



WINEWISE

THE CONSUMER'S WINE GUIDE

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SHIRAZ

Shiraz is Australia's most adaptable grape variety. The Barossa, Hunter, Yarra, Margaret River, Orange – even Tasmania – you name it. They all produce good shiraz, and that diversity was reflected in the 2013 Winewise Small Vignerons Awards.

Some of the gold medal winners offer great value.

Note: **G**=Gold medal; **S**= Silver medal; **B**=Bronze medal

Excellent value wines in purple.

Outstanding



2009 Quarry Hill Shiraz The best Canberra District shiraz wines are perfumed, spicy and medium bodied, and this one fits the bill beautifully. The combination of freshness, varietal character and sheer drinkability got it over the line ahead of the opposition. Unbeatable value. (\$18.00) **G**

<http://quarryhill.com.au/contact/>

2011 De Iuliis Limited Release Shiraz This is a very impressive shiraz which is built to last. Freshness, structure and intensity of varietal character and structure push this wine into the very top level, and it could become a Hunter classic. Cellar with confidence. (\$60.00) **G**

<http://www.dewine.com.au/all-wines>

2010 Sanguine Estate Heathcote Shiraz Everything you seek in shiraz is here. The colour is deep and bright, the nose is richly varietal and spicy, and the palate is long, intense and balanced. Cellar 6-8 years. (\$39.95) **G**

<http://sanguinewines.com.au/cart/>

2012 Dogrock Degraives Road Vineyard Shiraz This is a beautifully aromatic Pyrenees (Vic.) shiraz. The palate is intense, balanced and textural, providing great drinking now, and cellaring potential as well. (\$38.00) **G**

<http://www.dogrock.com.au/documents/DogRockWineryOrderForm2013.pdf>

Highly Recommended

2012 Serafino Shiraz There's plenty of intense blackberry varietal flavour here, backed up by appropriate oak. The finish is long, firm and satisfying. (\$22.00) **G**

<http://www.serafino.com.au>

2010 Redman Shiraz The classic Coonawarra shiraz can be difficult to find, but here's one for you. It has raspberry characteristics with hints of pepper and spearmint, and the finish is long and acid-fresh. (\$23.00) **G**
<http://www.redman.com.au/>

2012 Rosenthal Richings Shiraz This is a delicious shiraz offering fresh plummy fruit and great balance. The match of the intense flavour to the well chosen oak is near enough to perfect. (\$28.00) **G**
<http://www.rosenthalwines.com.au/>

2009 Balthazar of Barossa Shiraz This is a vibrant wine that combines richness of fruit with silkiness of palate. It is a very fine red that has many years ahead of it. (\$50.00) **G**
<http://balthazarbarossa.com/>

2012 Serafino Goose Island Shiraz A very attractive shiraz showing dark plum characteristics with hints of dark chocolate. The tannins are admirably fine. (\$15.00) **G**
<http://www.serafino.com.au>

2011 Sidewood Stable Hill Shiraz A supple, peppery, approachable, medium-bodied shiraz with a long, balanced palate. (\$20.00) **G**
<http://www.sidewood.com.au/>

2011 Andrew Thomas Elenay Shiraz This is a rich, spicy, perfumed shiraz which shows some new oak, but has the power to carry it. The palate has the length and structure for cellaring. (\$45.00) **G**
<http://www.thomaswines.com.au/>

2011 Mistletoe Reserve Shiraz A very attractive wine that is the essence of the medium-bodied Hunter. The palate is long and savoury, with fine tannins. (\$50.00) **G**
<http://www.mistletoewines.com.au/>

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2008 McKellar Ridge Shiraz Viognier This wine is showing very good form right now. It's vibrant, spicy and long-flavoured, offering varietal and regional flavour. (\$35.00) **G**
<http://mckellarridgewines.com.au/>

2012 Mount Majura Vineyard Shiraz The nose is appealing, showing dark cherry and spice with a complexing stemmy hint. The palate is long, balanced and satisfying. Cellar 3-5 years. (\$32.00) **G**
<http://www.mountmajura.com.au/>

2012 Montalto Pennon Hill Mornington Peninsula Shiraz A perfumed medium-bodied style with attractive spicy hints. The palate is long and fine. Excellent drinking. (\$30.00) **G**
<http://www.montalto.com.au/>

