



WINEWISE

THE CONSUMER'S WINE GUIDE

August 2014



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ORANGE REGION TOP 50

Deb Pearce and Lester recently conducted a major benchmarking exercise for the vignerons of Orange and the Central Ranges. They spent two days tasting wines of all styles under “blind” conditions. We thank the producers of Orange for their support in providing the wines and venue and helping with the tasting.

Here are our top fifty wines. The wines are listed in **alphabetical order** within each category.

Excellent value wines in purple.

Outstanding

2011 Bantry Grove Chardonnay A powerful chardonnay showing some development and toastiness. The intense palate has an excellent creamy texture and fascinating complexity. Delightful drinking now. An exceptional wine from a tough vintage. (\$28.00)
<http://www.bantrygrove.com.au/products-page/white-wine/2009-chardonnay/>

2008 Conobolas Smith Shine Chardonnay This chardonnay has it all – white peach, nuts, butter and remarkable freshness. It’s rich and creamy, with a good line of acidity. Drink now – 2016. (\$45.00)
<http://www.canobolassmithwines.com.au/>

2012 Philip Shaw No.89 Shiraz Very enticing perfume/spice nose enhanced by classy oak. Great varietal drive on the palate which finishes with fine, firm tannins. It will be even better after 4-5 years. (\$36.75)
<http://www.corkscrewcellars.com.au/onlineshop.html>

2013 Ross Hill Pinnacle Series Chardonnay An intense white peach/grapefruit chardonnay with beautifully subtle barrel-derived complexity. It’s long, creamy and has perfect phenolic grip. (\$35.00)
<http://rosshillwines.businesscatalyst.com/pinnacle-series>

2012 Ross Hill Pinnacle Series Cabernet Franc Often cabernet franc is treated like a second-class citizen in Australia, but this wine shows what the variety can do. The raspberry/bramble aromas are classically varietal, and the palate offers perfectly ripe fruit wrapped in fine tannins. (\$40.00)

2012 Swinging Bridge Reserve Chardonnay Intense cool area aromas of grapefruit and white peach surge out of the glass. This wine has power, length, texture and the acidity for which the Orange region is noted. (\$38.00)
<http://www.swingingbridge.com.au/2012-swinging-bridge-reserve-chardonnay/>

Highly Recommended

2013 Angullong Shiraz Fresh, ripe characteristics - almost blackberry jam. Good length of palate with a structure based on lingering fine tannins. (\$19.00)

<http://angullong.mybigcommerce.com/wine-store-all-wines/>

2011 Borrodel Chardonnay A delicious white peach/nougat style which is quite restrained and dry. The creamy texture is a major positive. (\$25.00)

2014 Cargo Road Wines Riesling Appealingly fresh and limey. A very aromatic riesling with good fruit weight and acidity. (\$28.00)

2012 Charles Sturt University Chardonnay This wine offers clearly defined grapefruit/white peach varietal characteristics. The palate is satisfying and well-textured. (\$13.50)

<http://winery.csu.edu.au/products/2012-chardonnay.html>

2014 Colmar Estate Sauvignon Blanc Shows powerful gooseberry/grass aromas and has impressive weight and balance together with racy acidity. (\$24.00)

2011 De Salis Chardonnay Rich, fresh, complex white peach. Toasty oak. Very rewarding palate. (\$35.00)

2013 Hedberg Hill Guy's Sauvignon Blanc This is an exceptional sauvignon blanc. It's restrained, showing elements of lime, grass and mineral. Its pureness is a key feature. (\$18.00)

<http://www.hedberghill.com.au/site/index.cfm>

2014 Logan Weemala Riesling Nicely fresh, showing apple, musk, floral aromatics with some lime. Well made, with well integrated residual sugar. It finishes comparatively dry. (\$16.50)

[https://www.crackawines.com.au/Logan/2014 Logan Weemala Riesling/Sales](https://www.crackawines.com.au/Logan/2014_Logan_Weemala_Riesling/Sales)

2009 Patina Reserve Chardonnay The nose is attractively peachy with a faintly grassy edge and a hint of toast. Overall it's very rich and creamy, drinking well now. (\$35.00)

