

NEW IN THE MARKET



IS FRENCH RABBIT THE NEXT YELLOW TAIL?

It has an animal as part of its name, but it's not Australian.

In a day an age when iPods are the rage, this wine comes in a tetra pack otherwise known as an ePod, a name trademarked by the company that imports the wine.

It comes in a 1 litre container (the ePod), when most wines come in 750ml bottle.

Meet French Rabbit, a new introduction from French-importer Boisset America. It comes in four varietals - Pinot Noir, Chardonnay, Merlot and Cabernet - and if its success in Canada in 2005 is any indication, French Rabbit might very well be the next big hit in the wine industry.

The ePod is an ecologically friendly

package with a twist off cap, which allows consumers to squeeze the package (not the Charmin) to get rid of the air once its opened and then reseal for longer preservation.

While the packaging is unique and worthy of conversation, the wines themselves stand out as quality values, retailing for about \$9.99 per litre. They're vintage-dated, appellation-specific wines from the South of France.

There is always some questions about how the consumers will respond to something relatively novel. Some other companies have begun using some form of tetra packs with some success, but it will be interesting to see what winery, be it French Rabbit or someone else, can capture the wine drinking public's attention and acceptance of this new concept in packaging.

Pinot Noir 2004 - Fresh ripe cherry fruits. Easy sipping and good with food. **89**

Chardonnay 2004 - You smell and taste balanced fruits like peaches. A good finish, too. **87**

Merlot 2004 - Is that a hint of chocolate on the nose? Well-balanced flavors with a touch of tannins. **87**

Cabernet Sauvignon 2004 - Intense nose and medium-bodied flavors. **86**