2012 She Oak Hill Estate Shiraz Here's a delightfully big, rich wine with real mouthfilling varietal quality. Although it's intense, it can be enjoyed in the short term – or later. (\$25.00) **G**
<http://www.sheoakhill.com.au/>

2011 The Rivers Red Classic Shiraz This Frankland River shiraz is a real discovery. It's vibrant and fruity, balanced by very fine tannins. Remarkable value. (\$14.00) **G**
<http://www.3oceans.com.au/>

2011 Mandon Reserve Shiraz A vibrant bright purple shiraz packed with dark berry flavour enhanced by cedary overtones. Cellar for best results. (\$32.00) **G**
<http://www.mandoonestate.com.au/>

2012 Nannup Ridge Shiraz This is a substantial shiraz, but it's beautifully balanced and satisfying, offering spiciness, length of flavour and fine tannins. (\$23.00) **G**
<http://www.nannupridge.com/>

2009 Honey Moon Vineyard Adelaide Hills Shiraz Shows attractive peppery dark cherry fruit on both nose and palate. The finish is fairly firm, but will soften with age. (\$47.50) **S**
<http://www.honeymoonvineyard.com.au/>

Recommended

2010 Honey Moon Vineyard Adelaide Hills Shiraz Quite spicy and supple with good dark cherry characteristics. Fresh and varietal. (\$47.50) **S**

2011 De Iuliis Shiraz Has plenty of fresh varietal flavour, but the oak comes on a little too strongly. (\$25.00) **S**

2012 After Hours Oliver Margaret River Shiraz The nose is fragrantly floral and that carries through to a rich palate which finishes with drying tannins. (\$19.00) **S**

2012 Head The Contrarian Barossa Shiraz A brooding purple shiraz with plenty of everything. It's quite firm at the moment. (\$30.00) **S**

2008 Balthazar of Barossa Shiraz Rich and ripe, but showing some leathery development already. It still has a future, but monitor it closely if you have some in the cellar. (\$50.00) **S**

2010 Red Art Barossa Shiraz Amazing purple colour. Not surprisingly the flavour is fresh and concentrated; however the finish is very firm. (\$30.00) **S**

2010 Hugo McLaren Vale Shiraz A very fresh varietal red with excellent fruit weight. The oak is a little assertive. (\$24.00) **S**

2009 De Iuliis Limited Release Shiraz A powerful, dense wine with solid tannins. Needs a few years to show its best form. (\$60.00) **S**

2009 Wombat Crossing Hermit's Block Reserve Shiraz This is a bright, lively shiraz that carries a lot of oak. (\$45.00) **S**

2011 Mount Majura Vineyard Shiraz The nose shows red berry with a whiff of white pepper. There's a touch of under-ripeness but good persistence of flavour. (\$32.00) **S**

2012 Huntington Estate Basket Dried Shiraz Great colour. This is a whopping big, primary-flavoured flavoured red that needs time to soften. (\$49.00) **S**

2008 Sanguine Estate Heathcote Shiraz A solid wine showing very ripe fruit. It's straightforward and honest, with a hint of developed complexity. (\$39.95) **S**

2012 Harcourt Valley Vineyards Heathcote Shiraz A fresh peppery, spicy style that just needs a little more intensity for a higher rating. (\$25.00) **S**

2012 Burge Family Winemakers Draycott Shiraz Has an attractive red berry nose with hints of spice. The palate finishes quite firmly and needs a little more fruit in the middle. (\$35.00) **S**

2010 Palmer Margaret River Shiraz A very spicy, firm shiraz with fine talc-like tannins. The palate offers good fruit, but the tannins need time to integrate. (\$27.50) **S**

2011 Juniper Crossing Margaret River Shiraz An attractive approachable shiraz that shows some oak but has a generously flavoured palate. (\$20.00) **S**

2011 Singlefile Frankland River Shiraz Shows slightly jube-like dark fruits together with a hint of reduction. Should improve with cellaring. (\$37.00) **S**

2012 Mandon Reserve Shiraz Substantial and closed, this richly flavoured, firm shiraz needs time to soften. (\$32.00) **S**

2012 Mandon Old Vine Shiraz This is a plummy shiraz with "sweet" fruit and a fleshy palate that will invite drinking reasonably early. (\$25.00) **S**

