

## 2017 WINEWISE CHAMPIONSHIP

**T**ime flies. This is the eighth – and largest - Winewise Championship. Wine producers were invited to enter gold medal winners from regional shows and major trophy winners from capital city shows held in 2017-18. The response rate was impressive, and this year 462 wines were assessed.

The Winewise panel was joined by winemakers Tim Knappstein and Nick O’Leary, and wines were tasted in groups no larger than six. They were then placed in order of preference, following the practice of trophy judging in most wine shows. Often heats and semi-finals were required before a grand final taste-off. This process certainly brought the cream to the top.

The winning wine in each category is awarded a gold-plated medallion produced by the Australian Mint.

### WHITE WINES

#### Sauvignon Blanc and Blends



#### **Medallion Winner** 2016 Watershed Shades Margaret

**River Sauvignon Blanc Semillon** Gooseberry aromas with a faint hint of green pea. The palate delivers excellent weight and freshness. (\$19.95) ★★★★★

<https://www.watershedwines.com.au/product/2016-shades-sauvignon-blanc-semillon/>

**2016 Shaw + Smith Adelaide Hills Sauvignon Blanc** Lively, grassy and richly flavoured, with a hint papaya showing on the nose. The palate is long, with some textural interest. (\$23.00) ★★★★★

<https://www.nicks.com.au/2016-shaw-smith-sauvignon-blanc>

**2016 Flametree Margaret River Sauvignon Blanc Semillon** A full ripe citrus/grass style with attractive barrel ferment/lees complexity. The palate is textured and long. (\$24.00) ★★★★★

<https://www.flametreevines.com/product/Flametree-Sauvignon-Blanc-Semillon-2016>

**2016 Firetail Margaret River Sauvignon Blanc** Fresh, grassy and faintly sweet, with good acidity and a hint of toasty complexity. ★★★★★

**2016 Sidewood Estate Adelaide Hills Sauvignon Blanc** Fresh, fully ripe gooseberry aromas with tropical fruit overtones. Full of life and drinking well. ★★★★★

**2016 Petaluma White Label Adelaide Hills Sauvignon Blanc** A gooseberry/grass style that is beginning to show a little development. ★★★★★

**2015 Moorilla Muse Sauvignon** There's plenty of barrel ferment complexity here. Although it's a fascinating wine, the non-fruit component is too pronounced. ★★★

**2016 Josef Chromy Sauvignon Blanc** Comparatively deep colour. Has varietal character but is fairly forward. ★★★☆

**2015 Domaine Naturaliste Sauvage** We were impressed by the depth of fruit, but the barrel ferment and oak aromas and flavours are very obvious. It's certainly down the path of Graves blanc but the oak is prominent. ★★★

**2016 Deep Woods Hillside Semillon Sauvignon Blanc** The green methoxypyrazine characteristics dominate those of gooseberry which fight the good fight. ★★★

## Riesling



**Medallion Winner**

**2012 Peter Lehmann Wigan Eden Valley Riesling** Maturity meets freshness here to deliver a riesling that is simply stunning. It's totally true to its Eden Valley roots, offering varietal perfume and "chalky" regional character. A few years in bottle has allowed the flavour to build and the palate to fill out. Near perfection. (Soon to be released at around \$35.00) ★★★★★



**Medallion Winner**

**2016 Jim Barry The Florita Riesling** This riesling is simply bursting with the classic Clare regional lime character. It may not be a long-lived wine, but it is simply irresistible now. The intense varietal flavour is matched by lip-smacking acidity. We think it may peak in 3-5 years.

(\$50.00) ★★★★★

<https://www.jimbarr.com/products/7828-the-florita-riesling/>



**Medallion Winner 2015 Jacob's Creek Steingarten**

**Riesling** Although the floral-lime aromas are very enticing, this Eden Valley wine is clearly teasing us. It has the line, length, acidity and intensity of a wine that has only just begun to evolve. Give it another five years at least. (Not yet released. Should be around \$30.00 when it is)

★★★★★

**2016 Pikes Merle Riesling** Another brilliant Clare that was so regional in character that it shone out of the line-up. It's delightfully limey, backed by racy acidity and is definitely one to cellar. (\$45.00) ★★★★★

<http://shop.pikeswines.com.au/catalog/>

**2012 Silverstream Riesling** We were unfamiliar with wines from Silverstream (Denmark, W.A.), but this one made us instant converts. It's a vibrant, strongly varietal riesling that hasn't yet reached its peak. The budding complexity merges beautifully with the fruit in a wine of power, depth and freshness. (\$25.00) ★★★★★