2013 Philip Shaw No.8 Pinot Noir The perfumed red fruits aroma is enhanced by oak and forest floor complexity. There's a touch of class about this wine which offers sweet fruit, length, texture and structure. (\$40.00)

2012 Philip Shaw No.17 Merlot Cabernet Franc Cabernet The red fruits aromas are particularly vibrant, enhanced by a touch of oak. This is a very attractive wine with a long palate and fine tannins. (\$25.00)

<http://www.philipshaw.com.au/wine-store>

2013 Philip Shaw No.19 Sauvignon Blanc Quite intense and grassy with excellent length of varietal flavour and acid drive. (\$25.00)

2013 Printhie MCC Shiraz It's a little "out there" and gamy, but it's also powerful, fresh and perfumed, with slightly charry oak and a firm finish. (\$35.00)

2013 Printhie MCC Chardonnay A very appealing white peach, cashew style of chardonnay with a long creamy palate. (\$35.00)

2014 Ross Hill Pinnacle Series Pinot Gris There's plenty of fresh pear varietal character here within a balanced phenolic structure. (\$30.00)

2013 Ross Hill Pinnacle Series Sauvignon Blanc A fresh grassy sauvignon blanc with beguiling complexity derived from wild yeast and lees contact. Very textural. (\$30.00)

2012 Ross Hill Tom & Harry Cabernet Sauvignon Good varietal blackcurrant plus oak and faint leaf. The palate is long, firm and fine. A very classy wine for the price. (\$25.00)

2013 Swinging Bridge Sauvignon Blanc An intense grassy/nettle sauvignon blanc with some background funk and racy acidity. Plenty of interest here. (\$20.00)

2013 Swinging Bridge Mrs Payton Chardonnay Lemon, grapefruit and white peach in a true expression of a cool growing environment. Nuttiness and nougat show on creamy palate. (\$24.95)

2013 Tamburlaine Reserve Shiraz A fresh intense blackberry and spice style with a long, fairly firm palate. It needs a few years to soften the tannins. (\$44.00)

2013 Tamburlaine Wine Lovers Organic Shiraz The striking spicy/blackberry nose shows some black pepper influence. The medium-bodied palate is vibrant, long and balanced. A bargain!! (\$14.00)

http://www.jimscellars.com.au/_product/view-product/tamburlaine-wine-lovers-shiraz?id=3cfef6b86db8eac342b3c75c454c1453&sessid=b917538c93ca4197064c0b6be5785b79

2012 Twisted River Cabernet Merlot There's plenty of substance in terms of the fresh plummy red fruits flavour. Balanced tannins support the fruit well. (\$20.00)

<http://twistedriverwines.com.au/>

2013 Twisted River Viognier This wine is a very good expression of the variety. It's intense without being heavy or oily and shows good intense lemony/apricot/ginger characteristics. There's plenty of flavour and texture with a pleasant phenolic grip. (\$22.00)

Recommended

2013 Angullong Fossil Hill Shiraz Viognier Here we have rich dark berry aromas and flavours. It's fresh and quite opulent, with a firm structure. (\$24.00)

2013 Borrodell Rosé Light pink. Fresh restrained strawberry aromas and a palate of good intensity with a dry finish. (\$18.00)

2013 Charles Sturt University "R" Riesling A complex, funky Alsace-like style. It's slightly sweet but has structure and balanced phenolics. Left-field but good. (\$18.00)

2012 Cumulus Chardonnay Fresh white peach. Impressive creaminess and good initial mouthfeel, but the acid is a little too obvious on the finish. (\$35.00)

2011 Highland Heritage Estate Nikki D Riesling Varietal and acceptably developed. Some limey characteristics in an off-dry riesling. Excellent fruit and acid. (\$25.00)

2013 Highland Heritage Estate Sauvignon Blanc Fresh nose with some tropical fruit overtones. A rich mouthful. (\$25.00)

2014 Logan Sauvignon Blanc Very fresh gooseberry/grass. Packed with flavour plus a slight sweetness backed by good acidity. (\$22.00)

