



## Terrific Pacific Rim Rieslings

publication date: Aug 25, 2008

I had the opportunity to sip Randall Grahm's single-vineyard Pacific Rim Rieslings from Washington state while thumbing through his very useful (and free) booklet, [Riesling Rules](#). Grahm's new 2007 vineyard designates from Solstice Vineyard in Yakima Valley and the biodynamically farmed Wallula Vineyard in the Horse Heaven Hills (both sub-appellations of the Columbia Valley) are impressive, particularly since they're so soon out of the gate.

Grahm's "regular" Pacific Rim Rieslings, which come in both dry and sweet versions, are unfussy, fruity blends and in the neighbourhood of \$10/£8 per bottle. Yet the spanking-new single-site wines take a big leap in sophistication, are blessedly dry and firm, and with price tags that announce the seriousness of the project.

The three Rieslings (there is a fourth that I've yet to taste, from the Dauenhauer Vineyard in Oregon's Willamette Valley) were made by Grahm's Pacific Rim general manager/winemaker, Nicolas Quillé, at their West Richland winery in Washington state. The wines are sealed with screwcaps – and, alas, not yet available in the UK.

### **Pacific Rim, Solstice Vineyard Riesling 2007 Yakima Valley** 16 Drink 2008-11

The sweetest of the trio at 1.14g/l residual sugar, it tastes remarkably dry and crisp. Stony and nutty on the nose, it pierces the palate with lean lime and grapefruit, enriched by some spicy baked apple on the finish. Crisp acidity. 13.5% alcohol. (LM)  
\$30

### **Pacific Rim, Wallula Vineyard Riesling 2007 Columbia Valley** 17 Drink 2009-15

Terrific value. Fragrant (honeysuckle and minerals), it tastes bone-dry, bordering on austere, with earthy notes and racy citrus and white peach flavours. There's some creaminess and tropical fruit in the mid-palate, then the wine closes with mouthwatering acidity - tart and minerally. Delicious now, but best to wait. 0.9g/l RS, 12.3% alcohol. (Wallula is in the Horse Heaven Hills AVA, although the label reads Columbia Valley.) (LM)  
\$18

### **Pacific Rim, Wallula Vineyard Riesling Biodynamic 2007 Columbia Valley** 17 Drink 2009-15

Produced from a young, 145-acre, certified biodynamic plot at Wallula. Floral, stony, faintly leesy nose. Pure, focused Meyer lemon, citrus pith and peach fruit. Slightly plumper than the non-BD Riesling above, and with more yeasty complexity, it offers depth now and promises reward with cellaring. 0.76g/l RS, 13% alcohol. (LM)  
\$30