

# STEPHEN AMES PARTNERS WITH WOLF BLASS

## *Aussie wine is a family favourite*



To commemorate four decades of superior wine making, Wolf Blass has created a special collection of its Yellow Label cabernet sauvignon, shiraz and merlot.

—Margaret Swaine

WHEN STEPHEN AMES WAS APPROACHED by his agent about a link with Wolf Blass wines, the PGA Tour star didn't take much convincing.

"My wife's a fan of Wolf Blass," Ames said. "We drink it at home."

This year marks the 40th anniversary of Wolf Blass, one of Canada's favourite Australian wine labels. Named after founder Wolfgang Franz Otto Blass, the winery now is part of the Foster's Wine Group.

The Yellow Label series was launched in 1967 and, to celebrate, the company has produced gift packs of 375 mL bottles of cabernet sauvignon, shiraz and merlot priced at around

\$20. But there's much more depth to Wolf Blass than the Yellow Label.

Ames's favourite is now the rare Platinum Shiraz that sells for around \$100—when it's available.

Blass instigated the coloured tiering system to help people choose their wine. "Back in the 1960s, all the labels were white and no one knew the difference between each of the varieties," Blass says. "How was someone meant to remember the wine

The Wolf Blass Platinum Label Barossa Valley Shiraz is the pick of the Australian label's colourful array of fine wines. After almost two years in the barrel, the pure shiraz is a treat for the tastebuds.

they liked?" Grey Label was the first, followed by Yellow, Black, Red, Gold and other colours.

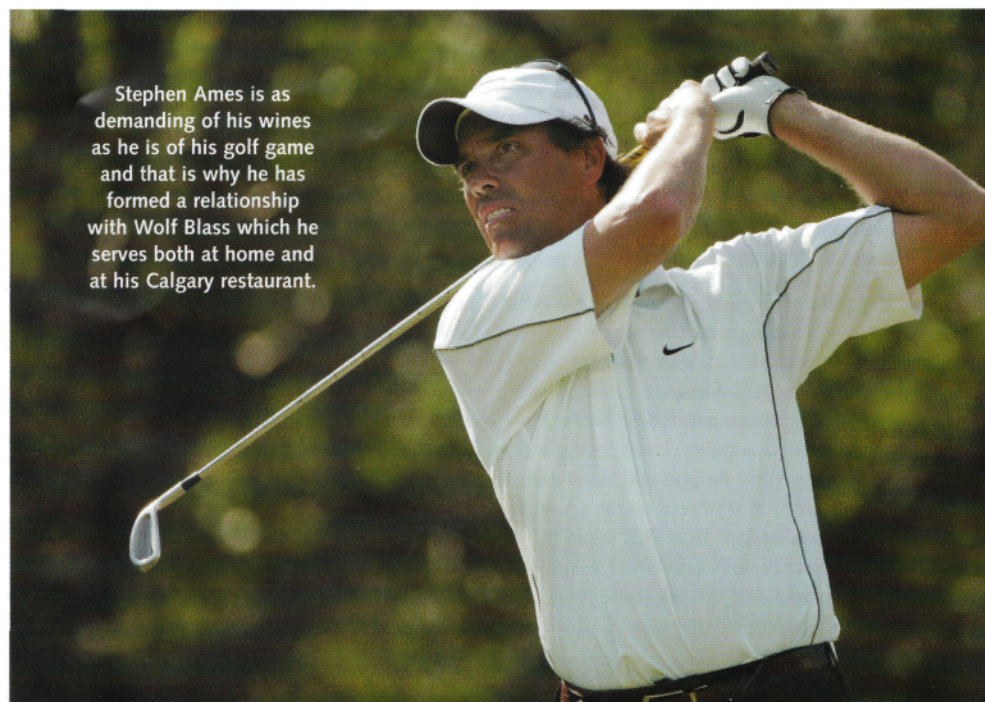
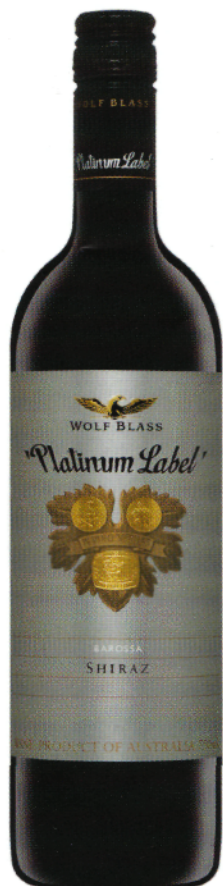
At the top of the quality pyramid is Platinum Label Barossa Valley Shiraz showcasing the varietal in its very best expression. The 2005 vintage is 100-per-cent shiraz, deep and full with plump meaty chocolate and berry tastes and a vanilla oaky finish from its 20 months in the barrel.

The Gold Label range is flavourful with good regional character. Riesling 2007 from Adelaide has a fresh floral lemony bouquet and zippy lime flavours. The Shiraz 2005 Adelaide Hills (fermented with a small amount of viognier) with 15 months in French oak has a velvety rich chocolate and berry flavour that has nuances of spiced raisin and black pepper. The Shiraz 2006 from Barossa Valley seasoned for 15 months in French and American oak has a dark chocolate mint character with a firm structure, persistent tannins and smoky oak finish. Sauvignon Blanc 2005 from Mount Gambier has a tangy, juicy fruit character with mineral and petrol in its aromatics.

For those who live in Western Canada, Wolf Blass has teamed with Ames to offer lucky contest winners a chance to hit a ball or two with the Calgary resident in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia where 25 cents from each Blass bottle purchased goes towards the Stephen Ames Foundation.

If you miss out on the big prize, you might do well to head to Vintage Chophouse in Calgary. Ames is a part owner in this steakhouse and you might just catch him there enjoying a filet of beef and a bottle of Blass.

King Valley Member Margaret Swaine is a freelance writer specializing in food, wine and travel.



Stephen Ames is as demanding of his wines as he is of his golf game and that is why he has formed a relationship with Wolf Blass which he serves both at home and at his Calgary restaurant.