



WINEWISE

THE CONSUMER'S WINE GUIDE

March 2014



Shiraz Champion

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WINEWISE CHAMPIONSHIP

SPARKLING

Note: **Os** = Outstanding
HR = Highly Recommended
R = Recommended
Ag = Agreeable
Ac = Acceptable
Un = Unacceptable

Excellent value wines in purple.

Judged by: Lex Howard, Lester Jesberg, Nick O'Leary, Deb Pearce & Nick Spencer

Although we were disappointed at the lack of interest shown by Accolade in the Championship, we weren't surprised. The company seems to show little initiative in promoting its top wines like Arras.

Arras or not, this was a very strong group of Australian sparklers and the winning wine is unquestionably one of the best in the country.

Sparkling White 2010 & younger and NV

2011 Coombe Farm Nellie Melba Blanc de Blancs This wine offers attractive apple-like characteristics enhanced by just a hint of breadiness. The palate is fresh and the mousse is very fine. Although it's comparatively simple there's plenty to enjoy. (\$35.00) **HR**

2010 Word Of Mouth Isabel's Idyll Pinot Noir Chardonnay A fresh, appealing citrus/peach style with good weight and acidity. Very enjoyable drinking. (\$40.00) **HR**

NV Centennial Blanc de Blancs There's some attractive funky complexity to complement the citrus-like fruit, and the acidity is refreshingly racy. Impressive. (\$39.00) **HR**

NV Centennial Pinot Noir Chardonnay Pinot Meunier A fresh lemony style that is full of life, but simple. (\$28.00) **R**

2010 Abel's Tempest Chardonnay Pinot Noir although there's some complexity, there's also a hint of brown apple dullness on the nose. Flavoursome but not vibrant, and this could easily be a cork issue. (\$25.00) **Ag**

Sparkling White 2009

2009 Salinger Vintage Cuvée There's richness, freshness and complexity to be enjoyed here. Restrained stone fruit aromas are given an extra dimension by bready autolysis, and the flavour lingers long and fresh. (\$22.00) **HR**

2009 Coldstream Hills Chardonnay Pinot Noir Sparkling

Very fresh, with hints of cashew and breadiness. An impressive bubbly. (\$32.50) **HR**

2009 Ross Hill Vintage Brut Lively but simple, showing green apple and white peach characteristics. (\$27.00) **R**

2009 Charles Sturt University Reserve Sparkling Fresh and slightly bready but lacks the intensity of the top wines.. Drinks well now. (\$24.75) **R**

Sparkling White 2008 & older

2001 Courabyra 805 Pinot Noir Chardonnay Pinot Meunier

A marvellous Australian bubbly in which restraint, maturity and freshness all come together. The mousse is very fine and the acid backbone is champagne-like. World class. (Unfortunately it's no longer available, but we had told you about it before.) **Os**

2008 Lake Barrington Alexandra An attractive touch of autolysis breadiness provides an extra dimension to this classy Tasmanian bubbly, and the fresh, creamy palate completes a very appealing picture. (\$39.00) **HR**

2008 Heemskerk Chardonnay Pinot Sparkling Another classy Tasmanian showing bakery and nougat complexity. The palate is long, fine and racy. (\$50.00) **HR**

2000 Petaluma Croser Late Disgorged This is a very mature, complex wine with a touch of aldehyde. It drinks very well, but to enjoy it you'll have to like the obvious development. (Not available) **R**

2004 Domaine Chandon Prestige Cuvée Quite toasty and mature, but still commendably fresh. (Not available) **R**

Only one sparkling red was entered, so it was judged with the three wines that qualified for the final.

SPARKLING FINAL

2001 Courabyra 805 Pinot Noir Chardonnay Pinot Meunier
(Medallion Winner)

2009 Salinger Vintage Cuvée

2011 Coombe Farm Nellie Melba Blanc de Blancs

2009 Peter Lehmann Black Queen Sparkling Shiraz This is a marvellous example of its genre. Hints of spice and leather add complexity and the intense plate is perfectly balanced – neither too dry nor too sweet. Delicious! (\$42.00) **HR**

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WINEWISE CHAMPIONSHIP

SHIRAZ

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Excellent value wines in purple.