2014 Patina Scandalous Riesling A restrained floral style with good fruit weight and marginal residual sugar balanced by acidity. (\$25.00)

2013 Philip Shaw No.11 Chardonnay Impressive white peach aromas herald a firm, creamy dry palate of good length and acidity. (\$35.00)

2013 Philip Shaw The Architect Chardonnay Fresh, peachy, and uncomplicated, with nice palate texture. (\$20.00)

2013 Philip Shaw The Idiot Shiraz Blackberry, perfumed, violets. Impressive fruit. Fine firm structure. Needs time. (\$17.25)
<http://www.corkscrewcellars.com.au/onlineshop.html>

2012 Printhie Super Duper Chardonnay Fresh white peach aromas and flavours are enhanced by a lees influence and a creamy palate. (\$85.00)

2012 Printhie MCC Chardonnay A big, rich peachy chardonnay with plenty of flavour and texture. (\$35.00)

2010 Printhie Swift Chardonnay Pinot Noir Brut Very fresh, with a bready hint and a slight aldehyde complexity. Nicely put together and creamy. (\$50.00)

2013 Printhe MCC Riesling The strongly varietal and regional citrus nose leads to a fresh palate of good weight and acidity. Low level sweetness adds to the appeal. (\$26.00)

2012 Ross Hill Isabell & Jack Cabernet Franc Merlot
Perfumed red fruits with a faint leafiness. Good but slightly lean. (\$25.00)

2013 Stockmans Ridge Rider Pinot Gris Italian-style grigio nose. The palate is pleasantly flinty. (\$23.00)

2013 Stockmans Ridge Rider Savagnin Fresh and lemony with some free SO₂ closing the nose a little. Quite racy, with good length and texture. (\$23.00)

2012 Swinging Bridge MAW Pinot Noir Slightly stewed strawberry aroma. Better palate, with good fruit and balance. (\$38.00)

2013 Tamburlaine Reserve Malbec Concentrated, vibrant, floral and intense. A bit raw and firm but it has potential. (\$44.00)

2013 Twisted River Chardonnay Viognier Fresh apple/lemon nose with a hint of stone fruit. Good phenolics, texture and length. (\$20.00)

What information can we take away from this tasting? First, the leading varietals for the region are chardonnay, sauvignon blanc and shiraz, with riesling beginning to make a strong statement. The Bordeaux varieties cabernet franc, cabernet sauvignon and merlot certainly have their places when planted in the right sites, but the question mark hangs over pinot noir. Lack of vine age is a major contributor to lack of intensity at the moment, but will it ever produce exciting wines in the Orange region? We'll have to wait at least a decade to find out.

2014 WINEWISE SMALL VIGNERON AWARDS

The judging of the 2014 Small Vigneron Awards concluded on Saturday, 23 August. Here are the trophy winners. Much more on them and hundreds of other entries very shortly. As you can see, high quality wine doesn't have to cost a fortune.

BEST RIESLING 2014 Gilberts Mt Barker Riesling (\$22.00)

BEST SEMILLON 2011 Mistletoe Reserve Hunter Valley Semillon (\$28.00)

BEST SAUVIGNON BLANC 2014 Mandoon Margaret River Sauvignon Blanc (\$19.50)

BEST CHARDONNAY 2013 Eden Road Maragle Chardonnay (\$50.00)

BEST OTHER WHITE VARIETY 2013 Twisted River Viognier
(\$22.00)

BEST BLEND OF SEMILLON & SAUVIGNON BLANC 2013
Warner Glen Estate Margaret River PBF Sauvignon Blanc Semillon
(\$30.00)

BEST SWEET WHITE 2013 Freeman Dolcino (\$20.00)

BEST ROSÉ Not awarded



BEST PINOT NOIR 2013 Balgownie Black Label Yarra Valley Pinot
Noir (\$25.00)

BEST SHIRAZ 2013 Credaro Beach Head Shiraz (\$25.00)

BEST CABERNET SAUVIGNON 2012 Ross Hill Tom & Harry
Orange Cabernet Sauvignon (\$25.00)

BEST OTHER RED VARIETY 2013 Capital Wines Foreign Minister
Sangiovese (\$25.00)