2010 Kyneton Ridge Estate Heathcote Shiraz A richly flavoured, solid wine with bright fruit. There's a hint of volatile acidity that lifts the wine now, but should be watched if you choose to cellar it. (\$45.00) **S**

All other shiraz tasted – in order of preference

- 2011 Ernest Hill Shareholders Shiraz (\$35.00) **B**
- 2011 Tallavera Grove 'Fenestella' Hunter Valley Shiraz (\$45.00) **B**
- 2009 Rosby Shiraz (\$18.00) **B**
- 2010 Wolseley Wines Shiraz (\$25.00) **B**
- 2012 Sanguine Estate Progeny Shiraz (\$19.95) **B**
- 2010 Clarnette & Ludvigsen Grampians Shiraz (\$28.00) **B**
- 2010 Bundaleer Southern Flinders Shiraz (\$19.00) **B**
- 2011 Sidewood Shiraz (\$30.00) **B**
- 2012 Lobethal Road Wines Shiraz (\$22.00) **B**
- 2008 Rosby Shiraz (\$18.00) **B**
- 2012 Brown Magpie Single Vineyard Shiraz (\$30.00) **B**
- 2008 Montara Chalambar Road Shiraz (\$70.00) **B**
- 2009 Grampians Estate Streeton Reserve Shiraz (\$65.00) **B**
- 2009 Rosily Vineyard Shiraz (\$23.00) **B**
- 2010 Morgan Simpson Basket Press Shiraz (\$22.00) **B**

2005 Mistletoe Reserve Shiraz (\$75.00) **B**
 2012 Yarrowood Tall Tales Shiraz (\$26.00) **B**
 2011 Fox Gordon Eight Uncles Shiraz (\$19.95) **B**
 2010 Fox Gordon Hannah's Swing Shiraz (\$44.95) **B**
 2010 McLaren Vale III Associates Descendant of Squid Ink Shiraz (\$35.00) **B**
 2012 Wicks Estate Shiraz (\$20.00) **B**
 2011 Briar Ridge 'Dairy Hill' Single Vineyard Shiraz (\$60.00) **B**
 2011 De Iuliis LDR Shiraz (\$40.00) **B**
 2010 Mistletoe Hilltops Shiraz Viognier (\$25.00) **B**
 2012 Grove Estate Cellar Block Shiraz Viognier (\$37.00) **B**
 2012 Gundog Estate Shiraz (\$35.00) **B**
 2012 Ravensworth Shiraz Viognier (\$30.00) **B**
 2012 Seville Estate The Barber Shiraz (\$22.00) **B**
 2010 Buckshot Vineyard Heathcote Shiraz (\$28.00) **B**
 2011 Glenwillow Shiraz (\$25.00) **B**
 2009 Terra Felix Shiraz Viognier (\$19.80) **B**
 2011 Battely Syrah (\$50.00) **B**
 2010 Wine By Brad Mantra Shiraz (\$25.00) **B**
 2011 Windance Shiraz (\$25.00) **B**
 2011 Fifth Estate Wines Shiraz (\$17.00) **B**
 2012 Crooked Brook Shiraz (\$15.00) **B**
 2012 Harcourt Valley Vineyards Sightings Shiraz (\$20.00) **B**
 2010 Koonowla Shiraz (\$25.00) **B**
 2010 Dowie Doole Cali Road Shiraz (\$35.00) **B**
 2011 Merilba Estate New England Shiraz (\$65.00) **B**
 2010 Paringa Estate The Paringa Shiraz (\$70.00) **B**
 2011 Buckshot Vineyard New Block Shiraz (\$28.00) **B**
 2011 Palmer Shiraz (\$27.50) **B**
 2012 Collector Folded Blue Shiraz (\$35.00)
 2010 Balnaves of Coonawarra Shiraz (\$25.00)
 2011 Leogate Estate Reserve Western Slopes Shiraz (\$70.00)
 2012 Printhie Mt Canobolas Collection Shiraz (\$36.00)
 2010 Battely Syrah (\$58.00)
 2011 Andrew Thomas Kiss Shiraz (\$60.00)
 2010 Juniper Estate Shiraz (\$35.00)
 2012 Sidewood Shiraz (\$30.00)
 2011 Ridgeview Impressions Shiraz (\$35.00)
 2011 Andrew Thomas Sweetwater Shiraz (\$35.00)
 2011 Pokolbin Estate Reserve Shiraz (\$50.00)
 2010 Ernest Hill Wiliam Henry Shiraz (\$40.00)
 2012 Clyde Park Block G Shiraz (\$55.00)
 2012 Buckshot Vineyard Heathcote Shiraz (NA)
 2010 TeAro Estate Charred Door Shiraz (\$28.00)
 2011 Lerida Estate Lake George Shiraz Viognier (\$49.50)
 2012 Anvers Adelaide Hills Shiraz (\$38.00)
 2010 Montara Grampians Shiraz (\$25.00)
 2011 Ross Hill Pinnacle Series Shiraz (\$36.00)
 2012 Dowie Doole Shiraz (\$25.00)
 2012 Sidewood Stable Hill Shiraz (\$20.00)
 2011 Meerea Park Black Shiraz (\$190.00)
 2010 Witchmount Estate Shiraz (\$38.00)
 2011 Credaro Family Estate Shiraz (\$40.00)
 2010 Lillypilly Shiraz (\$19.90)
 2010 Koonowla AJM Reserve Shiraz (\$55.00)