Judged by: Fran Austin, James Halliday, Lester Jesberg, Peter Nixon & Deb Pearce

As usual the stars shone brightly in the shiraz category. The focus was on balance and length of palate. The judges tried as much as possible to push their style preferences to the background and recognize excellence regardless of origin. There is nothing, in our view, between the best of the Barossa, Heathcote, Grampians or Hunter for example.

2012 Shiraz NSW (except Hunter)

2012 Mount Majura Vineyard Shiraz It could be argued that the nose is a little too stemmy, but this wine scored three first places and one second from five judges. Given the strong consensus we rate this wine very highly as a complex, vibrant, intense medium-bodied shiraz influenced by northern Rhône styles like J.L. Chave. It should age very well indeed. (No longer available) **Os**

2012 Domaine Paulownia Syrah This stylish shiraz hails from Gundagai, and it's packed with flavour and spiciness. There's a hint of reductive complexity and fine, firm tannins frame a long palate. It's very hard to find, hence the contact below. (\$35.00) **HR** simon.robertson@hotmail.com.au

2012 Barwang Shiraz A flavour-packed red with plenty of ripe blackberry fruit and well managed tannins. It needs time to show its best form. Remarkable value. (\$15.00) **HR**
<http://www.jimscellars.com.au/product/view-product/barwang-shiraz?id=33de4e3728ea78f49e1019c72dc3c088&key=wmB4JM&ssid=c406c87c81c40d86e2186c2d626be770>

2012 Ravensworth Shiraz Viognier Quite peppery and on the edge between ripeness and under-ripeness. There's adequate intensity and the fruit is matched to fine ripe tannins. (\$26.00) **R**

2012 Grove Estate Hilltops The Cellar Block Shiraz Very perfumed and spicy. The palate is balanced, offering plenty of flavour. (\$27.00) **R**

2012 Gallagher Wines Shiraz A wine with great depth of varietal flavour that definitely needs time to get its act together. (Not available) **R**

Shiraz 2011-12 NSW (except Hunter) & Qld

2012 Lucas Estate Shiraz The richness of flavour without over-ripeness is a winner, as is the tannin balance. A very rewarding shiraz. (Not available) **HR**

2012 Charles Sturt University Shiraz A fresh spicy style that has plenty of immediate appeal. It's just a little light, but in a way that adds to its drinkability. (\$13.50) **R**
<http://winery.csu.edu.au/products/2012-shiraz.html>

2011 Mount Majura Vineyard Shiraz Light colour. This wine is fresh but the white pepper aromas and thin palate indicate under-ripe fruit. (\$32.00) **Ag**

2011 Ross Hill Pinnacle Series Shiraz A sound wine that is just a bit too light and simple. (No longer available) **Ag**

2011 Huntington Estate Special Reserve Shiraz Very dense and firm, but shows clear-cut varietal character. Definitely needs time to soften. It will be much more approachable when it's released. (Not yet available)

Please take note that the top wine in this group is from QUEENSLAND. Don't ignore the Granite Belt. Some excellent wines are being made there.

Shiraz 2011 Hunter (1)

2011 Andrew Thomas Elenay Shiraz This is the epitome of medium-bodied Hunter shiraz. There's a hint of spice, and the dark berry fruit is opulently ripe but, at the same time vibrant and expressive of origin and variety. Finely polished tannins complete a classic picture. (\$45.00) **Os**
<http://www.thomaswines.com.au/shop-online/>

2011 Tulloch Wines Pokolbin Private Bin Dry Red Here's another wine that does the Hunter Valley proud. It delivers blackberry aromas and flavours together with a hint of regional tilled earth complexity. The palate is superbly silky. (\$50.00) **Os**
<http://www.tullochwines.com/buy-online/>

2011 Pepper Tree Wines Tallawanta Grand Reserve Shiraz The Pepper Tree completes a trio of superb Hunter reds. It combines intensity of flavour with a medium-bodied palate and the balance is perfect. This is a long-term proposition from a famous site. (Not available) **Os**

2011 Wandin Hunter Valley Shiraz A fragrant spicy wine that is balanced, fresh and varietal. Another very impressive young Hunter shiraz. (Not available) **HR**

2011 David Lowe Reserve Shiraz Quite a spicy/peppery approachable shiraz with good fruit and fine tannins. A Cellarmasters wine. (\$17.00) **R**

2011 Leogate Estate Wines The Basin Shiraz Very concentrated and chewy. Big, but without balance. (\$115.00) **Ag**

Shiraz 2011 Hunter (2)

