

Championship Pre 2018 Shiraz

The pre 2018 shiraz group wasn't quite as strong as the 2018s overall, but the top end is every bit as good. In the top ten, honours were shared between South Australia (McLaren Vale and Barossa) and Victoria (Heathcote and Grampians). Sanguine Estate and Shingleback distinguished themselves by claiming five of the top ten places.



Medallion Winner 2017 Shingleback Unedited McLaren

Vale Shiraz Here's a wine that typifies both its origins and grape variety. The vibrant blackberry aroma and flavour harmonise perfectly with the fine, firm tannins. Fans of shiraz from the Vale will find it hard to beat this one. (\$69.95) ★★★★★

<https://www.shingleback.com.au/wine/unedited-shiraz-2017>



Medallion Winner 2013 Sanguine Estate Inception

Heathcote Shiraz This is a delightfully spicy shiraz which is still in its youthful phase. Red and dark berry flavours feature on a long palate balanced by very fine tannins. Impressive. (Not available) ★★★★★

2012 Sanguine Estate Progeny Heathcote Shiraz It's perfumed and peppery. This is a knockout shiraz entering the prime of its life, but there's at least another decade to go. (Not available) ★★★★★☆

2014 Sanguine Estate Inception Heathcote Shiraz The spiciness of this wine is very attractive, as are the fine tannins which support the intense, persistent fruit. First class. (Not available) ★★★★★☆

2014 Peter Lehmann Stonewell Barossa Valley Shiraz An exciting, albeit comparatively raw, expression of Barossa shiraz. The youthful blackberry fruit matches it with new oak, and the palate is deep, long and firm, needing plenty of time. (Not yet released) ★★★★★☆

2017 Pontifex Barossa Valley Shiraz A classic, substantial regional style with both structure and balance. The tannins are quite fine, and just-right acidity freshens the finish. ★★★★★☆

2016 Shingleback Davey Estate McLaren Vale Shiraz A delightful, fresh, ripe, dark berry shiraz that is mouthfilling, intense and faithful to region. (Not available) ★★★★★☆

2017 Grampians Estate St Ethels Shiraz The fresh, perfumed, spicy dark cherry aromas are difficult to resist. The palate provides intense fruit with integrated oak and tannins. Cellar. (\$50.00) ★★★★★☆

<https://grampiansestate.com.au/product/grampians-shiraz-st-ethels-shiraz/>

2016 Yalumba The Octavius Shiraz Although it shows some oak at this stage, there's no denying the impact of the powerful regional dark berry fruit. This is one to put away for a while. (Not yet available)

★★★★☆

2016 Sanguine Estate Inception Heathcote Shiraz This is a shiraz with presence. The dark berry aromas are enhanced by whiffs of spice and dark chocolate, and the firm, multilayered palate is very impressive.

(\$37.00) ★★★★★

<http://www.bottegatasca.com.au/prod2513.htm>

2017 Yes Said the Seal Bellarine Shiraz A vibrant red berry/dark cherry style of shiraz with a positive, but not overdone, oak input. The fine, firm tannins linger on a long finish. (\$403.20 for 12) ★★★★★

<https://yessaidtheseal.com.au/collections/frontpage/products/shiraz-2017>

2017 Sanguine Estate Inception Heathcote Shiraz This is a powerful spicy, strongly varietal red in which the tannins are fairly prominent. Give it a little time to soften. (\$40.00) ★★★★★

2017 Dogrock Pyrenees Shiraz Perfumed dark cherry notes highlight the nose together with toasty oak. Although the palate delivers satisfying fruit weight, the finish is fairly dry. (No longer available) ★★★★★

2017 Dutschke Oscar Semmler Barossa Shiraz The powerful fresh dark berry fruit shares the stage with toasty oak. Give this wine time to get it all together. (Not yet available) ★★★★★

2017 Moppity Vineyards Estate Hilltops Shiraz An attractive dark cherry shiraz which is ready and waiting, fruity and balanced. (\$35.00)

★★★★★

2017 Pepper Tree Claude Limited Release Hunter Valley Shiraz A fresh dark berry shiraz that is packed with flavour. The balance and richness suggest that cellaring will be rewarded. ★★★★★

2015 Ross Hill Wines Pinnacle Orange Region Shiraz A powerful ripe blackberry style of shiraz with firm, fine tannins and a fresh acid lift to the finish. The oak is very well integrated. (Not available) ★★★★★

2017 Blue Pyrenees Estate Richardson Reserve Shiraz A rich, ripe full-flavoured dark berry shiraz with hints of rosemary and thyme and its share of oak. It's a little firm and raw and the moment, but will soften in time. (Not yet released) ★★★★★

2010 Dogrock Pyrenees Shiraz This wine is holding its colour well. It's a mature spicy shiraz that retains a good core of fruit. ★★★★★

2017 Grampians Estate 1878 Vines St Ethels Shiraz Fresh and rich, with a confectionery note. A substantial red with slightly furry tannins. (Not available) ★★★★★

2013 Glenwillow Wines Reserve Bendigo Shiraz An attractive spicy, blackberry style with a slightly herbal edge and fine tannins.

(\$288.00/half-dozen) ★★★★★

2015 Zema Estate Coonawarra Shiraz Although it shows a touch of maturity, this shiraz delivers attractive, faintly minty red fruits characteristics backed up by fine tannins. (\$22.00) ★★★★★

2017 Clarnette & Ludvigsen Reserve Grampians Shiraz A rich and ripe but fresh and spicy shiraz of good fruit weight. It's quite firm on the finish and needs more time. (\$50.00) ★★★★★

2017 Paringa Estate Peninsula Shiraz This is a fresh, spicy, perfumed red, which, although elegant and fine, is just a bit light. (\$29.00) ★★★★★

2017 Centennial Vineyards Hilltops Shiraz Decidedly cherry-like aromatics with hints of rose petal. This wine offers attractive fruit, but is just a fraction short. (\$27.00) ★★★★★

2017 Yalumba The Octavius Shiraz Colour not great. The nose and palate are fresh, and offer attractive varietal fruit, but the oak comes through very strongly at the moment. ★★★★★☆

2017 Charlotte Dalton Wines Beyond the Horizon Adelaide Hills Shiraz Although there is more than ample fresh varietal flavour to be enjoyed, the oak is dominant at this stage. ★★★★★☆

2017 Eden Road Canberra Syrah The fresh spicy dark cherry aromas have appeal, but the finish is a bit lean. ★★★★★☆

2017 Xanadu DJL Margaret River Shiraz There's plenty of ripe red fruits flavour backed up by oak. The finish is quite dry. ★★★★★☆

2017 Innocent Bystander Yarra Valley Shiraz A slightly forward blackberry/spice style with a drying finish. ★★★★★

2017 Cavalry Wines Rosaria Heathcote Premium Shiraz Pale colour. Quite herbal, forward and lean. There's just enough fruit. (Not available) ★★★★★

2017 Indigo Vineyard Beechworth Shiraz Light colour. Fresh, light red berry nose. Lacks weight. ★★★★★

2017 Clarnette & Ludvigsen Grampians Shiraz Lacklustre colour. A plain blackberry style that is showing some development. ★★★★★

2017 d'Arenberg The Footbolt McLaren Vale Shiraz The dark berry aromas and flavours aren't vibrant. The finish is quite drying. ★★★★★

The level of development played a major part in the judging, and that certainly included colour. Even ten year old shiraz should offer brightness of colour and fresh varietal character.

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