

The Yard Shiraz by Larry Cherubino

I've tasted my way through a couple of dozen Larry Cherubino wines recently, and you'll see reviews in the near future, but in this report I'm highlighting a trio of his exciting reds – The Yard single vineyard shiraz wines from Frankland River.

I first visited Frankland River in 1989 – that's 27 years ago – and it was an established wine area then. That makes it easy for me to understand how Larry has the luxury of selecting material from mature vineyards in possibly the most under-rated wine region in Australia.

The Mean January Temperature (MJT) 19°C of Frankland River equates with the Mean July Temperature of Tain l'Hermitage. The Heat Degree Days (HDD) summation for Frankland River is 1441, near enough to the 1450 of Hermitage, compared to 1680, for example, of the Barossa Valley. Figures from

<http://www.mountbarkerwine.com.au/great-southern-area.html>

Little wonder that Frankland River grows exceptional shiraz.



2015 The Yard Acacia Frankland River Shiraz The stunning nose of violets, black pepper and aromatic spices is immediately captivating and forms the perfect introduction to a long, fine, seamless, medium-bodied palate. This wine, and the other two, will pass through several phases as they age, but do try a bottle now to experience that magical bouquet. It will change over time. (\$35.00) ★★★★★

November 21, 2016

2015 The Yard Riversdale Frankland River Shiraz This is a fresh dark berry style with a spicy/herbal note. It's a deliciously mouth-filling wine which is supple, satisfying and in no way jammy or heavy. (\$35.00) ★★★★★

2015 The Yard Justin Frankland River Shiraz Dark berry and cracked black pepper aromas abound in this exceptional red wine. There are also dried herb notes that bring to mind wines from the Hermitage hillside. A gloriously opulent, silky shiraz with very fine savoury tannins. (\$35.00) ★★★★★

This wine comes from a block of the Justin vineyard which was singled out as special by Larry Cherubino. The vineyard is a national treasure, planted in the early seventies. It has delivered us the marvellous Gladstones and Jack Mann reds, and although Constellation continues to purchase fruit, they can't fit the whole vineyard into their plans any longer. About five years ago Larry formed a management team for the owner, and the vineyard is now a source of material for a few different clients.

The Justin shiraz, like the others in the trio, undergoes pre-ferment maceration, but there is no whole-bunch or stems contact during fermentation which takes place in both closed and open vessels. The wines are aged in large and small new and one-year old oak for only about six months.

By keeping winemaker input low-key, Larry expresses the characters of the three sites with aplomb. Although there are similarities, the wines are very much individuals. I commend all of them to you.

Lester Jesberg

<https://www.larrycherubino.com/Wine/The-Yard>

COMING SOON: The panel tastes 112 Margaret River chardonnays, cabernet sauvignons and Bordeaux blends. How will the big names fare against the strong challenge of the not-so-well-known producers? Blind tasting will tell all.

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