2010 The Willows Vineyard Shiraz (\$26.00)
2008 Thomas Vineyard Estate Shiraz (\$20.00)
2010 Deviation Road (\$45.00)
2011 Ernest Hill William Henry Shiraz (\$40.00)
2007 Ridgeview Generations Reserve Shiraz (\$45.00)
2010 Tintilla Reserve Shiraz (\$38.00)
2010 Wily Trout Reserve Shiraz (\$44.00)
2011 Collector Reserve Shiraz (\$58.00)
2010 Rosby Shiraz (\$20.00)
2012 Seville Estate Shiraz (\$33.00)
2011 Lerida Estate Canberra District Shiraz (\$26.50)
2011 She Oak Hill Estate Shiraz (\$25.00)
2012 Brookwood Estate Shiraz (\$25.00)
2010 Saddler's Creek Bluegrass Shiraz (\$36.00)
2011 Tenafeate Creek One Tree Hill Basket Press Shiraz (\$25.00)
2006 Sanguine Estate Heathcote Shiraz (\$39.95)
2012 Credaro Beach Head Shiraz (\$25.00)
2011 Te Aro Estate Charred Door Shiraz (\$28.00)
2011 Koonowla Ringmaster Shiraz (\$15.00)
2009 Morgan Simpson Basket Press Shiraz (\$22.00)
2010 Kies Family Dedication Shiraz (\$45.00)
2010 Lobethal Road Wines Bacchant Shiraz (\$42.00)
2011 Jodie Mason Adelaide Hills Shiraz (\$35.00)
2011 Leogate Estate Reserve The Barim Shiraz (\$70.00)
2011 Mistletoe Home Vineyard Shiraz (\$30.00)
2010 Quarry Hill Shiraz (\$18.00)
2010 Yarrowood Barrel Select Shiraz (\$40.00)
2011 Newbridge Wines Shiraz (NA)
2012 Harcourt Valley Vineyards Barbara's Shiraz (\$25.00)
2009 Fifth Estate Wines Shiraz (\$17.00)
2010 Fifth Estate Wines Shiraz (\$17.00)
2012 Silkwood Shiraz (\$20.00)
2010 Chalkers Crossing Hilltops Shiraz (\$35.00)
2010 Freeman Altura Vineyard Shiraz (\$25.00)
2012 Balgownie Black Label Shiraz (\$24.00)
2010 Golding Rocco Shiraz (\$38.00)
2008 Jared & Giovanni 1926 McLaren Vale Shiraz (NA)
2012 Ross Hill Benny & Taylor Shiraz (\$22.00)
2012 Warner Vineyard The Rest Shiraz (\$36.00)
2009 Montgomery's Hill Shiraz (\$23.00)
2009 Pauletts Polish Hill River Shiraz (\$24.00)
2010 Ernest Hill Shareholders Shiraz (\$35.00)
2011 Warner Glen Estate Shiraz (\$25.00)
2010 Trandari Shiraz (\$19.00)
2010 Tenafeate Creek One Tree Hill Judgement Shiraz (\$100.00)
2011 Windows Estate Basket Pressed Shiraz (\$28.00)
2009 Rosnay Shiraz (\$20.00)
2010 Turner's Crossing Shiraz Viognier (\$20.00)
2010 Meerea Park Alexander Munro Shiraz (\$75.00)
2010 Meerea Park Terracotta Shiraz (\$65.00)
2012 Lloyd Brothers Estate Shiraz (\$28.00)
2010 Terra Felix Lucky Country McLaren Vale Shiraz (\$33.00)
2011 Robert Stein Reserve Shiraz (\$50.00)
2010 Cape Naturaliste Vineyard Torpedo Rocks Shiraz (\$40.00)
2011 Ceravolo Shiraz (\$18.00)
2010 Harewood Estate Reserve Shiraz (\$34.00)

