

October - Top Picks

Back to the tasting table after swanning around Europe for a few weeks. Wine of the trip was the 2002 Dom Perignon Plenitude 2, possibly the best champagne I've ever tasted. A brief search on Wine Searcher indicates that it's not yet available in Australia, but is selling for \$A406.00 a bottle in Hong Kong.

Now for quality wines at more affordable prices. Here are some of the better wines we've recently tasted.

RIESLING

2019 Grosset Polish Hill Clare Valley Riesling In some vintages Polish Hill is almost a brute of a riesling, but the 2019 combines restraint with that undeniable power. The lemon-lime aromas carry through to a long palate with the type of acidity that makes great rieslings what they are. Superb. (\$57.00) ★★★★★

<https://www.nicks.com.au/2019-grosset-polish-hill-riesling>

2019 Grosset Springvale Clare Valley Riesling Watervale through and through. Lime and lime blossom in abundance. Purity of fruit backed up by a strong line of acidity. We could use adjectives galore, but you get the drift – it's a brilliant riesling. (\$41.00) ★★★★★

<https://www.nicks.com.au/2019-grosset-springvale-riesling>

2016 Kreuznacher Narrenkappe Riesling (Paul Anheuser) A powerful limy style from the Nahe in Germany. It's rich, yet flinty and dry. Delightful. (\$30.00) ★★★★★☆

<https://www.rathdownecellars.com.au/products/online-store/?page=99>

CHARDONNAY

2017 Oakridge 864 Funder & Diamond Yarra Valley Chardonnay The nose shows delicate white peach and citrus aromas backed up by funky barrel ferment nuances. The palate is tight, verging on lean, but it has great texture, length and acid line. A marvellous chardonnay, but we don't think it's any better than the 2018 Henk. (\$67.00) ★★★★★

<https://www.boccaccio.com.au/buy/oakridge-864-funder-diamond-drive-block-chardonnay/2084>

2017 Tarrawarra Reserve Yarra Valley Chardonnay It comes from the same region as the Oakridge 864, but the stylistic difference is striking. The difference is due more to winemaker input than sub-regional influence. This is an "Australian Meursault". The funky nutty-nougat nose is complex and powerful, and the palate is long, rich and delightfully creamy. (\$50.00) ★★★★★

<http://www.tarrawarra.com.au/product/2017-Reserve-Chardonnay>

2018 Soumah Hexham Vineyard Yarra Valley Chardonnay Quite restrained, showing hints of toasted cashew which complement the fruit. The palate is of adequate weight with good acid drive. (\$40.00) ★★★★★

2018 Soumah U. Ngumby Vineyard Yarra Valley Chardonnay

Slightly more intensity all round than the Hexham, and the texture is creamier. It's complex, fresh and will build more flavour in bottle.

(\$40.00) ★★★★★☆

<https://soumah.com.au>

2017 Yering Station Yarra Valley Chardonnay

The nose shows skilled barrel work, and is toasty, nutty and slightly funky, complementing the grapefruit/white peach varietal aroma. The palate needs a little more weight in the middle, but finishes with fresh acidity.

(\$40.00) ★★★★★

REDS

2016 Soumah Yarra Valley Syrah Attractively fresh red berry aromas with a hint of whole-bunch complexity. The palate offers fine tannins, intensity and length. A classy medium-bodied red. (\$40.00) ★★★★★☆

<https://soumah.com.au/product/2016-soumah-single-vineyard-syrah/>

2016 Soumah The Butcher Syrah-Cabernet-Nebbiolo The artistry of blending is on display in this innovative red. The plummy-berry aromas are lifted by a hint of cassis. Firm, persistent tannins harmonise well with the long flavour. (\$50.00) ★★★★★☆

<https://soumah.com.au/product/2018-soumah-the-butcher/>

2016 Terre à Terre Crayères Vineyard Wrattontully Cabernet Sauvignon

The dark red fruits aromas are enhanced by intriguing tobacco/dusty/cedar notes. The palate is long and intense, the essence of finesse, with savoury "European" tannins. (\$38.00) ★★★★★☆

<http://www.wineculture.com.au/index.php/catalog/product/view/id/1006272/s/terre-a-terre-cabernet-sauvignon-2016/>

2016 John Duval Wines Eligo Barossa Valley Shiraz The vibrant blackberry aromas are supported beautifully by slightly toasty French oak. The oak follows through on the palate but is comfortably absorbed by the fruit. Supremely fine tannins and acid that is just a touch too prominent complete the picture. Give this wine at least 8-10 years.

(\$110.00) ★★★★★☆

<https://www.winesquare.com.au/catalog/product/view/id/10283/s/2016-john-duval-eligo-shiraz-barossa-valley/>

2016 Mr. Riggs Burnt Block McLaren Vale Shiraz "Cool" McLaren Vale shiraz from Clarendon. This is a beautifully crafted red showing vibrant dark berry and cherry characteristics. A touch of oak and savoury tannins complete the picture. McLaren Vale at its finest. (\$50.00)

★★★★★

<https://www.mrriggs.com.au/shop/2016-burnt-block-shiraz/>

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