2011 Tulloch Pokolbin Dry Red That hint of tilled earth regional identity is there again and the skilfully managed tannins are silky and fine. A splendid Hunter red to enjoy now or cellar for a few years. (Not available) **Os**

2011 De Iuliis Limited Release Shiraz If you're looking for a great example of the Hunter "Burgundy" style, here it is. The fragrant, spicy nose leads to a delightfully fine palate that is very seductive. It would be very tempting to drink this wine now, but it's likely to develop into a classic over time. (\$50.00) **Os**
<http://www.dewine.com.au/all-wines/2011-limited-release-shiraz-1>

2011 Andrew Thomas Kiss Shiraz This is the richest shiraz of the group and it shows some oak which will integrate over time. Clearly made for cellaring, the 2011 Kiss is comparatively firmly structured, but everything is in balance. Patience required. (\$60.00) **Os**
<http://www.thomaswines.com.au/shop-online/>

2011 Mistletoe Reserve Shiraz Mulberries and red fruits abound in a very well rounded shiraz. The length of palate is very impressive, as are the very fine tannins. Beautifully made. (\$50.00) **Os**
<http://www.mistletoewines.com.au/our-wines/reds.aspx>

2011 Leogate Estate Wines Western Slopes Shiraz A fresh, intense blackberry-scented wine that simply bursts with flavour. It's not exactly a wine of great finesse, but it certainly delivers power of fruit. (\$115.00) **HR**

2011 Pepper Tree Wines Coquun Single Vineyard Shiraz Ripe and concentrated, with a slight eucalypt overtone. Needs time. (\$60.35) **HR**

The 2011 Hunters are breath-takingly good, and there was little between the top wines. Make sure you have some in the cellar.

NSW/QLD SHIRAZ FINAL

2011 Andrew Thomas Elenay Shiraz (Top)

2012 Mount Majura Vineyard Shiraz

2011 Tulloch Pokolbin Dry Red

2012 Lucas Estate Shiraz

The judges thought alike here, and endeavoured to recognise two very different styles. However the Elenay Shiraz was the top wine of four out of five judges.

Shiraz 2010-12 Mornington Peninsula, Yarra, Bellarine

2010 Yarrowood Barrel Select Shiraz A vibrant young wine which is generous with its berry and spice aromas and flavours, although it certainly isn't an over-ripe blockbuster shiraz. It should age very well. (Not yet released) **HR**

2012 Brown Magpie Single Vineyard Shiraz A very spicy shiraz with hints of white pepper together with herbal notes. The palate is balanced by ripe tannins and finishes with satisfying length. (Not available) **HR**

2012 Terindah Estate Single Vineyard Shiraz This impressive cool area shiraz is packed with fruit and pepperiness, and the tannins are ultra-fine. (Not available) **HR**

2012 Montalto Pennon Hill Shiraz A richly flavoured, spicy shiraz that is very fresh, but a little firm at the moment. (\$30.00) **R**

2012 Precipice Wines Syrah There are mulberries and spice here – in a ripe cool climate style. It needs a little more intensity on the mid palate. (\$35.00) **R**

Shiraz 2012 Victoria Other

2012 Sanguine Estate Progeny Heathcote Shiraz The “Progeny” has a great track record with Winewise, and the 2012 could be the best of the line. It's concentrated – richer than normal, in fact – but it's beautifully balanced in all respects. It can be enjoyed now, but will deliver more with cellaring. (\$20.00) **Os**
<http://www.topaustralianwines.com.au/red-wine/sanguine-estate-progeny-shiraz-2012-red-wine>

2012 She-Oak Hill Estate Shiraz An intriguingly spicy shiraz with a whiff of oak showing on the nose. The palate is crammed with sweet fruit that has great drive on a pleasantly firm finish. (\$25.00) **HR**
<http://www.sheoakhill.com.au/wines/>

2012 Pfeiffer Carlyle Shiraz We admired the rich dark berry flavours and supple tannins of this wine. Looking for a richly flavoured, fresh shiraz to drink? Look no further. (\$18.50) **HR**
<https://www.pfeifferwinesrutherglen.com.au/home/shop/wines/red-wines>

2012 Dogrock Degraves Road Vineyard Shiraz Another truly captivating wine, rounding out a great set. This is the one to put away. It has everything – the fruit, the oak, the tannins – it just needs a little time to bring them together to maximum effect. (\$38.00) **HR**

An impressive foursome that are very much different styles – all expressive of their origins.

