

TUNE-UP TIME

“What are the songs of this generation?” asked Bob Boilen, the host of NPR’s All Songs Considered. The answer from the show’s panel was an undecided shrug of the shoulder and audible head scratching; it’s a doozy of a question. Unlike previous generations that were defined by a certain genre—the ‘60s had Elvis’s rock and roll, ‘70s had the Buzzcock’s punk, and the ‘90s had Nirvana’s grunge—the Millenials had no defining genre.

This blurring of genres owes much thanks to the mp3 revolution. Five thousand songs now fit into my pocket, spanning decades all the way to Miles Davis, and Hank Williams, and I’m definitely not the exception here. Kids these days pack in 40, 50GB of music on their hard drives, so it’s no wonder that those brought up in the digital age don’t have a defining genre or idol. There’s just too much music to choose from.

What a great problem to have. Of course, having too much choice meant that I had to spend an

inordinate amount of time discovering new bands for this month’s feature of Bands You Oughta Know (page 56). “It’s work,” I say to my bosses as I bobbed my head to the kickin’ tunes of The Ting Tings and Joe Lean & The Jing Jang Jong. What a great excuse.

But it’s not all about bands on MySpace and YouTube, as the local music scene is booming as well, typified by the rebellious Hujan (page 62), who live their rock ‘n’ roll life as they sing it—aggressive, loud, and irreverent. The indie rockstars are amongst the new generation of rock musicians coming up, and one wonders how many more bands like them are just waiting to emerge onto the mainstream arena.

Moving on from the music, we also interviewed Bryan Robson, a football legend, who, regardless of your club affiliation, is a well respected player and overall nice guy. Which isn’t to say he’s an unopinionated doorknob, as you’ll find out in our extensive interview on page 70.

And before I wrap things up, let me introduce our new wine column, written by Ron Khoo, the man behind the Wine Cellar in Bangsar—if you ever wanted to know anything about wine, from how to order wine to tasting the difference between a Chilean and Californian, Ron’s your man, and I’m grateful for his extensive knowledge gracing our pages.

Until the next month, enjoy!

John Lim
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GOOD WINE STARTS HERE

For his first column about appreciating wine, Wine Cellar's director, Ron Khoo, rounds down the basic essentials you need to know before you venture into the wide world of vino.

I realised immediately when I first got interested in wine that wine is like music. You can't please everyone, you can't impose your style on another, some people will get headaches drinking your style of wine (like how my parents never liked rock music) and you can just drink what you like without worrying about other people's perception.

This is my inaugural article on wines and anything wine related - my passion and my vice! It started off by that innocent glass of student crap-quality wine, which progressed to mid-range wines that I started to find intriguing. After a short stint in banking, I decided to go into wine retail and distribution, and have now graduated with the Advanced Level qualification from Wine & Spirit Education Trust UK with a distinction, and am currently pursuing my Diploma of Wine from Wine & Spirit Education Trust UK. I love giving wine tutorials and facilitating tastings and also experimenting with food and wine matchings.

I thought I'd start this column with some Wine 101s - it seemed appropriate to start from the beginning.

Serving temperature

Have you ever had a glass of wine that tasted of nothing but alcohol fumes? That glass of wine could have been served to you at our room

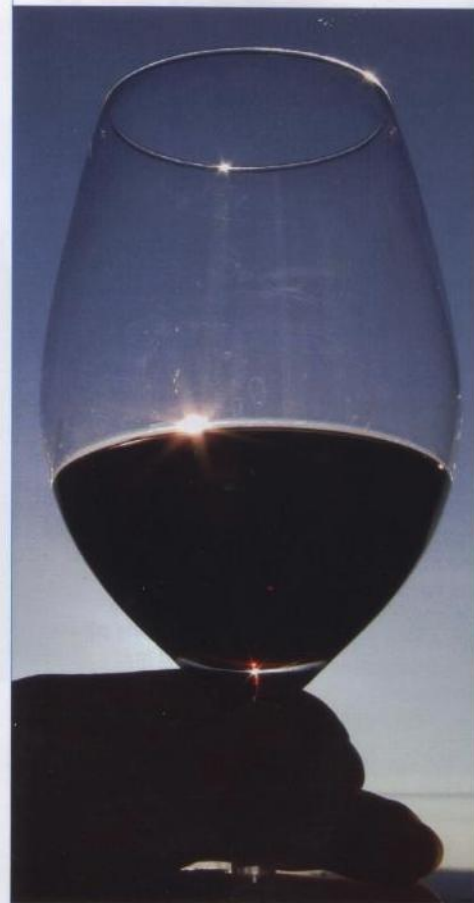
temperature. Although it's common knowledge that you should serve your red wines at room temperature, not everyone knows what temperature that refers to. A quick rule of thumb for serving temperature is to serve lighter wines colder and heavier bodied wines warmer up to maximum of 18°C.

How long can you store a wine for and at what storage conditions?

I've had friends who have been storing wines for 10 years, only to find out that those wines were made to be drunk within three years. The bell curve on how long a wine can last is different for each wine produced and some can be as short as six months, to wines that can last for more than 100 years. The best way to find out is to ask the person who sold you the wine as they should know. And if you do not have a wine chiller or a room that is constantly at a temperature between 13°C to 18 °C, don't even attempt to store a wine for more than six months in our climate. It's best to buy it when you need it.

How long can you keep an open bottle?

On average, most opened bottles of wines last for a maximum of two to three days. I've had the exceptions, but it's not something you should count on! After those few days, that bottle of wine will turn into an expensive bottle of terribly tasting vinegar.



I'm sure some of you already know this but to the rest, following this will definitely provide a better wine drinking experience for you.

Ron Khoo (www.ronkhoo.com) can be reached at ron.blog@ronkhoo.com

What I'm drinking this month:



Hacienda Araucano Cabernet Sauvignon 2004

Grape: 100% Cabernet Sauvignon

Characterised by deep ruby red colour, this cabernet sauvignon has beautifully rich aromas that marries ripe fruit with notes of vanilla and chocolate. Great concentration and power in the mouth supported by good structure. The tannins are well defined and silky. Great aromatic persistence.

Awards:

Vintage 2002: 4 Stars, *Restaurant Wine*

Why I recommend it:

It is a nice medium-bodied wine with nice ripe fruit flavours that gives you a perception of ripe berry sweetness and a smooth and refreshing aftertaste. Great with the Angus beef tenderloin and Pan fried rack of lamb.

The *Hacienda Araucano Cabernet Sauvignon 2004* is priced at RM70 and is available at The Wine Cellar. For more information, visit www.winecellar.com.my or call 03-20931919

Recommended dishes are available at The Tasting Room. For more information, visit www.tastingroom.com.my or call 03-20924404