BEST AUSTRALIAN CLASSIC BLEND Not awarded

BEST BORDEAUX BLEND 2013 Mandoon Margaret River
Cabernet Merlot (\$25.00)

BEST OTHER RED BLEND 2012 Dolan Family Winemakers Shiraz
Grenache Mataro (\$25.00)

BEST SPARKLING Not awarded

BEST FORTIFIED Not awarded

BEST EXHIBITOR To be confirmed



LEN SORBELLO MEMORIAL

TROPHY (Best current vintage or one year old semillon) 2014
Briar Ridge Dairy Hill Hunter Valley Semillon (\$35.00)

WINEWISE PANEL TASTINGS

As often happens the panel was greeted by a mixed bag of wines. However one white and one red provided a great deal of pleasure.

Chardonnay

Outstanding

2011 Paringa Estate Mornington Peninsula Chardonnay Plenty of ripe fresh fruit impact together with subtle lees and oak complexity. Well textured and intense. Delightful drinking now-2016. (\$35.00)

Highly Recommended

2013 Xanadu DJL Margaret River Chardonnay A little closed by SO₂ but has attractive white peach flavour. The long creamy palate makes it a very appealing wine to enjoy in the short term. (\$24.00)

Recommended

2013 West Cape Howe Frankland Old School Chardonnay An intense white peach/nectarine style of chardonnay with barrel-derived complexity and a nicely textured palate. (\$22.00)

2012 Xanadu Margaret River Chardonnay Fresh intense white peach and cashew show on both nose and palate. A rich approachable wine with good texture. (\$35.00)

2011 Paringa Estate The Paringa Mornington Peninsula Chardonnay Big, powerful and shows plenty of new wood. A chardonnay of large proportions with oak to match. (\$50.00)

2013 Coldstream Hills Yarra Valley Chardonnay This wine offers white peach with plenty of ground almond. Big and rich with fruit and alcohol sweetness. It's bigger and more forward than usual. (\$29.00)

Agreeable

2012 Killerby Margaret River Chardonnay Quite full-flavoured. Slightly tropical. Round and ready. (\$30.00)

2012 Delamere Vineyards Tasmania Chardonnay Very round and full, with attractive nutty lees support. Hint of butter. Somewhat fat and soft. (\$40.00)

2012 Rochford Isabella's Vineyard Yarra Valley Chardonnay Lacks freshness on nose, but the palate is substantial. (\$44.00)

Acceptable

2012 Rochford Yarra Valley Chardonnay Slightly advanced. Peachy but plain. A bit flabby. (\$30.00)

2012 West Cape Howe Styx Gully Mount Barker Chardonnay Full and peachy. On the edge of VA. Sweet. Stuck ferment? (\$30.00)

2012 SHIRAZ

Outstanding

2012 Blue Pyrenees The Richardson Series Shiraz Fresh, very intense blackberry with a faint hint of mint. Gorgeous firm yet silky palate. Great length and balance. Cellar ten years. The only negative is the cork seal. (\$50.00)

Highly Recommended

2012 Wolf Blass Brown Label Shiraz Attractive meld of fresh blackberry and toasty oak. Very intense fruit and oak in a classic Australian style. (\$50.00)

2012 Rosemount Estate McLaren Vale Shiraz Ripe intense dark berry aromas. Firm and long with excellent varietal flavour. Mouth-coating tannins. (\$25.00)

Recommended

2012 Mojo Barossa Shiraz Fresh rich blackberry with toasty oak shows on a very satisfying palate offering layers of flavour. Cellar. (\$15.00)

2012 Mr Riggs McLaren Vale Shiraz Comparatively light colour. The nose and palate are packed with blackberry, dark chocolate and slightly toasty oak. Rich and fresh, with an oak finish. (\$47.00) Cork

2012 Thorn-Clarke Shotfire Barossa Shiraz Big but not jammy. A ripe, rich, "sweet" style with slightly furry tannins. (\$20.00)

Agreeable

2012 West Cape Howe Two Steps Mount Barker Shiraz Developed colour. Blackberry, chocolate and oak flow through to a palate that is slightly savoury in nature. Seems ready. (\$27.00)