<https://www.silverstreamwines.com/our-wines/>

**2016 Freycinet Riesling** A very floral, perfumed riesling which reflects its cool Tasmanian origins. This trophy winner from our Small Vignerons Awards stood tall again. The palate is restrained and long, backed up seamlessly by acidity. A gem. (\$27.00) ★★★★★

[http://www.freycinetvineyard.com.au/order\\_now/order\\_now.htm](http://www.freycinetvineyard.com.au/order_now/order_now.htm)

**2016 Goon Tycoons Riesling** A restrained limey riesling from Frankland River, W.A.. It's a wine of power, length and freshness. (\$25.00) ★★★★★ Never heard of Goon Tycoons? Check out their Facebook page.  
[https://www.facebook.com/pg/GoonTycoons/about/?ref=page\\_internal](https://www.facebook.com/pg/GoonTycoons/about/?ref=page_internal)

**2015 Jaeschkes Hill River Clare Estate Riesling** How many times have we extolled the virtues of Jaeschke's rieslings? They just keep performing. This one is Clare through and through – packed with fresh limey goodness. (\$75.00/6 bottle case) ★★★★★  
<https://www.hillriverclareestate.com.au/our-wine/>

**2014 Peter Lehmann Wigan Eden Valley Riesling** Gorgeously floral and “chalky”. The slight development adds complexity and the palate is fresh and intense. Another classic Eden Valley riesling. (Not yet released) ★★★★★

**2014 Jaeschkes Hill River Clare Estate Riesling** Intense lime aromas with a touch of honeyed bottle development. Delightful. Fresh acidity lifts the finish. ★★★★★

**2004 Tamburlaine Reserve Riesling** This wine is in great condition. It's still fresh and aromatic, with lovely toasty complexity. (\$203.94/6 bottle case) ★★★★★  
<https://www.crackawines.com.au/product/2004-tamburlaine-reserve-riesling>

**2016 Kerrigan & Berry Mount Barker Riesling** Fresh floral/lime aromatics feature strongly, and the intense palate has a lively acid finish. Another good one from K & B. (\$26.00) ★★★★★  
<http://www.hayshedhill.com.au/view/cellar-new>

**2011 Peter Lehmann Wigan Eden Valley Riesling** A very fresh riesling with appealing bottle-age complexity. It's drinking beautifully now. (\$30.00) ★★★★★  
[https://www.danmurphys.com.au/product/DM\\_903894/peter-lehmann-wigan-riesling](https://www.danmurphys.com.au/product/DM_903894/peter-lehmann-wigan-riesling)

**2015 Peter Lehmann Wigan Eden Valley Riesling** Floral, but very reserved at the moment. The palate is long but comparatively closed. Good, but needs time. (Not yet released) ★★★★★

**2016 Mandoon Estate Reserve Frankland River Riesling** Fresh citrus aromas with a faintly tropical overtone. Very satisfying palate with excellent balance. (\$30.00) ★★★★★

**2015 Leo Buring Leonay DW S17 Eden Valley Riesling** Showing a touch of development, with elements of honey and citrus peel. The palate is rich and full of life. Very good short term drinking. (Not yet released) ★★★★★

**2016 Naked Run The First Riesling** Fresh and limey. Full of that great Clare riesling flavour which is supported by refreshing acidity. (\$20.00) ★★★★★  
<http://www.princewinestore.com.au/shop/index.php/category-list/liquor/white-wine/naked-run-the-first-clare-valley-riesling-2016.html>

April 11, 2017

- 2016 Seppelt Great Western Vineyard Riesling** Richly flavoured and a little advanced, but it has good acid backing. ★★★★★
- 2011 ArtWine Clare Riesling** Shows attractive maturity and is drinking very well. ★★★★★
- 2016 Colmar Estate Block 6 Riesling** Rich and limey, with good acidity. ★★★★★
- 2016 Colmar Estate Riesling** Fragrant citrus with tropical fruit overtones. Plenty of flavour. ★★★★★
- 2010 Petaluma Hanlin Hill Clare Valley Riesling** Powerful, mature and still fresh. Good drinking. ★★★★★
- 2016 Moppity Vineyards Riesling** Nicely limey and restrained. Good length and acidity. ★★★★★
- 2009 Robert Stein Riesling** An attractive combination of maturity and freshness. Well balanced current drinking. ★★★★★
- 2015 Cherubino Porongurup Riesling** Slightly forward, but has appealing limey flavour and clean acid. ★★★★★
- 2016 Jim Barry Block 114 Clare Valley Riesling** Restrained lime with the faintest hint of marmalade. Finishes long. ★★★★★
- 2016 Mount Majura Vineyard Riesling** Lemony, with a beguiling hint of preserved ginger. Good depth and richness. ★★★★★
- 2016 Robert Stein Reserve Riesling** Attractively tight, promising positive bottle development. Very fresh citrus aromas and flavours. ★★★★★
- 2016 Peter Lehmann Hill & Valley Eden Valley Riesling** Slightly dull lime aromatics. Better palate with zippy acid. ★★★★★☆
- 2016 Thorn Clarke Wines Sandpiper Riesling** A full-flavoured, forward citrus style. Slightly firm. Good acid. ★★★★★☆
- 2016 Cherubino Ad Hoc Wallflower Riesling** Honey and grapefruit overtones. Plenty of flavour with a slight hardness. ★★★★★☆
- 2016 La Boheme Act One Riesling** Ripe and tropical-fruity but fresh. Slightly forward. ★★★★★☆
- 2012 Shut the Gate Watervale Riesling** Quite honeyed. Still has some freshness. Drink soon. ★★★★★☆
- 2016 ArtWine Glass Half Full Riesling** A citrus style showing some honeyed overtones. A little too forward. ★★★★★☆
- 2010 Kilikanoon Mort's Reserve Riesling** Decidedly honeyed but still fresh enough. ★★★★★☆

