day. So revealing, so shaming, yet, so entertaining, (especially if you're 10 years old with a push bike, a trailer and a dog).

There's enough tellies that no Indian family living in poverty would be without one by 2015, if they just had somewhere to put them.

Which begs the question: houses are bigger now, but where did they put all those lounges, TVs and exercise bikes etc before they put them on the nature strip?

Yep, consumerism is rampant and we are all guilty variously, sadly, not least through our wine consumption. Furthermore it's not the wine growing, which is a readily implicated 'misdegreenour', it's the bottle.

Now don't go all mushy and bemoan the demise of cork. Rubbish (see above).

Screw caps are the best thing since inflatable tyres and electric lawnmowers and glass alternatives might be next.

For most wine-drinkers this is no big deal, casks have long been acceptable receptacles, but what about the good stuff? Will we accept decent plonk in plastic?

Given that if all Australia's bottled wine came in plastic containers, in greenhouse gas terms it would be the equivalent of taking all the cars off the road in Geelong, perhaps not a bad idea for that reason alone, but there are others: plastic bottles make your esky lighter, they bounce, (great party trick) they, um, let me see, er, okay that's about it. But isn't that enough?

Here's one of the first of the new (injection) mould:

■ **SIRROMET FIRST STEP CABERNET MERLOT 2005, \$12.** Amazing. Not that it comes in plastic but that it comes in plastic AND is decent red wine. Go green and go and drop it on concrete to tease your mates. 8.3/10.



■ **SCARBOROUGH SEMILLON (WHITE LABEL) 2007, \$30.** Guest reviewer Big Ads. "the most drinkable white wine I've tasted in ages, and three glasses and a risotto later and it's still really good." 8.8/10.

■ **COOKOOTHAMA KING VALLEY SAUVIGNON BLANC SEMILLON 2008 \$15.** Sometimes too much sav is more than enough, and tonight we hit the sav wall. Later we again hit the wall with the sav. 8/10.

■ **PIPERS BROOK ESTATE CHARDONNAY 2007, \$34.** This could

benefit from lighter packaging, it comes from Tassie. Alternatively you could fly to Tassie to try it. Either way it is a worthy and considerably different chardy unlike many heavy competitors. 8.6/10.

■ **DOWIE DOOLE SHIRAZ 2007, \$25.** Even the warmth of a car trip in a heat-wave couldn't flatten the floral flavours. Or is that what caused them? I did use the 'aircon' however. Noice. 8.7/10.

■ **BUD NAKED MARLBOROUGH SAUVIGNON BLANC (NV), \$20 (1.5 LITRES).** In a naked foil bag, it's a sack without a cask, with groovy graphics and the ability to stand on its own feet. Amazingly, so does the wine, for the price. 8/10.