Shiraz 2010-11 Victoria Other

2010 Sanguine Estate Heathcote Shiraz Sanguine Estate does it again. Need any more proof? Maybe the final below will do the trick. This one is an intense dark berry style offering some new oak and plenty of tannin structure. Cellar. (\$38.00) **HR**

2011 Glenlofty Wines Shiraz The Glenlofty walks the tightrope between greenness and ripeness but manages to maintain its balance. An intriguing wine with fine tannins and a long palate. (\$24.00) **HR**

2010 Mitchelton Print Shiraz There's a lack of freshness here that diminishes the ripe fruit impact considerably. (\$50.00) **Ac**

VICTORIAN SHIRAZ FINAL

2012 Sanguine Estate Progeny Heathcote Shiraz

2010 Sanguine Estate Heathcote Shiraz

2010 Yarrowood Barrel Select Shiraz

The comparative approachability of the Sanguine Estate Progeny won the day, but it was a very close three-way contest.

Shiraz 2010-2012 Limestone Coast

2010 Brand's Laira Coonawarra Shiraz Vibrant blackberry aromas team with those of well-seasoned oak to create a captivating bouquet. The palate is long, firm and fine, with more than a little elegance. (\$15.00) **HR**
<http://www.nofrillswine.com.au/wines.php?ID=Brands%20Laira%20Shiraz%202010&TY=All%20varieties&RE=All%20regions&PR=Any%20price&search=&page=315>

2010 Redman Coonawarra Shiraz A rich red berry style with a hint of classic Coonawarra mint. It's fairly firm at the moment and needs time. Cork seal. (\$20.00) **HR**
<http://www.nofrillswine.com.au/wines.php?ID=Redman%20Coonawarra%20Shiraz%202010&TY=All%20varieties&RE=All%20regions&PR=Any%20price&search=&page=2340>

2012 Riddoch Coonawarra E.K. Shiraz Quite intense, showing obvious oak-derived bacon overtones. Lots of flavour but lacks subtlety. (\$17.00) **R**

2010 Wynns Coonawarra Estate V&A Lane Shiraz Ripe and concentrated, but very closed. Definitely needs time to open up. (\$45.00) **R**

2010 Norfolk Rise Vineyard Shiraz Comparatively light colour. Quite spicy and drinkable now. (\$18.00)

Although there is no shortage of value in this group, no wine really "sang" as far as the panel was concerned. The strong point of the top two wines is their regionality.

Shiraz 2012 Adelaide Hills

2012 Shaw + Smith Adelaide Hills Shiraz We'll say it yet again. The Shaw + Smith Shiraz is one of Australia's best reds. Forget auction prices. Forget the over-hyped "classics". This is the real deal – opulently varietal, fresh and concentrated, with polished tannins. (\$35.00) **Os**
<http://www.winestar.com.au/prod4888.htm>

2012 The Lane Vineyard Block 14 Basket Press Shiraz This is a brilliant shiraz. It's a gorgeous, silky, blackberry-spice style of prodigious length and it will certainly reward cellaring. (\$33.00) **Os**
<http://www.winestar.com.au/prod4616.htm>

- *We strongly suggest you purchase the top two wines and put them away for a couple of years while you drink the Wicks Estate (below)*

2012 Wicks Estate Adelaide Hills Shiraz An intense, fresh shiraz reflecting excellent tannin management. This red is already beginning to drink well and it's a bargain. (\$20.00) **HR**
<http://www.wicksestate.com.au/index.cfm?method=storeproducts.snowdrilldown&productid=65789e8d-e86d-0e74-c1e7-c82a1c541d2c>

2012 Ashwood Estate Stable Hill Shiraz Quite perfumed and spicy, with good fruit and fine tannins. Very drinkable now. (Not yet released) **R**

Shiraz 2010-12 Adelaide Hills

2012 Lobethal Road Shiraz Another stunning Adelaide Hills shiraz that revels in its spiciness and medium bodied red berry flavour. The tannins are delightfully fine. (\$25.00) **Os**
<http://www.lobethalroad.com/order/>