April 11, 2017

**2016 Jaeschkes Hill River Clare Estate Riesling** Richly citrusy and tropical, but a little too forward. ★★★

**2010 Robert Stein Reserve Riesling** Developed but holding on. Plenty of flavour. ★★★

**2012 Naked Run Place in Time Sevenhill Riesling** Showing quite a lot of development. ★★★

**2015 Kilikanoon Mort's Block Riesling** A bit too developed for its age. ★★★

**2016 St John's Road Peace of Eden Riesling** The rich nose suggests both citrus and stone fruit. Full flavoured initially, but finishes a little short. ★★★

**2015 Carillion Estate Grown Orange Riesling** Fairly forward, but limey, with hints of stone fruit. ★★★

**2016 Robert Stein Black Label Riesling** Dull colour. Limey but quite forward. ★★★

**2007 McGuigan The Shortlist Eden Valley Riesling** Citrus with honeycomb overtones. Complex, but showing signs of drying out. ★★★

**2013 Leo Buring Leonay Mature Release Clare Valley Riesling** Deep colour. Too advanced. Plenty of developed flavour. Saved by good acidity. ★★★

**2015 Penfolds Bin 51 Eden Valley Riesling** Too developed and broad for its age. ★★★

**2016 Baily & Baily Folio Clare Valley Riesling** Forward marmalade/apricot suggesting botrytis. Too much grip. ★★★

**2016 d'Arenberg The Dry Dam Riesling** Varietal but forward, with a slight straw overtone. Too sweet for this class but not sweet enough to include with the "stickies". ★★★

**2010 Highland Heritage Estate Riesling** Tired and cracking up. ★★

There are some stellar wines in this class – wines that set standards and put others into perspective. We would be happy to taste the ★★★★★ and ★★★☆☆ rieslings against the best dry styles of the rest of the world. They would do Australia proud.



## Semillon



### Medallion Winner



**2009 Tintilla Estate Angus Hunter Valley Semillon** A very youthful, fresh eight-year-old semillon which is near the peak of its powers. It has a touch of toasty bottle-age character, but offers vibrant varietal aroma and flavour. It's a joy to drink. (\$40.00) ★★★★★  
<https://my.subscribilty.com.au/taste/tintilla-estate>

**2009 Tyrrell's Vat 1 Hunter Semillon** We wish we could have declared a tie, but we had to make a choice. This wine is a gem. It offers just a little maturity with vibrancy, richness and great acidity, and has years ahead of it. (\$67.00) ★★★★★  
[https://www.danmurphys.com.au/product/DM\\_796692/tyrrell-s-vat-1-semillon-2009](https://www.danmurphys.com.au/product/DM_796692/tyrrell-s-vat-1-semillon-2009)

**2007 Thomas Wines Cellar Reserve Braemore Semillon** This is a classic Hunter semillon that is right at its peak. It has that marvellous honey and toast aroma which complements the superb fruit. The freshness of flavour is very impressive. (Not available) ★★★★★

**2013 Thomas Wines Cellar Reserve Braemore Semillon** A vibrant semillon with just a suggestion of development and a hint of lemon curd. The lively palate offers length and great depth of varietal flavour. (Not available) ★★★★★

**2011 Tyrrell's Stevens Semillon** Here's a very classy semillon that is beginning to drink beautifully. The freshness is commendable and the palate has acquired some toasty richness. (\$312.00 per dozen) ★★★★★  
<http://www.winestar.com.au/tyrrells-stevens-single-vineyard-semillon-2011>

