

AUSTRALIA

Western Australia:

Red:

Cloudburst, Margaret River (Western Australia) Cabernet Sauvignon 2012 (\$250):

As I've said before, "Will Berliner is either a visionary or has beginner's luck. An American married to an Australian and settled in Western Australia's Margaret River area, Berliner has no formal education or real background in wine." Yet he continues to turn out spectacular wines. The immediate gush of aromatics from the glass predicts a dazzling wine -- and the taste confirms it. It's a harmonious mixture of intriguing savory and meaty notes with plump cassis-like fruitiness all buttressed by freshness and energy. The tannins are suave, which allows for immediate enjoyment. But what distinguishes it -- and all his wines -- is an unheard of elegance and restraint compared to most wines coming out of Australia. And it weighs in at all of 13.5% stated alcohol, showing that you don't need super rich grapes to produce marvelous wines. Berliner feels that with this vintage, "you can taste my vineyard." I can't attest to that, but what I taste is marvelous. Most people don't have \$250 to spend on a bottle of wine, but if you do, consider this one.

97 Michael Apstein

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