2012 Wolf Blass Gold Label Adelaide Hills Syrah Loads of lively blackberry aroma and flavour supported by well-balanced tannins and toasty oak. (\$28.00) **HR**
<http://shop.wolfblass.com.au/index.cfm?method=storeproducts.showdrilldown&productid=60582B92-D952-E59B-1B3A-18FA534005D2&isMarketingURL=1>

2012 Murdoch Hill The Landau Shiraz Fresh and spicy with a slightly herbal hint. The tannins are ripe and the varietal flavour persists. (\$45.00) **HR**

2010 Honey Moon Vineyard Adelaide Hills Shiraz This is a fairly firm shiraz packed with dark cherry and spice flavour. It's a classy wine that needs time. (\$47.50) **HR**

2011 Ashwood Estate Stable Hill Shiraz It's just a little forward in nature but offers more than adequate shiraz flavour. Enjoy it now. (Not yet available) **R**

When wine consumers (and many journalists) come to their senses they'll realise just what a great shiraz region the Adelaide Hills is. Take advantage of the bargain prices now.

ADELAIDE HILLS & LIMESTONE COAST SHIRAZ FINAL

2012 Shaw + Smith Adelaide Hills Shiraz

2012 Lobethal Road Adelaide Hills Shiraz

2010 Brand's Laira Coonawarra Shiraz

The two Adelaide Hills wines fought out a close finish and clearly had the better of the Coonawarra.

Shiraz 2010-11 Great Southern, W.A.

2011 Mandoon Estate Frankland River Reserve Shiraz

Plenty of dark berry aroma and flavour here together with some violets fragrance. The palate is beautifully balanced. Cellar 5-7 years. (Not yet available) **Os**

2010 Evans & Tate Frankland River Shiraz An attractive spicy shiraz that is showing the first signs of development but has a lot of flavour. It's beginning to drink well. (\$32.00) **HR**

2010 Mandoon Estate Frankland River Reserve Shiraz An intense blackberry-scented shiraz that shows some new oak. The palate delivers plenty of everything but needs time to integrate all the components. (\$29.50) **HR**

Shiraz 2011-12 Margaret River

2012 Cow Bombie Shiraz A richly flavoured style of considerable freshness showing both blackberry and blackcurrant characteristics. The tannins are comparatively soft, allowing enjoyable early drinking. (Not yet released but likely to sell for under \$15.00) **HR**

<http://search.cellarmasters.com.au/>

2011 Juniper Estate Margaret River Shiraz A substantial, even dense, shiraz which is packed with blackberry flavour. Needs cellaring. (Not yet released) **HR**

2011 Butler Crest Shiraz Quite complex, with herbal overtones adding to the dark berry fruit. The tannins are firm, verging on astringent. (Not yet released) **R**

2012 A to B Shiraz There's a lot of fruit here, tending to blackberry jam. Fresh, big, short term drinking. **R**

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN SHIRAZ FINAL

2011 Mandoon Estate Frankland River Reserve Shiraz

2012 Cow Bombie Shiraz

Two very good wines squared off and the longer-term style prevailed.

Shiraz 2012 Fleurieu & Clare

2012 Annie's Lane Clare Valley Shiraz This is a very fresh, strongly varietal red of excellent balance and length. The fine tannins invite drinking now, but we recommend cellaring for 3-5 years. (\$12.00) **HR**
<http://www.jimscellars.com.au/product/view-product/annies-lane-shiraz?id=bb772ff4b784a23344ecb20d2fc3fb6e&key=wmB4JM&sesid=78247ef4a532ab4a7066efa4930a61a7>

2012 Ingoldby McLaren Vale Shiraz Classic McLaren Vale shiraz. Excellent expression of ripe fruit, and everything in balance. (\$17.00) **HR**
<http://www.wineboxwarehouse.com.au/Red-Wine/Shiraz/Ingoldby-Shiraz-2012>

2012 Shingleback Red Knot McLaren Vale Shiraz Very big and ripe. A little too much so, but it's a sound, rich red for drinking now. (\$12.50) **R**
<http://www.shingleback.com.au/buy-our-wine>

2012 Rosemount Balmoral Syrah A very dense red that is solid and astringent at the moment. There are no problems with the balance but cellaring 8-10 years is essential if you wish to see the best of this wine. (Not yet released) **R**

2012 Shingleback The Davey Estate Shiraz Plenty of fruit here, but more than enough oak. The jury is out. (Not yet released) **R**

2012 Craftsman Clare Valley Shiraz Very ripe, but fresh and approachable. A good example of early-drinking shiraz. (\$14.00) **R**
https://www.danmurphys.com.au/product/DM_327977.jsp?bmUID=kj8fXl5

2012 Ministry of Clouds McLaren Vale Shiraz Very solid and ripe. Tending jammy but it's fresh and will have its fans. (\$28.00) **R**

The best wines avoided jamminess and delivered good fresh varietal flavour.

