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Grape time for tippie

Victorian Wine Week invites everyone to the party, writes Tracey Kirkland

IF a comprehensive wine list is a sign of a good restaurant, how much better is a wine list that incorporates 400 of Victoria's best?

That's exactly what's on offer at a major exhibition being held in Melbourne as part of Victorian Wine Week.

From August 19-22, wine-makers from across the state will converge on the Exhibition Centre for an event which will offer everything from tasting to tips.

Visitors will be handed an empty glass on arrival and a list of the hundreds of wines with which to fill it.

"It's worth taking time to look through the list for a few minutes and work out a tasting plan," organiser Pamela Bakes says. "It's also good to take notes, so you can find the ones you like again later."

Free lectures are available.

Wine lovers may join one of the Wine Bar tours. These walking tours, which cover three of Melbourne's liveliest precincts, offer wine tasting while being treated to the finest food.

"We'll start with a crisp



Wine world: Neil Prentice promises an interesting tour.

white wine and end with a big Rutherglen red," tour leader Neil Prentice says. "And there will be a few interesting wines in the middle."

From the Grape to the Glass tour will take guests on an expedition through wineries in the Yarra Valley on August 14.

Starting at Shantell Vineyard, guests will walk with wine-makers in the vineyard to learn how grapes are grown; visit the factory at De Bortoli Winery and learn how wine is made; learn how to identify wine by flavor at Oakridge Estate; and get tips on appreciating sparkling wine at Domaine Chandon.

For those who prefer to sit and sup, many restaurants are embracing Victorian wines as part of Wine Week.

Also involved in the event are several popular Asian restaurants which will experiment with wine and Asian food.

Then there's the annual duck crawl convention at Southbank, luscious literary lunches, dinners and plenty of wine.

IN A NUTSHELL

Wine Week: August 12-22.

Exhibition: August 19-22. \$12.50/\$15 day sessions; \$22/\$25 evening sessions. RACV Ticketing, 13 28 86

Wine Bar tours: Aug 14, 15 & 19. \$50. Contact: Neil Prentice, 9593 8100

Yarra Valley coach tour: Aug 14, \$75. Details: 9621 2089

Chalk and Cheese dinner: Richmond Hill Cafe and Larder, Aug 16, \$85. Contact: 9421 2808

More Information: 9421 3048