2012 Frankland Estate Isolation Ridge Shiraz Bright but weak colour. Light and somewhat plain. (\$35.00)

Acceptable

2012 Xanadu DJL Margaret River Shiraz Slightly light colour. Light minty red fruits. Firm but a bit hollow, with a lingering eucalypt overtone. (\$24.00)

2012 Mount Avoca Malakoff Pyrenees Shiraz Shows blackberry with a touch of horsey Brett. The palate is hard. (\$49.95)

WYNNS COONAWARRA

A continuing conversational theme among winemakers and fellow journalists over the past few years is the exceptional work being done at Wynns Coonawarra. It's not often that the opinion of winemakers large and small, is so united, especially when it comes to a division of a huge company like Treasury Wine Estates.

Sue Hodder, Sarah Pidgeon, Allen Jenkins, Luke Skeer and the entire team earned that praise by starting with extensive renovation of vineyards which is now paying huge dividends by way of the quality of the wines. In early August I visited Wynns as a guest and tasted a wide range of reds – young and not so young..

V&A Lane



2008 V & A Lane Shiraz This is a vibrant wine. Six years have smoothed the tannins, but the red fruits flavours still speak of youth. It's a very impressive regional style that is approachable but still has many years ahead of it. ***Highly Recommended***

2009 V & A Lane Shiraz Blackberry, tilled earth, regional mint. Fairly austere and tannic, with typical Coonawarra acidity. A bit too firm. ***Recommended***

2010 V & A Lane Shiraz Intense ripe dark berry aromas merge well with a touch of new oak. Likewise the strong fruit meets fine powdery tannins. This wine needs time. ***Highly Recommended***

2012 Shiraz Fragrant. Packed with red berry fruit, and there's a faint suggestion of undergrowth. The opulent but not overpowering fruit is matched with very fine, lingering tannins on a palate of classic Coonawarra weight and acidity. Thirty percent whole bunch was used in fermentation, and the oak is all French, but none is new. (\$45.00) ***Outstanding***

https://www.crackawines.com.au/Wynns_Coonawarra_Estate/2012_Wynns_Coonawarra_Estate_V_A_Lane_Shiraz/Sales

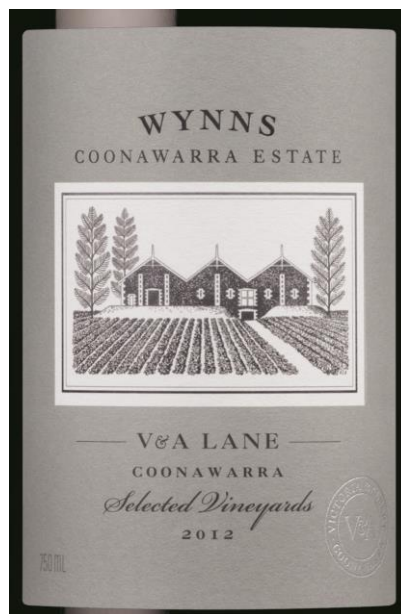
The history of V&A Lane started in 1851, just 15 years after European settlement in South Australia. Surveyor Eugene Bellairs mapped the 'county line' from the eastern border to Nora Creina, 20 kilometres south of Robe. Local history has it that in 1857 Chinese immigrants used Bellairs' survey posts to guide their trek from Robe to the Victorian goldfields. Later, the richest land along the lane would become a prized part of John Riddoch's extensive holdings.