Shiraz 2010-11 Fleurieu & Clare

2011 Shingleback The Gate Shiraz This is a wine that needs time. It's ripe and fresh, confronting the 2011 doubters, and, what's more. It's firm and built to last. (Not yet released) **HR**

2010 Shark's Block McLaren Vale Shiraz A big wine, but it has its share of oak. (Not yet released) **R**

2011 Rosemount Estate District Shiraz A very big wine which is ripe and plummy but quite well balanced. (\$17.00) **R**
<http://www.wineboxwarehouse.com.au/Red-Wine/Shiraz/Rosemount-Estate-District-Release-McLaren-Vale-Shiraz-2011>

2011 Shingleback Unedited Shiraz Very, very ripe and full flavoured at the expense of balance. (\$79.95) **Ag**

2011 Wirra Wirra Woodhenge Shiraz A firm style with plenty of dark berry, chocolate and oak. (\$27.00) **Ag**

2010 Kirrihill Tullymore Vineyard Shiraz This is a very big sweet fruit style that is beginning to lose its way. (\$18.00) **Ag**

2010 Rosemount Estate Little Berry Shiraz A solid, astringent shiraz. There's no lack of fruit but we question the balance. **Ag**

FLEURIEU & CLARE VALLEY SHIRAZ FINAL

2011 Shingleback The Gate Shiraz

2012 Annie's Lane Shiraz

This was a very close taste-off. Shingleback 3; Annie's Lane 2. The latter is fantastic value.

Shiraz 2012 Barossa

2012 Krondorf Symmetry Shiraz There's plenty of flavour to be enjoyed here, but the oak is a tad assertive. Nevertheless it has the depth and intensity for successful cellaring. (Not yet released) **HR**

2012 Pepperjack Shiraz Concentrated and chabby. Very rich and fresh. Worth cellaring. (\$29.00) **R**

2012 Mum's Block Barossa Valley Shiraz Another big wine, but it's rich and the tannins are reasonably well balanced. (\$26.00) **R**

2012 Cat Amongst The Pigeons Shiraz Concentrated and fresh, but it has a slightly acidic finish. (Not yet released) **R**

2012 St Hallett Garden of Eden Shiraz Ripe and fresh, but quite oaky. (Not yet released) **R**

2012 Avon Brae New Eden Vineyards Shiraz It certainly reflects ripe grapes, but there's a worrying dullness to the nose and palate. **Ac**

Although the 2012 Barossas all offer abundant flavour, none possess the degree of finesse required for the highest level.



Shiraz 2009-11 Barossa

2010 Sons Of Eden Romulus Shiraz A very classy shiraz with rich but not over-ripe fruit and a long finish. The tannin and oak handling are spot-on. Cellar with confidence. (\$49.95) **Os**
<http://www.canterburywines.net/>

2010 Saltram Mamre Shiraz Shows very intense varietal fruit supported by well integrated oak. The finish is firm, but the freshness of flavour and balance guarantee successful cellaring. (\$26.00) **HR**

2010 Wolf Blass Gold Label Barossa Shiraz This is a concentrated and fresh red in which the oak and varietal fruit merge as they should. It's beginning to drink well. (\$20.00) **HR**
<http://www.jimscellars.com.au/product/view-product/wolf-blass-gold-label-shiraz?id=a0dc1810a70f01e830a08ea65f50571b&key=dDmbns&sessid=b60c0471223d951e25c835394c05560b>

2010 Sieber Road Ernest Shiraz A rich, ripe shiraz that shows its share of oak. (Not Available) **R**

2009 Balthazar of Barossa Shiraz There's no doubting the power of this shiraz. The oak is still fairly prominent and there's a hint of raisin. (Not yet available) **R**

2011 Avon Brae New Eden Vineyards Shiraz Comparatively light and developed but has enough fruit for current drinking. (\$36.00) **Ag**

A slightly disappointing group, but the top three wines all have plenty to offer.

