

## Bangkok culinary treats

## EAT AT

- **The Spice Market:** casual restaurant at the Four Seasons Bangkok, with an exciting cafe-like menu of Thai specialties.
- **Bo.lan:** cool restaurant with emphasis on seasonal artisan produce. Cooking lessons and a monthly farmers market on the first Saturday each month ([www.bolan.co.th](http://www.bolan.co.th)).
- **Nahm, Metropolitan Hotel:** Australian chef David Thompson is celebrated for his authentic Thai fare in luxurious surroundings.

## MARKETS

- **Aw Taw Kaw Market:** Bangkok's hidden gem – scrupulously clean produce market with seasonal food and hawker stalls.
- **Chinatown Old Market:** 120-year-old covered produce market in the heart of Chinatown, off Yaowarat Rd. A feast for all senses.

## HOTELS

- **Shanghai Mansion:** exquisitely presented designer hotel, formerly a department store, in the heart of steamy Chinatown.
- **Four Seasons Bangkok:** centrally located for shopping and trains and a haven of luxury amid the city's frantic pace.

SALMON IN CURRY SAUCE  
(CHU CHEE PLA SALMON)

2 tbsp vegetable oil  
2 tbsp chu chee curry paste (red curry paste without coriander or cumin)  
2-3 cups coconut milk  
4x150g pieces fresh salmon fillet (skin on)  
2 tsp fish sauce  
2 tsp palm sugar  
2 large red chilli peppers, finely sliced  
2 kaffir lime leaves, very finely sliced

Gently heat the oil in a heavy frying pan. Add the curry paste and fry it gently until fragrant. Pour on half the coconut milk, stir to mix well, then bring to a simmer.

Add the salmon, skin-side up, and gently simmer for 3 minutes. Turn the salmon over, add more coconut milk to keep the mixture very sauce-like and simmer for another 2-3 minutes.

Season with fish sauce and palm sugar so the leading flavours hint of sweetness, followed by salty notes.

The salmon should be served almost rare in the middle, so try to avoid overcooking. Serve on a plate, skin-side down, and pour over the sauce. Garnish with chilli and lime-leaf shreds.

Serves 4. ■

Lauraine Jacobs travelled as a guest of *Globetrotting Gourmet* ([www.globetrottinggourmet.com](http://www.globetrottinggourmet.com)).



## WINE

by Michael Cooper

## Cool reds

The memorable 2010 vintage produces some top Auckland wines.

**H**awke's Bay promotes itself as a source of "hot reds", based on its acclaimed mostly merlot-based blends and syrah, while pinot noir flourishes further south. So, how good are Auckland's reds?

A tasting of Auckland's "cool reds" (as the growers dub them), based on traditional Bordeaux varieties – merlot, cabernet sauvignon, cabernet franc, malbec and petit verdot – was staged recently to build awareness of "this unique region". All were from the memorable 2010 vintage – low-cropping, sunny and dry.

Only a few big names were missing. My top wines flowed from north of the city (Matakana and Stillwater), Waiheke Island and South Auckland (Clevedon and the Awhitu Peninsula). They were not overshadowed by three benchmark wines from Bordeaux included in the tasting, which was conducted "blind".

Here are several of my top picks. Prices are approximate and some are not yet released.

**Brick Bay Pharos 2010**

★★★★★

Refined Matakana red, blended mostly from malbec and petit verdot. Full-coloured and supple, with ripe plum, spice and nut flavours, finely textured and rich. \$32

**Cable Bay Vineyards Five Hills 2010**

★★★★★  
Powerful Waiheke Island red, blended from merlot, malbec and the two

## WINE OF THE WEEK



Cliff Edge Awhitu Merlot/Cabernet Franc 2010 ★★★★★

Rare, seductive Auckland red, powerful and fleshy, from mature vines. Deeply coloured, with rich, ripe blackcurrant, plum and spice flavours, very silky and refined. (\$195 for six bottles from the owner, [Seager@orcon.net.nz](mailto:Seager@orcon.net.nz))

cabernets. Still a baby, it is a bold style, with rich, firm blackcurrant and plum flavours. \$35

**Messenger 2010**

★★★★★  
From Stillwater, south of the Whangaparaoa Peninsula. This blend of cabernet franc, merlot and malbec is fragrant and fleshy, with blackcurrant, plum and spice flavours, a hint of dark chocolate and lovely depth and harmony. \$85

**Obsidian 2010**

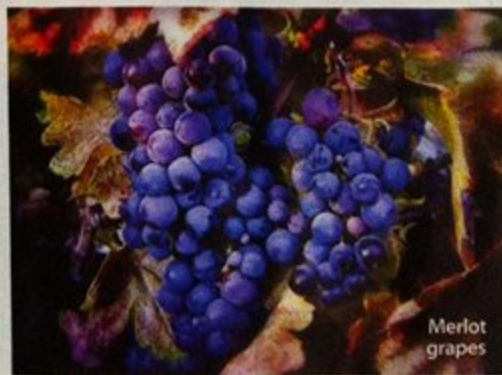
★★★★★  
A dark cabernet sauvignon and merlot-based blend from Waiheke Island. It has blackcurrant, spice and slight herb flavours, firm and highly concentrated. Obvious cellaring potential. \$54

**Puriri Hills Pope 2010**

★★★★★  
Lovely Clevedon blend, merlot-based. Finely structured, with beautifully ripe plum, spice and slight licorice flavours, concentrated, complex and built to last. \$120

**Takatu Matakana Merlot/Franc/Malbec**

2010 ★★★★★  
Classy blend, sweet-fruited, savoury and supple, with impressive density and complexity. Built to last. \$39 ■



Merlot grapes