QUALITY FROM CHAPEL HILL

Chapel Hill has just released two impressive reds from the unfairly maligned 2011 vintage in McLaren Vale.

The **2011 Chapel Hill McLaren Vale Shiraz** is packed with the typical “sweet” regional fruit and is commendably fresh and balanced. If you seek a drier, more savoury style with no less fruit intensity you’ll like the **2011 Chapel Hill McLaren Vale Mourvèdre**.

Both are \$30.00, both are *Highly Recommended* and both are drinking very nicely but will take some cellaring.

Lester Jesberg

NEW VOYAGER ESTATE RELEASES

As usual the standard from Voyager Estate is high. I admire the estate’s persistence with chenin blanc, an old WA mainstay, but the excitement comes from the other three.

2013 Voyager Estate Margaret River Chenin Blanc The baked apple varietal character shows on the nose, and the palate is rich, with a slightly firm structure. (\$20.00) *Recommended*

2010 Voyager Estate Margaret River Chardonnay Here’s another addition to the growing list of brilliant Australian chardonnays. The evolution of Margaret River chardonnay from big and peachy to complex, structured and textural has been a delight to behold. This wine is in the vanguard of that evolution. (\$45.00) *Outstanding*

2012 Voyager Estate Margaret River Shiraz Opulence, silkiness and spiciness can all be found in this strongly varietal medium-bodied wine. It’s a supple, delicious shiraz. (\$38.00) *Highly Recommended*

2009 Voyager Estate Margaret River Cabernet Sauvignon Merlot They don’t come much better than this. The vibrant intense blackcurrant aromas and flavours carry a hint of leaf and the firm tannins are very fine. Perfectly integrated oak completes the picture. (\$70.00) *Outstanding*

Note: If you wish to explore or show off the differences between shiraz and cabernet sauvignon, here’s a perfect place to begin.

Lester Jesberg

COMING – 100 PINOT NOIRS

And then

THE MASTER BLEND CLASSIFICATION (or Are Bordeaux first growths the most over-rated, over-priced wines on earth?)

BORDEAUX BLENDS

The Cabernet Merlot or “Bordeaux” blends class of the Small Vignerons Awards didn’t deliver a flood of gold medals, but there was still quality at the top end.

Note: **G**=Gold medal; **S**= Silver medal; **B**=Bronze medal

Excellent value wines in purple.

Highly Recommended



2011 Mandoon Margaret River Cabernet Merlot There’s an impressive elegance about this wine which combines vibrant blackcurrant fruit with fine tannins and well-judged oak. It’s not a big wine, but there’s great persistence of flavour. (\$25.00) **G**

2012 Serafino BDX McLaren Vale Cabernet Sauvignon Merlot Cabernet Franc Serafino did particularly well at the Small Vignerons Awards, and this was one of their top entries. It shows spicy red fruits characteristics within a fine, firm structure, and offers excellent cellaring potential. (\$26.00) **G**

Recommended

2011 Credaro Family Estate Margaret River Cabernet Merlot Credaro Family Estate has featured prominently in the Awards for a few years. This is a briary, plummy style with hints of potpourri. It certainly doesn’t lack flavour, but the oak is a little too obvious. (\$27.00) **S**

2010 South by Southwest Margaret River Cabernet Merlot Shows fresh blackcurrant fruit, but is quite firm on the finish at the moment. Could benefit from another couple of years in bottle. (\$22.00) **S**

2011 South by Southwest Margaret River Cabernet Merlot
The fruit is quite dense, and is matched to a firm, drying finish.
(\$22.00) **B**

2012 Mandoon Margaret River Cabernet Merlot A big style in this context – firm, dark berry jube flavours. Needs cellaring.
(\$25.00) **B**