Shiraz 2009-10 Barossa

2010 Penfolds Bin 150 Marananga Shiraz (equal top) A powerful red with sweet oak in the typical Penfolds style. It ticks all the boxes for long term cellaring. (\$60.00) **HR**

2010 Rojomoma Red Art Shiraz (equal top) This is another Barossa of richness and substance. The opulent palate is impressive, as is the balance. (\$30.00) **HR**

2009 Wyndham Estate Best of Vintage Shiraz A very concentrated shiraz with its fair share of oak, but there's definite cellaring potential. (\$150.00) **HR**

2009 Saltram No.1 Shiraz Even though the oak shows obviously on the nose, this wine has a certain flair. The dark berry fruit is vibrant and the tannins are fine. (Not yet released) **HR**

2010 Sons Of Eden Remus Eden Valley Shiraz A fascinating spicy Barossa red with a stems-like overtone that split the panel. The lingering finish is a delight, as are the fine tannins. This is a style of its own that's well worth trying. (\$49.95) **HR**

All of these wines are fresh, well made and have strong regional identity.

BAROSSA VALLEY SHIRAZ FINAL

2010 Sons Of Eden Romulus Shiraz (Top)

2010 Rojomoma Red Art Shiraz

2012 Krondorf Symmetry Shiraz

2010 Penfolds Bin 150 Shiraz

A very even group. The Sons Of Eden has that little extra pizzazz.

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN (Post 2008) SHIRAZ FINAL

2012 Shaw + Smith Adelaide Hills Shiraz

2011 Shingleback The Gate Shiraz

2010 Sons Of Eden Romulus Shiraz

Another close call, but the Shaw + Smith polled three first votes out of five.

Shiraz 2008-2009 (all regions)

2009 Wyndham Estate Black Cluster Hunter Valley Shiraz

The impressive concentration of fruit is supported by oak enhancement. Everything indicates successful cellaring, and this wine has the makings of a classic. (\$85.00) **Os**

<http://www.wyndhamestate.com/Wine-Club/Pages/Order-Wine>

2008 McKellar Ridge Shiraz Viognier A fascinating spicy, perfumed shiraz of medium weight. The palate is long and fine, and we feel this wine has not yet peaked. (Not available) **HR**

2009 De Iuliis Limited Release Shiraz Here's another classy shiraz for cellaring. The palate is intense and long, but medium-bodied, and the balance is spot-on. (\$51.95) **HR**

2008 Blue Pyrenees Estate Reserve Shiraz An attractive whiff of spice complements the fresh blackberry fruit which is supported by nicely polished tannins. (\$35.95) **HR**

2009 Quarry Hill Shiraz The Small Vigneron Awards winner again showed well. It seemed a little more stemmy this time, but the length and concentration of fruit impressed, as did the fine tannins. (Not available) **HR**

2009 Rockcliffe Third Reef Shiraz A powerful blackberry style with slightly furry tannins. From Great Southern in W.A. (\$25.00) **R**

2008 Adelaide Winemakers Old Faithful Top Of The Hill Shiraz Shows some prune-like character and oak. Lacks freshness. (\$48.00) **Ac**

Most of these wines, at 5-6 years of age, still have potential.

Shiraz 2005-07 (all regions)

2006 Wolf Blass Platinum Shiraz This prestigious shiraz held its own against strong competition. There's a complex tobacco-like note to the nose which is showing a little maturity and the oak still makes its mark. The tannins are firm, but beautifully polished.

Very stylish. (\$150.00) **Os**

<https://www.cellarit.com.au/59015/wolf-blass-platinum-label-shiraz-2006.aspx>

2006 Grampians Estate Garden Gully St Ethel's Shiraz An intense, spicy wine that is still bright and lively. This is a classic Great Western Shiraz that should live for decades. (\$50.00) **Os**

<http://www.grampiansestate.com.au/online-wine-sales/>

2006 Malone Shiraz Shows ripe varietal fruit, and is quite rich, but is now probably showing its best form. (Not available) **R**

2005 Orlando Lawson's Padthaway Shiraz This wine showed eucalyptus character when it was young, and it still does. The impressively fresh fruit is more than matched by oak. (Not available) **R**

2006 Rojomoma Red Art Shiraz A big, dense, firm red that needs time to soften. (\$36.00) **R**

2007 Ravensworth Shiraz Viognier Looking quite tired. **Ac**

It's always fascinating to taste the older wines in a blind line-up. The Wolf Blass Platinum edged out the Grampians Estate because it was nearer to its ideal drinking window. The Platinum shows touches of bottle-age complexity, while the Grampians Estate is still relatively primary and begs for extended cellaring. If you're looking for a long term shiraz from one of Australia's great wine regions, this could be it.