After the Riddoch estate was broken up in 1906, a succession of fruit growers and sheep farmers established themselves on the much sought-after soil. The Hayes, Adamson and Childs families are recalled in the names of today's vineyards, and Glengyle commemorates the Scottish origins of the Childs family. The names of other fine blocks, such as the V&A and Albert vineyards, refer more directly to their location near the lane.
Words from Wynns

2008 Cabernet Shiraz The power of Coonawarra cabernet shows strongly here. Cassis dominates the nose and palate, and cabernet muscle shows its grip. An impressive red. Cellar ten years at least. **Highly Recommended**

2009 Cabernet Shiraz Here we have intense, slightly leafy cabernet aromas with a touch of maturity. It's a true Aussie claret - firm and dry. Cellar about ten years. **Highly Recommended**

2010 Cabernet Shiraz Rich and ripe. More blackberry than blackcurrant. Firm cabernet tannins work well with plenty of mid-palate richness. **Highly Recommended**



2012 Cabernet Shiraz A very fresh merging of both varietal characteristics. Lingering, fine, firm tannins. Impressive. Vibrant fruit. Again classic Coonawarra weight. (\$45.00) **Highly Recommended**

It's exciting to consider that the 2012s and not the 2008s, are really the starting points on a fascinating journey. Not only is the work in the vineyards well and truly kicking in, but more creative wine making (including use of whole bunches) is taking place.

Understanding of the terrain is also playing a major role. Coonawarra is **not** flat. V & A Lane, for example drops about a metre in an easterly direction from the Riddoch highway. This promotes cold air drainage, and picking times are affected by the changes in temperature. Similarly, soil composition changes as we head east, impacting varietal and clonal choices.

Single Vineyards



Single vineyard soil profiles

2001 Harold Cabernet Sauvignon Mature colour but holding its red. Shows its age but also ripe fruit. It doesn't exactly scream cabernet on the nose. Definitely ready. **Recommended**

“It wasn't our finest hour viticulturally.” **Sue Hodder**

2003 Johnsons Shiraz Cabernet Sauvignon Mature nose showing some leather. Ripe fruit but elegant palate. Lingering, slightly furry tannins. In its drinking window. **Recommended**

2004 Johnsons Shiraz Cabernet Sauvignon (from magnum with cork) Sound colour. Lightening at edge. Shiraz-driven nose. Fresh, with slight mushroom overtones. Attractive, long, medium-bodied palate with a fine tannin structure. Drinks well, but still has time ahead of it. **Highly Recommended**

100% Screwcap after 2004

2005 Messenger Cabernet Sauvignon Bright, comparatively youthful colour and nose. Aromas show some cassis but seem at the top end of ripeness. This is an opulent cabernet with persistent, slightly furry tannins, and it still needs time. **Highly Recommended**

2006 Alex 88 Cabernet Sauvignon Cassis, blackberry and the faintest hint of leaf show in the bouquet which is still fresh. The palate is sumptuous, with plenty of tannin grip. Cellar. **Highly Recommended**

2007 Glengyle Cabernet Sauvignon Attractive bright red colour. Quite intense dark berry aroma which is still youthful. The fruit is backed by fine, firm tannin structure. Keep for a decade. **Highly Recommended**

2008 Davis Cabernet Sauvignon The bright colour is impressive, and the nose is complex, showing cedar, tobacco and intense varietal fruit. Long palate. Very fine tannins. Cellar another 10-15 years. **Outstanding**

2009 Glengyle Cabernet Sauvignon Elegant red berry, mint and leaf. Classic Coonawarra. This is a long-flavoured wine with impressive savoury tannins. **Outstanding**

2010 Messenger Cabernet Sauvignon Strong colour. Rich, ripe dark berry. Incredibly opulent – if the Glengyle is Médoc ‘88 this Médoc ‘89. Magnificent in the fuller style. **Outstanding**

2010 Alex 88 Cabernet Sauvignon Powerful cassis plus cedar and oak, yet there's complexity and some restraint. Quite stunning, having a touch more finesse and classic regionality than the Messenger. **Outstanding**

Single Vineyard Descriptions *(Courtesy of Wynns)*

Harold

Wynns Harold Vineyard is a nine hectare block set in the heart of some of the best terra rossa soils in Coonawarra. It is named after Harold Childs, the previous owner. This grazing land was purchased by Wynns in 1966 and planted to the current cabernet vines in 1971. In 2001 the Harold vineyard produced exceptional fruit, and it was decided in 2004 to release the first bottling of this unique, single vineyard wine.

Over the last ten years the vineyard has been renovated and re-trellised. Drip irrigation was installed to provide protection from drought, and selective compost on shallower soil areas has also nurtured the vines back to health.

