

## I'LL DRINK TO THAT CHRISTMAS CHEER

A drinkable gift might have its moral ups and downs for some, but you can always temper that with the hope you'll get to sample your festive generosity – either sooner or later. You should, of course, know dad's particular taste for blockbuster reds or mum's partiality for French bubbles.

And it's the perfect time to select that special bottle for Christmas Day – nothing goes down better than a great sparkling red, and two of the best are **Primo Estate's Joseph Sparkling Red** (\$55) and **Stephen George's Ashton Hills Red** (about \$45).

For the grumpy old man in your life, there's only one serious wine present, a **Kaesler 2005 Old Bastard Shiraz (\$160)**, a 16 per cent Barossan heavyweight guaranteed to calm down anyone. For the more mellow gentleman, a beautiful

little heritage-shaped bottle of organic **Kalleske JMK Shiraz VP**, an 18 per cent vintage liqueur wine from the Barossa, is luscious and worth setting a date to help sip it once opened.

The popular French champagne houses of Veuve Clicquot and Moët & Chandon have a terrific selection of gift packs, from a **Mini-Moët** (200ml) that sells for \$25 to the **Moët & Chandon Brut Imperial Flower Rose** pack (\$139). One of the hottest non-vintage champagnes is **Veuve Clicquot NV**, which comes in a bright gold wetsuit cover (\$85).

Two books worth considering for your wine fanatic are: **A Good Nose and Great Legs**, by Robert Geddes (Murdoch Books, \$39.95), an overview of the pleasure of growing grapes to drinking it. Campbell Mattinson's **Why the French Hate Us** (Hardie Grant Books, \$28.95) looks at home truths about the industry and covers the madness over Grange.