As you can imagine, getting to this final stage of the tasting took quite a while. We enjoyed a fascinating odyssey through many wine regions and styles.

Now came the time for our stewards to pour the six wines that had fought their way to the top. Needless to say, the judges didn't rush into their decisions, and, not surprisingly, the competition was very close.

In the end, one wine received three first votes out of five, and that was enough.

AND THE WINNER IS

SHIRAZ FINAL



2011 Thomas Wines Elenay Shiraz (Medallion winner)

2011 Mandoon Estate Frankland River Reserve Shiraz

2012 Shaw + Smith Adelaide Hills Shiraz

2012 Sanguine Estate Progeny Heathcote Shiraz

2009 Wyndham Estate Black Cluster Hunter Valley Shiraz

2006 Wolf Blass Platinum Shiraz

Although the judges had no knowledge of the wines or the vintages, all agreed that the decision was an acknowledgement of the superb 2011 Hunter Valley vintage.

Given Andrew Thomas' dedicated and highly-valued input to Hunter Valley wine over the past decade, this award is well-deserved.

ANDREA OBERTO, PIEMONTE, ITALY

Adrienne and I have been importing the wines of Andrea Oberto for fifteen years, and the quality, high at the start, has steadily improved. We were introduced to Andrea by Elio Altare, and now Andrea's son Fabio is in charge. Fabio thinks a lot about his winemaking and has steadily fine-tuned each wine in his portfolio. He took on board my suggestions about oak and has dropped the percentage of new barriques for his Barolos considerably as well as introducing large format barrels. Based in the key village of La Morra, Fabio now produces some of Piemonte's best wines – from Dolcetto to single-vineyard Barolo. Huon Hooke recently tasted the 1996 Barolo Rocche and described it thus: "A grand Barolo of real power, stature and charisma. It's loaded with the ironstone, mineral and almost dried blood aromas typical of nebbiolo. The palate is powerful, concentrated, driving and yet smooth and lovely with real grace and charm. Certainly has no hardness. A beautiful Barolo, now and for many years to come. 96 pts" **Lester**

We also import from 17 other high-quality producers in France, Italy, Germany and Austria.

The 2009 and 2010 Barolos are now available for order. To find out more or to join our mailing list Contact adrjes@bigpond.net.au

17 OUTSTANDING SHIRAZ

Here's a list of the 17 Outstanding shiraz from the Championship. It's very much an honour roll.



- 2011 Andrew Thomas Elenay Shiraz** (Hunter Valley)
- 2011 Andrew Thomas Kiss Shiraz** (Hunter Valley)
- 2011 Tulloch Pokolbin Private Bin Dry Red** (Hunter Valley)
- 2011 Tulloch Pokolbin Dry Red** (Hunter Valley)
- 2011 Pepper Tree Wines Tallawanta Grand Reserve Shiraz** (Hunter Valley)
- 2011 De Iuliis Limited Release Shiraz** (Hunter Valley)
- 2011 Mistletoe Reserve Shiraz** (Hunter Valley)
- 2009 Wyndham Estate Black Cluster Shiraz** (Hunter Valley)
- 2012 Mount Majura Vineyard Shiraz** (Canberra District)
- 2012 Sanguine Estate Progeny Shiraz** (Heathcote)
- 2006 Grampians Estate Garden Gully St Ethel's Shiraz** (Grampians)
- 2012 Shaw + Smith Shiraz** (Adelaide Hills)
- 2012 The Lane Vineyard Block 14 Basket Press Shiraz** (Adelaide Hills)
- 2012 Lobethal Road Shiraz** (Adelaide Hills)
- 2010 Sons Of Eden Romulus Shiraz** (Barossa Valley)
- 2006 Wolf Blass Platinum Shiraz** (Barossa Valley)
- 2011 Mandon Estate Reserve Shiraz** (Frankland River)

They are the top 17 shiraz of 100 tasted by the panel. Collectively they demonstrate the quality and versatility of this great grape in Australia.