

Shingai Darangwa gets the lowdown from two sommeliers

LOOKING for a superb bottle of red? Carrie Adams, a seasoned wine sommelier and partner at Norman Goodfellows Fine Wine & Spirit Merchants, talks us through her top five red wines.

She says: "With about 8 000 different labels to choose from, selecting just five top South African reds is a bit of a daunting task.

"There's a plethora of new and exciting wines emerging from the Cape. Add to these newbies some of the very well-established labels we have all grown to love and it's a bit like asking me to select my favourite sibling!

"However, there are times when you just have to hold your nose and jump into the deep end, throwing caution to the wind – so, in no particular order, here are my personal top five SA reds."

1 Delaire Graff Botmaskop Bordeaux Style Blend

"Apart from being one of the most beautiful properties in the Cape, the wines coming out of the Botmaskop cellar are simply some of the best South Africa has to offer.

"I have loved the Botmaskop since the first release under the ownership of Sir Laurence Graff in 2011 and have secretly delighted in each and every award it has received since. The current selling vintage is 2013 and is literally a bottle crammed full of sublimely elegant black fruit. I love it!"

2 De Morgenzon Syrah

"While I'm on the 'Ds' how could I leave off this delicious wine? Again, from a completely picture-perfect setting in Stellenbosch, maestro Carl van der Merwe works his magic on this Rhone grape variety under the loving (if exacting) crack of Wendy Appelbaum's whip.

"The result is the perfect balancing act of polished, smooth, red fruit laced with the required fringe of white pepper. Not to be missed at all."

3 David & Nadia Sadie's Grenache

"It's unfair of me to include this wine because it is the original 'pork chop in Palestine' – you simply cannot find it anywhere.

"Husband and wife team up to concoct a veritable delight that sells out almost before it's released. Picked from three different Swartland blocks and crafted to perfection, this wine dances across your palate leaving you desperate

for more – cruel, but true – you simply have to sell your soul for a bottle."

4 Lourens River Valley Red from Morgenster

"No excuses – everybody knows Giulio Bertrand (the owner of Morgenster) is one of my favourite boyfriends – mostly because you cannot but salute the attention to detail and the consistent excellence that emerges from this lovely farm in Somerset West.

"This is the baby brother to the majestic Morgenster Red but it's also a Bordeaux style blend – the percentages of each variety varying from vintage to vintage. "Silky, sexy and infinitely drinkable – no winter is complete

WELL-KNOWN in South African and international wine circles, Germain Lehodey is the sommelier at the award-winning Restaurant Mosaic at The Orient. Lehodey, recipient of a number of industry awards, has worked at top establishments around the country and sets course papers for the Cape Wine Academy. He also regularly organises ingredient tastings for anything from salt to bottled water so that people can expand their food knowledge.

"Talking about the rules that exist between food and wine, he believes wine "should be considered as the second sauce of the dish and harmony should exist between the two". In keeping with his expertise, here are Lehodey's top five South African red wines with his pairing advice.

KANONKOP PAUL SAUER

Regarded as one of the iconic wines for the past 35 years. It

Five top reds



without a case or two of this pedigreed vino!"

5 Elgin Vintners Pinot Noir

"Pinot Noir is possibly the most expensive love affair you will ever embark upon. It's a difficult, handful of a grape to vinify but

when you hit the sweet spot, boy, do you ever! I love this Burgundian grape and it usually costs you an absolute fortune – South Africa produces a couple of really heavyweight Pinots but this little contender from Elgin snuck into my heart a year ago in a blind

...and another five to pair with food



Sommelier Germain Lehodey.

MULLINEUX SCHIST SYRAH

Peppery on the nose, classic shiraz structure and a long after-taste. A pedigree to age. Classic example from the Swartland area. Powerful yet elegant finish. Serve with a lamb curry but not too hot.



Norman Goodfellows director Carrie Adams.

PICTURES: SIMONE KLEY

tasting where it stuck its head up above the rest."

"The taut strawberry fruit pretty much quivers with that special Pinot Noir tension, just as it should, and the clever use of oak rounds it off on the back palate. "A really special little wine at a very affordable price (well, for Pinot Noir anyway)."

MORGENSTER THE MONGENSTER

The flagship of this Somerset wine estate. A classic Bordeaux blend with high merlot in it. Refined, complex with lovely matured tannins, it has years of life ahead. A wine to match a rack of lamb. Add some red wine sauce or mustard sauce and it's a hit.

WATERFORD THE JEM

Leading wine from this Stellenbosch estate. Firm tannins, complexity coming from an unusual blend. Rich black fruit on the nose and palate. Another wine to benefit from cellaring up to 10 years. I can see it being served with a cold meat platter. From wet biltong, parma ham, forest ham, bird terrine such as quail or duck and spicy liver pâté.