TE MATA ESTATE

Te Mata Estate is one of the supreme southern hemisphere wine producers. Winewise identified Te Mata as such many years ago, and, while we acknowledge the Te Mata Coleraine as the best wine of the estate, that shouldn't distract your attention from the other high quality wines produced. <http://www.temata.co.nz/>

Latest Releases

2012 Te Mata Estate Hawke's Bay Chardonnay Fresh, up-front peach and pineapple aromas show on the nose, and there's no shortage of flavour on the acid-fresh palate. Drinking well now.
(\$22.00) *Recommended*

2012 Te Mata Estate Elston Hawke's Bay Chardonnay The pride of Te Mata's white portfolio again delivers the goods. It displays its usual peachy, buttery aromas, and the palate is beautifully balanced, bringing together fruit, acid and structure with a pleasingly creamy texture. Excellent drinking, (\$36.00)
Highly Recommended

2012 Te Mata Estate Cape Crest Hawke's Bay Sauvignon Blanc There's an element of feline urine on the nose of this blend of sauvignon blanc with semillon and sauvignon gris, but there's also fresh stone fruit flavour to be enjoyed. The palate is slightly lean at the moment, but barrel-ferment complexity and texture contribute significantly. Give it a couple of years to fill out. (\$36.00)
Recommended

2013 Te Mata Estate Hawkes Bay Sauvignon Blanc A very fresh varietal style offering plenty of gooseberry ripeness on the nose. The palate is very lively, with hints of nettle adding to the appeal. Very enjoyable drinking, particularly for those who aren't fans of the leaner, greener style. (\$19.95) *Highly Recommended*

2013 Te Mata Estate Hawke's Bay Gamay Noir Smells like cru beaujolais; tastes like cru beaujolais. You could have fooled me. This wine has a vivid light purple hue and a cherry aroma suggesting whole-berry ferment. Palate-wise, it's delicious and very, very drinkable. I have many fond memories of picnicking in France on charcuterie, bread and good light-bodied red. This wine provokes such sentimental recollections. (\$19.95) *Highly Recommended*

2012 Te Mata Estate Hawke's Bay Syrah Svelte, spicy and very drinkable, this medium-bodied red hits the spot. The tannins are fine and the fruit is vibrant. Good short term drinking.
(\$22.00) *Recommended*

ANSTED & Co.

I very recently reported on the wines of Tellurian, from Heathcote, crafted by Tobias Ansted. Here are a few under his own label.

<http://www.anstedandco.com.au/buy-wine.html>

2012 Ansted & Co. One Hundred Ares (60% marsanne, 40% viognier) This dry white has a mouthfilling quality, and the viognier contributes obvious apricot to the fresh nose. The richness and gentle phenolics will appeal to many. *Recommended*

2012 Ansted & Co. North Harcourt Vineyard Syrah There's power and depth to this wine which shows the classic blackberry and spice varietal characteristics. The structure is firm at this early stage, but the palate is balanced, requiring a few years to soften. *Highly Recommended*

2012 Ansted & Co. Variation No.1 Syrah This wine is the "second" label, blended from barrels not considered suitable for the North Harcourt Vineyard Syrah. However, this is no second level wine: in fact, I have a slight preference for it. It's not as full bodied, and seems to have some whole bunch character which adds intriguing complex notes to the nose. Palate-wise, it's long-flavoured and finely structured. *Highly Recommended*

Lester Jesberg

WIRRA WIRRA'S TOP REDS

2012 Wirra Wirra The Absconder McLaren Vale Grenache How I wish that all McLaren Vale grenaches were like this! The high-alcohol confectionery and rustic tannin styles may appeal to some, but I can live without them. This wine offers marvellous varietal aroma and flavour, but in an impressive savoury style of red with fine, persistent tannins. It's a magnificent wine that will appeal to those who love the wines of southern France. (\$70.00) *Outstanding*

2011 Wirra Wirra The Angelus Cabernet Sauvignon I've learned over the decades that light "difficult" years are the times to seek out McLaren Vale cabernet sauvignon. This is such a wine, packed with blackcurrant flavour and fine tannins. Marvellous. In riper years this material should be mated with Coonawarra cabernet – on the quiet of course. Cellar this one for a couple of decades and you could pass it off as a Médoc. (\$70.00) *Highly Recommended*

Lester Jesberg

Note: The 2011 RSW Shiraz will be reviewed in a report of a shiraz tasting which you will receive next week.

