

Ultra light on real taste



WHILE I have never been a big fan of light beer, I recognise the need for it, especially when it comes to being on the road.

The Australian light beer market offers up very few 'flavoursome' alternatives and it is often a case of drinking it because the situation or occasion demands it rather than by choice.

Now, there is an even lower alcohol option on the market, Hahn Ultra.

At just 0.9 per cent, this is the equivalent to 0.2 standard drinks meaning you could drink a whole bucket load of these – if you wanted to.

Aside from the PR blurb on responsibility and health benefits (who drinks beer for health reasons?), I personally find it hard to consider this as a beverage, though a work colleague said "it's better for you than drinking Coke".

Yes that's true but for me to drink it, it must have taste and frankly, I found Ultra challenging to say the least.

It has a clean copper colour with a sweet hop aroma – a little bit like a shandy I thought.

While it is clean and crisp across the palate, it doesn't have the same bite that a full-bodied beer would have.

I grant that it is refreshing and I would prefer to grab one of these than a soft drink but I would still prefer to drink a light beer rather than an ultra light beer.

MY TIP

Served cold, it's a thirst quencher when you have to hit the road. The price ranges from \$8 per 330ml six pack upwards – a beer for those responsible drinkers.



THE days of Queensland beer being solely synonymous with XXXX are long gone,



Hop On Brewery Tours' Matt Farrelly and Joslyn Erickson.

especially with the boom in the craft beer market.

Independent breweries are popping up everywhere, providing the opportunity for beer drinkers to discover new flavours and styles.

The challenge is in finding many of these small breweries and then, what happens when you do?

Gold Coast-based Hop On Brewery Tours are here to help. Founded by beer-obsessed couple Joslyn and Matt, Hop On offer all-inclusive day trips to their favourite breweries in and around Brisbane, Mount Tamborine and the Gold Coast.

Hop On Brewery Tours focus on fresh, local, hand-crafted beers. All tour options include transport, visits to multiple breweries, lunch and free-flowing beer tastings.

Each of the day tours last approximately six hours, and includes all transport including pick-up and drop-off at designated spots or can also be arranged at one of Hop On Brewery's partner pubs.

Public tours have a minimum of 2 and maximum of 10 guests, though larger numbers can easily be accommodated. Groups of seven or more can request a private tour.

For information about dates, tours, breweries and more information, phone 0459 207 622 or 0433 833 928 or visit hoponbrewerytours.com.au

- BOB ANTHONY

Bufs spoiled for choice



Wine is sunlight, held together by water - Galileo Galilei

WHEN it comes to well-priced drops and getting plenty of bang for your buck, or even zing for your tastebuds, La La Land's eclectic range offers stylish consistency, flavour and craftsmanship all packaged together with creative flair and an element of mystic charm.

Its latest release of 2015 wines include pinot gris, malbec and tempranillo all priced at a moderate \$16.

The pinot gris is refreshingly light, pleasingly dry and intriguingly textural. It exudes rich peach with a combo zingy lemon and lime for an appetising finish.

While it will cellar for a couple of years, it is ready to drink now and will complement sushi perfectly.

The malbec and tempranillo are equally appealing depending on your preference for reds and are ready to drink now or cellar for up to six years.

Western Australian winemakers West Cape Howe Wines have also released their 2015 Cape 2 Cape Pinot Grigio (\$17) with half the fruit harvested from its Langton vineyard and the other half from Frankland a week later.



A clear wine with a lemony tinge, it encompasses aromas of fresh citrus and tropical fruit aromas with hints of cashew nut. Delicate, citrusy fruit flavours make up the body of the wine with splashes of lemon and pear to create good length on the palate and a clean finish.

West Cape Howe Wines suggests it is best enjoyed young.

For those looking forward to the cooler winter months, delve into the winery's range of reds including 2013 Book Ends Cabernet Sauvignon (\$28), 2014 Tempranillo (\$20), or the 2014 Cape to Cape Cab Merlot and Shiraz (\$17).

There's plenty to choose from. Let's just hope the weather does what it should and gives us the opportunity to truly indulge.

WHAT'S ON:

The hunt is on for the nation's finest wines with entries for the Royal Queensland Wine Show (RQWS) open.

The competition, which started in 1876, saw 2186 wines sniffed, swirled and tasted last year – an increase of almost 30 per cent over the past two years.

Entries close on April 29 with judging taking place from June 27-30 and a special public showcase, Grape Grazing by Night – Celebrating Australian Wine on July 8.

The showcase gives wine enthusiasts the chance to sample some of the nation's finest, while getting insider knowledge from the expert judges and winemakers.

Visit www.rqfws.com.au

- VANESSA JONES

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