

BEST CELLARS

Four attractive Madeiras from the past 70 years

Blandy's Alvada, Five-yearold Rich Madeira (£8.99 per 50cl, Sainsbury's, Waitrose, Booths)



A blend of 50 per cent Bual and 50 per cent Malmsey, this is a laudable attempt to introduce grown-up Madeira to a wider audience. It offers attractive flavours of fruitcake and raisins and a typical rasp of acidity. Henriques & Henriques 15year-old Verdelho (£16.99 per 50cl, at select Waitrose)



Verdelho is the second driest style ofMadeira, and this – like most of H&H's older wines - is great value for money. It's nutty and slightly cheesy with wellbalanced sweetness and a subtle, complex finish. Barbeito 10-year-old Sercial (£19.75, contact Raymond Reynolds on



A great example of the driest style of Madeira, made by one of the island's best producers. It's a fresh, nutty style with hints of Moroccan spices, a touch of sweetness and assertive, palatecleansing acidity. 1934 Cossart Gordon Verdelho (£152.75, Patrick Grubb Selections,



This is the best bottle of wine I've had this year, and I can't imagine tasting anything better in 2005. It's a wine of infinite complexity, an off-dry, sweet and sour Madeira of stunning individuality and purity.