**2014 Two Rivers Stones Throw Semillon** Although the nose is slightly advanced, the palate is a delight – packed with fresh varietal flavour. Great drinking. (Not available) ★★★★★☆



**Medallion Winner 2016 Briar Ridge Dairy Hill Single**

**Vineyard Semillon** Vibrantly grassy, with a hint of lemon curd. The powerful, yet backward, varietal flavour is backed up by excellent acidity. Definitely a cellaring proposition. (Not yet released. Will be about \$35.00) ★★★★★

**2016 First Creek Single Vineyard Murphys Semillon** An impressively fresh, intense young semillon with the faintest hint of tropical fruit. Well worth cellaring. (Not yet available) ★★★★★

**2007 McGuigan Bin 9000 Hunter Valley Semillon** A classic mature semillon with pristine lemon curd aromas. It has plenty of life left. (Not available) ★★★★★

**2009 Thomas Wines Cellar Reserve Braemore Semillon** Slightly honeyed, but very fresh. Delightful drinking and nearing its peak. (\$50.00) ★★★★★

<http://www.rathdownecellars.com.au/products/online-store/index.php>

**2012 Peter Lehmann Margaret Barossa Semillon** A beautiful lemony semillon with the first signs of toasty development. Delicious drinking. (Not yet available) ★★★★★

**2013 Two Rivers Stones Throw Semillon** Classic semillon – restrained but satisfying, with delightful lemony flavour. Drinking very well. (Not available) ★★★★★

**2016 Cockfighter's Ghost Reserve Semillon** A fresh lemon/grass semillon with a faintly soapy overtone which is a typical Hunter Valley characteristic. It has power, depth and good balance. ★★★★★

**2015 Peter Lehmann Margaret Barossa Semillon** Fresh, with good, rich citrus aromas. It has plenty of flavour on a lively palate. ★★★★★

**2011 First Creek Winemakers Reserve Semillon** Rich, fresh, buttered toast aromas. Lovely rich palate backed by acidity. ★★★★★

**2013 McGuigan Bin 9000 Hunter Valley Semillon** Intense citrus and lemon curd with a hint of tropical fruit. A nicely rounded palate with excellent acidity. ★★★★★

**2009 Brokenwood Maxwell Vineyard Semillon** Comparatively mature, but drinking very well indeed, offering plenty of lemony, toasty enjoyment. ★★★★★

**2015 Coolangatta Estate Estate Grown Semillon** Showing just a little development but is still fresh. Good fruit intensity and acidity. ★★★★★

**2016 Gundog Estate The Chase Semillon** Classic restraint. Excellent fruit backed by steely acidity. ★★★★★

**2016 Brokenwood Marsh Poppy's Block Semillon** Showing lemony richness backed by fresh acidity. A little forward, but offers strong regional and varietal characteristics. ★★★★★

**2016 Silkman Wines Reserve Hunter Valley Semillon** Rich nose with some SO<sub>2</sub> showing. Will develop well over the next few years. ★★☆☆

**2016 Audrey Wilkinson Semillon** Comparatively full flavoured but still strongly varietal, and has a fresh finish. ★★☆☆

**2013 McGuigan Shortlist Hunter Valley Semillon** Plenty of flavour. Beginning to show toasty development. Drinking well. ★★☆☆

**2014 Peter Lehmann Margaret Barossa Semillon** Rich, showing lemon curd aromas and flavours. A bit too forward. ★★☆☆

**2016 Audrey Wilkinson Winemakers Selection Semillon** Rich and varietal. Seems to be developing fairly quickly. Lively acidity lifts the palate. ★★☆☆

**2010 First Creek Winemakers Reserve Semillon** Quite developed. Toasty but attractive. Drinking well. ★★☆☆

**2014 Wombat Crossing The Creek Flat Semillon** Fairly forward. Becoming a little coarse. ★☆☆

**2009 Bunnamagoo Mudgee Semillon** Fresh, rich, honeyed. Slightly dried out on the finish. ★☆☆

As usual the semillons are very strong. In cases where wines near the top of the list are not available, take note of the producers. They're some of the ones to follow.

## RATING SCALE

★★★★★	Outstanding	97-100 pts	Gold medal
★★★★☆	Highly Recommended	93-96	Gold or high silver
★★★★	Recommended	90-92	Silver
★★★☆☆	Recommended	87-89	Bronze
★★★	Agreeable	85-87	Bronze
★★☆☆	Agreeable	82-84	
★★	Acceptable	80-82	
★☆☆	Acceptable	77-79	
★	Barely Acceptable	74-76	
☆	Unacceptable	71-73	
No stars	Undrinkable	<71	

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