Johnson's

The Johnson's blocks were named after W.B. Johnson who owned some of the land in 1906. Johnson's Block is a dry-grown vineyard in the heart of the terra rossa. The first shiraz vines were planted there in 1925.

The 1954 planting of cabernet sauvignon in Johnson's Block was the first cabernet planting undertaken by the Wynn family after they purchased the winery in 1951. It is the oldest cabernet sauvignon in Coonawarra.

Messenger

Purchased from Allan “Nobby” Messenger in 1988, the dry-land Messenger Vineyard has been a consistent contributor to Wynns premium wines. The Messenger family has been in the region for a long time – Douglas Messenger was a carpenter in the early 1860s and Nobby was an earthmover who ripped the soil prior to many of the 1960s Coonawarra vineyard plantings.

It was planted in 1975 in southern Coonawarra, two kilometres north of Penola and 500 metres west of the Riddoch Highway.

When conditions are right, such as in 2005 and 2010, the block's heavier soils store enough winter rainfall to produce small, intensely flavoured grapes with excellent balance.

Alex 88

The Alex 88 block is named after Miss Nora Alexander, who lived there until her death in the 1960s. The Wynns Alexander Block was planted with cabernet sauvignon in 1988 (hence Alex 88). Located 1km north of the Wynns triple-gabled winery, fruit from the Alex 88 vineyard has been a regular contributor to Wynns Black Label Cabernet Sauvignon and John Riddoch.

The soil in this vineyard is a deep, light clay which produces even, low cropping cabernet sauvignon with great fruit intensity. In the last few years the fruit has been used in several trials including a viticultural Masters thesis - with promising results.

Glengyle

The Glengyle Vineyard was planted in 1969 and Wynns have been making wine from it since the purchase of the property in 1993.

Glengyle is one of the first Coonawarra cabernet vineyards to ripen because it is higher (60m) and warmer and typically yields at low levels of quality fruit. 2007 was one of the lowest yielding vintages in more than 50 years. It was a challenging vintage preceded by a dry winter and spring, contributing to widespread frost damage.

The Glengyle Vineyard bounced back after the frost, albeit with reduced yields of around two tonnes per hectare, producing intense regional and varietal fruit flavours.

Davis

Named after William Davis, Davis 5 is one of the oldest cabernet blocks in Coonawarra. The vines were planted in 1957 and renovated in 2003. It's been an important contributor to John Riddoch Cabernet Sauvignon. The Davis block has played an important role in providing cuttings for cabernet plantings throughout Coonawarra.

I'm told the wines of the sixties were fine and fruit-driven. I don't find it incongruous that we've returned to that style.

Sue Hodder

The Team



L to R Allen Jenkins, Sue Hodder, Sarah Pidgeon, Luke Skeer

And finally THE TWO CLASSICS

2012 Wynns Black Label Coonawarra Cabernet Sauvignon I always view the Black Label as the “château” wine of Wynns. It’s the wine on which the reputation of Wynns Coonawarra has been based for 60 years. Very good, sometimes even better, wines are made in smaller lots, but this label remains the best consistent expression of Coonawarra in my opinion.

The 2012 is certainly one of the best-ever Black Labels. It’s unmistakable cabernet sauvignon, vibrant and smelling of blackcurrant. The palate is plush but structured – and remarkably accessible – but the wine will live for decades. **Outstanding**

I notice Dan Murphy’s offer it for \$26.00 and First Choice sell it for \$27.00. Folks, this is one of Australia’s very best cabernets. Don’t leave a single bottle on the shelves.

2010 Wynns John Riddoch Coonawarra Cabernet Sauvignon There’s no doubting the quality and cellaring potential of the John Riddoch. It has power, finesse and everything that makes cabernet sauvignon great. You’ll need to keep it for at least ten years to even begin to see the best of it. (\$140.00)

That should explain why the Wynns crew is on the receiving end of so much praise. What’s more they don’t use the words biodynamic or organic to help sell their wines. Environmentally sound cultivation practices, quality-focussed viticulture and thoughtful winemaking produce the right results. It’s what’s in the glass that counts.

Lester Jesberg