

OTHER REDS

Australia is such a new field for these grape varieties. Don't forget, there were only about 20 different chardonnays produced in Australia in 1977. At that time mourvèdre (mataro) was well known, but usually as a blender. Merlot? There was a little in the ground. Brown Brothers planted graciano in the sixties, but there was almost zero elsewhere. Got the picture? We are dealing with the major issues of vine age and clone and site selection. We shouldn't expect miracles. In fact, the revelation is that some of these wines are so good.



2013 West Cape Howe Perth Hills & Frankland Tempranillo Quite a fragrant wine, showing aromas of sweet plums with a hint of cinnamon. There's no shortage of fresh flavour backed up by tannins which provide a firm finish. Impressive in terms of balance and varietal character. Quite a bargain. (\$16.00)

<http://www.nicks.com.au/2013-west-cape-howe-tempranillo>

2013 Bremerton Special Release Langhorne Creek Graciano The nose is quite beguiling, showing herbal notes together with spices like cardamom which enhance the red berry fruit. The fine, firm tannins are in keeping with the medium-weight palate and the flavour persists to a dry finish. An ideal, and interesting, accompaniment to pasta and pizza. (\$24.00)

<http://www.bremerton.com.au/Buy-Wine>



2012 Giaconda Nebbiolo (Beechworth, Victoria) Typical lightish colour. The nose is fascinating and complex, showing elements of tilled earth, dried herbs and oak as well as rose petal varietal character. The tannins are pronounced, but fine. Even so, the fruit only just copes. If you love wines that are polar opposites of the “sweet” fruit Aussie style, this one will probably please you. (\$80.00)

2013 Smith & Hooper Wrattenbully Merlot The fresh red fruits and plum aromas have considerable appeal, and they are enhanced by positive herbal hints. Palate-wise this is a lively medium-bodied wine that is beginning to drink well. (\$21.00)

2014 Catlin Adelaide Hills Montepulciano There’s a veritable basket of dark berries here. It’s a rich, chewy red which is long on flavour but a little lacking in finesse. (Not yet released)



2013 Catlin Adelaide Hills Montepulciano Although there’s certainly no lack of dark berry flavour, it’s a firm wine with more than a little oak. (\$30.00)

2014 Di Giorgio Family Montepulciano This wine has a very seductive nose of violets and plums. The palate really delivers in an exuberant youthful way. Tannin firmness and vibrant fruit make an excellent match here, although the flavour tapers off on the finish. (\$23.00)

2013 Smith & Hooper Wrattenbully Reserve Merlot This is a wine of substance, with dark berry, tobacco leaf and licorice aromas. Drying tannins feature on a palate of good length. The finish is quite firm, but would be softened by food – like beef. **Note:** This wine is, surprisingly, sealed with cork while the 2013 (non-reserve) above is secured with screwcap. The 2014 is obviously a safer bet. (\$27.00)



2013 Bremerton Special Release Langhorne Creek Mourvèdre Fairly light colour. The nose combines ripe, earthy and faintly vegetal characteristics. This is a slightly lean wine that is fresh, but lacks length. (\$24.00)

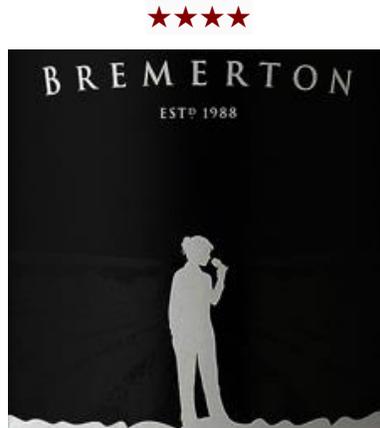
2014 Catlin Adelaide Hills Merlot Bright but lightish colour. It’s fresh, but the palate lacks weight and length. (Not yet released)



2012 Di Giorgio Family Lucindale Merlot Light, advanced colour. Overly herbal, suggesting under-ripe fruit. The palate is light and dry, lacking rewarding flavour. (\$20.00)

CABERNET SAUVIGNON & BLENDS

And now a few more mainstream wines. We're happy to report that there's good value to be had. That Langhorne Creek region keeps popping up at the top end of our ratings, and it does so again with a bargain for the cabernet fans.



2013 Bremerton Coulthard Langhorne Creek Cabernet Sauvignon A vibrant “juicy” cabernet packed with blackcurrant aroma and flavour. Firm, balanced tannins provide just-right structural support for the generous, long palate. Give it 3-4 years. (\$22.00)

2012 Terre à Terre Wratonbully Cabernet Sauvignon The nose is impressive, showing dark berry and blackcurrant aromas with secondary tobacco leaf and dried herb. The palate is firm, but there is an abundance of fresh varietal flavour. (\$40.00) **Note:** This wine is sealed with conventional cork so there will be variation.

2012 West Cape Howe Bookends Mount Barker Cabernet Sauvignon The nose impresses, showing key varietal elements of blackcurrant and tobacco leaf. Very fine tannins feature on a rich palate. It's easy to drink but should age quite well. (\$28.00)



2012 Smith & Hooper Wratonbully Cabernet Sauvignon Merlot Fresh, ripe and plummy, with a hint of leaf and mint. Although the herbal/minty component is fairly obvious, this wine offers decent fruit weight. (\$21.00)



2013 West Cape Howe Hannah's Hill Cabernet Merlot Ripe and plummy, but simple. However it certainly doesn't lack fruit. (\$20.00)

2013 Mr Riggs The Outpost Coonawarra Cabernet It's a wine that shows regional mintiness, but not greenness. The tannins are firm and lack a little finesse, but there's adequate fruit to cope. (\$20.00)