TARRAWARRA

ESTATE

I recently enjoyed the privilege of being part of a small group of journalists invited to Tarrawarra in the Yarra Valley to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the planting of the first vines on the estate.

The Besen family, owners of Tarrawarra Estate, have achieved much in the first thirty years. After purchasing 400 hectares of prime Yarra Valley land between Healesville and Yarra Glen, not only did they establish vineyards and a winery, but they now have a very fine restaurant and an art gallery that is a must for Yarra Valley visitors. The current exhibition features the works of Russell Drysdale, and I urge all art lovers to view it.



Tarrawarra Estate

Since its foundation Tarrawarra Estate has been in a constant state of evolution. It would have indeed been a fluke if all the original plantings were right variety, right clone, right place. It puzzles me that some much longer-established Australian wine producers persist with inappropriate varietals and inferior clonal selection, but that sort of inertia is not for Tarrawarra.

Much has been made of the introduction of the Dijon pinot noir clones to Australia in the past couple of decades, but winemaker Clare Halloran and vineyard manager Stuart Sissins found that they ripened too early for the Tarrawarra site, and they had to go. For example, the space they occupied on J Block near the museum is now the home of shiraz vines. That's just one example of the viticultural fine tuning that is one of the constant themes of Tarrawarra.



Winemaker Clare Halloran

Chardonnay

Chardonnay is one of two key varieties at Tarrawarra Estate, and the winemaking is simplicity itself. The grapes are pressed to tank, and after overnight settling, the juice is roughly racked into barrel for fermentation. There is no malolactic fermentation, and the new oak component is around 25%.

2012 Tarrawarra Reserve Chardonnay This is a gem of a chardonnay with plenty of power and lees character. The white nectarine flavours fill a tightly structured palate balanced by uplifting acidity. One to cellar. (Not yet released) **Outstanding**

2011 Tarrawarra Reserve Chardonnay A vibrant chardonnay that is slightly lighter than the 2012. It has elements of grapefruit as well as white nectarine, and shows a little oak. It's on the lean side at the moment, but will fill out nicely over the next few years. (\$50.00) **Highly Recommended**

2010 Tarrawarra Reserve Chardonnay Very rich and fresh with underlying lees complexity. Everything is in its place - power, freshness, length, balance. An exceptional chardonnay. (\$50.00) **Outstanding**

<http://www.nicks.com.au/2010-tarrawarra-estate-reserve-chardonnay>

Pinot Noir

No whole bunches or stems are employed in the fermentation. Pressing takes place as soon as dryness is reached.

2012 Tarrawarra Reserve Pinot Noir This wine is 100% H Block MV6 clone. The brilliant translucent colour catches the eye immediately and the nose is vibrantly perfumed. This is a superbly fine and silky pinot that should be on your “must buy on release” list. (Not yet released) *Outstanding*

2012 Tarrawarra MDB Pinot Noir I didn't have the chance to taste this wine side by side with the Reserve, but the similarities are strong, particularly the fragrant aroma. The palate is delightfully supple, but has a balanced firmness that encourages cellaring. (Not yet released) *Outstanding*

Shiraz

The J Block shiraz vines are located on the hill near museum, and are clones 50 and 60 - small bunch, small berry, low yielding. The shiraz grapes are co-fermented with 2% roussanne in oak vats. Pump-over is preferred to plunging. There can be some post-ferment skin contact depending on the vintage.

2012 Tarrawarra J Block Shiraz The violet-like perfume is appealing, and complements the scent of red berries with a hint of charred beef complexity. The palate is decidedly firm but has good fruit weight. (Not yet released) *Recommended*

Merlot

The K Block merlot vines were grafted over pinot noir in 2006. The clone is Q45-14 from northern Italy.

2010 Tarrawarra K Block Merlot This vintage is a good indicator of the prospects for merlot at Tarrawarra Estate. The nose is quite complex, showing hints of tobacco leaf which enhance the varietal red fruits and plum. The palate is long, with balancing fine, firm tannins that impart a savoury feel. (\$35.00) *Highly Recommended*

Tarrawarra is the very model of an elite Australian wine estate. Much is made of assigning ratings to wineries, and Winewise will stay out of that dubious process, but I'm convinced that Tarrawarra Estate is one of a relative handful of Australian wine producers that hold their heads high when their wines are poured in the best international company.

Lester Jesberg