

Halliday hails WA drops



By JOHN JENS

THE new 'vintage' of James Halliday's *Australian Wine Companion* (2011 edition) is in the bookshops.

It is the most detailed and the most consistent of all of the various wine ratings books that are coming on to the market.

The *Companion* rates a significant proportion of the just-released Australian wines and places them into quality and value perspectives for the wine-buying public.

The second major role of the

Australian Wine Companion is the wealth of relevant statistical detail in each of the winery profiles – 1477 in this edition – and the succinct one-paragraph perspective on each.

When the book's various special interest summaries are added it remains the most detailed and only essential Australian wine reference work.

The 2011 edition confirms that James Halliday is the greatest friend that the WA wine industry has ever had. James has rated, once again, the West's wines as among the nation's superstars.

WA gained the best (2009 Cherubino) and seven of the top 30 rieslings (23 per cent); two of the equal-top Chardonnays (Cullen Kevin John 2007 and



Larry Cherubino

Brookland Valley 2009) and 15 of the top 51 (29 per cent); two of the equal top Sauvignon Blancs (the 2009's from Leeuwin Estate and Cherubino) and 15 of the top 54 (28 per cent); the top two SSBs (Cullen and Suckfizzle both from 2009) and 28 of the top 36; and an equal top cabernet (Thomas Hardy 2004 – grown, made and bottled by Houghton) and 20 of the top 59 (34 per cent) and the top cabernet blend (Cullen Diana Madeline) and 16 of the top 34 (47 per cent).

And the winery of the year? Who else but the brilliantly effective Larry Cherubino.