

# Left-Fielders

**A**lthough I enjoy the good fortune of having many aged wines in my cellar, I still take more pleasure in the present and the future than I do in the past. That's why I love tasting wines that reflect planning and original thought. Here are a few that have recently attracted my attention.

## De Bortoli Grenache Wizardry



De Bortoli showed a penchant for innovation by releasing a white, a rosé and a red under their Grenache Wizardry banner. All three are sourced from vineyards in the northern portion of the Heathcote wine region.

**2020 Grenache Wizardry Heathcote Grenache Blanc** Very fresh, faintly floral aromas feature in an appealing bouquet. The palate is generously flavoured, with a balanced grip and lively acid finish. (\$23.00) ★★★★★

*This wine was whole-bunch pressed, fermented in clay amphora and aged on yeast lees in barrels and vats for eight months.*

**2019 Grenache Wizardry Heathcote Rosé** Delicate pink. The nose is vibrant, offering hints of rose petal. Everything you're looking for in rosé can be found on the long, satisfying pale with talc-like firmness. (\$23.00) ★★★★★

*Whole-bunch pressed, fermented in older French oak and aged on yeast lees for eight months.*

**2018 Grenache Wizardry Heathcote Grenache** Cherry and red plum aromas and flavours show out in this fresh red with a dry, savoury finish. It provides plenty of enjoyment right now. (\$23.00) ★★★★★

*Fermented in open-top fermenters with lots of whole bunches. 15 days on skins. Ten months in large old barrels.*

<https://shop.debortoli.com.au/brands/grenache-wizardry.html>

This trio of wines is ideal for spring-summer drinking, and it offers a great talking point for any get-together of wine lovers.

## Yangarra's "Châteauneufs"

**2020 Yangarra McLaren Vale Blanc (62% grenache blanc, 18% picpoul, 17% roussanne, 10% clairette, 3% bourboulenc)** The nose is pristine, showing the subtle fragrance of grenache blanc. The long palate delivers generous flavour supported by a fine textural grip and lively acidity. (\$27.00) ★★★★★

*Whole-bunch pressed. Unclarified juice fermented in 675 litre ceramic eggs and older French barriques.*

Strangely, at one time, McLaren Vale's premium quality white grape was riesling, championed prominently by Seaview Rhine Riesling in days of yore. D'Arenberg made it then, and still do. Fiano is being feted by some as McLaren Vale's great white hope, and it may prove to be, but logic suggests that France's white Mediterranean varieties are ideally suited to the Vale. Peter Fraser of Yangarra is demonstrating that they are.

**2019 Yangarra McLaren Vale Noir (62% grenache noir, 15% syrah, 12% mourvèdre, 6% carignane, 3% cinsaut, 2% counoise)** Red berries and rose petals are obvious here, and, on the palate, very fine, mouth-coating tannins balance the persistent flavour. This wine has immediate appeal, but will benefit from a couple of years in bottle. (\$27.00) ★★★

*50% whole berries in the ferment. Cold soak. 14-18 days on skins. Open fermenters. On lees in older French oak for six months.*

## Other Eye-Catchers

**2015 Lenton Brae Wilyabrup Semillon Sauvignon Blanc** The freshness of this wine is mind-boggling. It tastes like it's only one year old! The subtle barrel fermentation input provides a nutty complexity that enhances the gooseberry-grass characteristics of both varieties. The palate is delightfully textural, built on a long line of acidity. (\$60.00) ★★★★★

<https://www.lentonbrae.com/OUR-WINES>

**2018 Oakridge 864 Henk - Aqueduct Yarra Valley Chardonnay** A glowing review for an Oakridge 864 Chardonnay will come as no surprise, but this release is definitely one of the best ever. The intense white peach aromas carry some struck match complexity, and the long, powerful palate features seamless oak integration. This is a sublimely creamy chardonnay. (\$90.00) ★★★★★

<https://www.oakridgewines.com.au/products/26472-864-chardonnay-henk-vineyard-aqueduct-block/>

**2013 Mr Riggs The Chap McLaren Vale Shiraz Coonawarra Cabernet Sauvignon** Following in the footsteps of some of Australia's classic red blends, this wine strikes a brilliant balance between varietal and regional characteristics. The blackberry and chocolate of McLaren Vale shiraz merges perfectly with the blackcurrant and leaf of Coonawarra. At seven years of age, this outstanding red is only beginning to evolve. (\$100.00 - Diam)

<https://www.mrriggs.com.au/shop/2013-the-chap-shiraz-cabernet-sauvignon/>

Lester Jesberg