

SCARCE EARTH

We look forward keenly to each release of Scarce Earth shiraz from McLaren Vale. The McLaren Vale Grape Wine & Tourism Association calls for submissions of single site shiraz wines from the region, and they are assessed by a panel of three local winemakers and three highly-qualified “outsiders”. The wines that pass the test are entitled to wear the Scarce Earth neck label.

Apart from seeking to promote McLaren Vale wine of quality, the Scarce Earth program is about diversity of aroma, flavour and style. That diversity comes about via a mosaic of soil types across the region, together with such key variables as aspect and human input. McLaren Vale is not a uniform region, and Scarce Earth’s charter is to send that message loudly and clearly.

The 14 Scarce Earth wines of 2015 were tasted “blind” by the Winewise panel.



2015 Chapel Hill Road Block McLaren Vale Shiraz It’s very much from the big end of town, but it’s vibrant and beautifully balanced. The aromas suggest blackberry and black truffle with a touch of toasty oak. What a gem of a palate! It’s sumptuous and long, with superbly fine tannins. (\$65.00) ★★★★★
<https://www.chapelhillwine.com.au/products/15606-road-block-shiraz/>



2015 Mr. (Mister Riggs) McLaren Vale Shiraz (Diam cork) A classic Vale shiraz offering blackberry, licorice and very dark chocolate aromas with a caress of oak. The palate is utterly gorgeous, combining great length with beautifully polished tannins. (\$50.00) ★★★★★
<http://www.mrriggs.com.au/>

- 2015 Serafino Malpas Vineyard McLaren Vale Shiraz** Fresh blackberry, toasted nuts and faintly leathery aromas lead to a seamless palate of great length. This isn't a blockbuster, super-ripe style, and the tannins are a perfect match for the fruit. (\$45.00) ★★★★★
<https://serafinowines.com.au>
- 2015 Shottesbrooke Tom's Block Blewitt Springs Shiraz** Blackberry and dark chocolate are backed up by a whiff of oak. Vibrant ripe varietal flavours come to the fore on an impressive, well balanced palate. (\$40.00) ★★★★★
- 2015 Wirra Wirra Patritti Single Vineyard Shiraz** A very intense blackberry/plum style of shiraz that is both fresh and complex. It's multi-layered, firm and long-flavoured, but the prominent oak cost it half a star. (\$130.00) ★★★★★
- 2015 Shingleback Unedited Single Vineyard McLaren Vale Shiraz** Pure, ripe blackberry fruit is enhanced by some toasty oak. There's plenty of traditional McLaren Vale flavour to be enjoyed in this well made red. (\$79.95) ★★★★★
- 2015 Chapel Hill House Block McLaren Vale Shiraz** The concentrated blackberry flavour is backed up slightly "sweet" oak. There's no shortage of fruit ripeness, but the finish is fresh and the tannins are pleasantly mouth-coating. (\$65.00) ★★★★★
- 2015 d'Arenberg The Amaranthine Single Vineyard McLaren Vale Shiraz** Vibrant and intense in terms of bouquet, showing blackberry with hints of cinnamon and mint. The fruit flavour is satisfying, but the tannins are a bit taut and firm. (\$99.00) ★★★★★
- 2015 Hugh Hamilton Black Blood III McLaren Vale Shiraz** There's a slight confection note - almost grenache-like - to the nose. This is a big, ripe wine, but it's certainly fresh. The firm tannins need time to soften. It isn't a subtle red, but it will appeal to those who enjoy substantial red wines. (\$79.00) ★★★★★
- 2015 d'Arenberg The Sardanapalian Single Vineyard McLaren Vale Shiraz** The nose shows rich blackberry and plum aromas with a hint of reduction. The palate is flavoursome, but acid kicks in on the finish and furry tannins linger. (\$99.00) ★★★★★
- 2015 Coriole Galaxidia Single Vineyard McLaren Vale Shiraz** The colour lacks depth. The plummy nose is fresh enough, showing some oak and lead pencils character. Palate-wise, the finish is slightly lean and firm. (\$60.00) ★★★
- 2015 Haselgrove The Ambassador Les Burdett McLaren Vale Shiraz** (Diam cork) Very ripe and dense, showing some oak. It's a big wine that is slightly advanced. (\$85.00) ★★★
- 2015 d'Arenberg Shipsters' Rapture Single Vineyard McLaren Vale Shiraz** Here we have vibrant dark berries with minty overtones. The palate has a very drying finish. (\$99.00) ★★★

2015 Battle Of Bosworth Chanticleer McLaren Vale Shiraz Colour slightly weak. Red berry aromas with some development and tilled earth overtones. The finish is lean, with an acidic lift. (\$45.00) ★★★

Without doubt, some of McLaren Vale's best are included in this selection. However, regardless of what part of the region a wine calls home, we expect intensity of colour and flavour in two-year-old wines.

For more on the Scarce Earth project, go to.

<https://mclarenvale.info/marketing-promotion/scarce-earth>

MORE McLAREN VALE REDS

2015 Oliver's Taranga McLaren Vale Shiraz 21/74 This wine is regional to a tee, and the powerful, vibrant blackberry fruit is greatly enhanced by fine, savoury tannins. It's a delightfully opulent red that can be enjoyed now or over the next ten years. (\$30.00) ★★★★★

<http://www.oliverstaranga.com/wines/>

2014 Yangarra High Sands McLaren Vale Grenache Ripe, fresh and fragrant. There's great fruit expression to be enjoyed here, both in the bouquet and the long, fine, silky palate. (\$140.00) ★★★★★

<https://www.yangarra.com/wines/detail/2014-high-sands-grenache/>

2014 d'Arenberg The Ironstone Pressings (Grenache, shiraz, mourvèdre) The powerful dark berry fruit carries with it some mineral/earth character and hints of coffee. Nicely polished tannins round off a plush, satisfying palate. (\$65.00) ★★★★★

http://shop.darenberg.com.au/index.php?option=com_platform&view=crm&layout=productdetails&productid=3579&Itemid=22

2015 Yangarra Ovitelli McLaren Vale Grenache Strong colour for grenache – bright purple edge. Very fresh and varietal, showing raspberry and dark cherry. It's a little firm for the fruit weight. (\$72.00) ★★★★★

The fruit was hand-picked, then 100% was de-stemmed and mechanically berry-sorted, with only 50% crushed and tipped into two 675L ceramic eggs. A wild fermentation occurred in the eggs, and the wine remained on skins for 140 days. The pressings were not used in this wine. The wine was matured in the ceramic eggs, remained unfinned and was bottled in January 2016. Certified Biodynamic. From the Yangarra web site

2015 Chapel Hill McLaren Vale Shiraz Fresh and user-friendly, with plenty of dark berry aroma and flavour and a suggestion of spice. Strongly regional and varietal. (\$30.00) ★★★★★

2015 Wirra Wirra Woodhenge Basket Pressed Shiraz A shiraz that's full of life, showing red and dark berries with a hint of spice. The tannins fold into the generous palate seamlessly, encouraging early drinking. (\$35.00) ★★★★★

2014 d'Arenberg d'Arry's Original Shiraz Grenache There's value++ in this easy-to-drink, mulberry-scented red. A faint grilled meat overtone adds complexity, and fresh flavour flows from beginning to end. (\$18.00) ★★★★★