

Penfolds California Collection

One wonders what drove the fascination of Southcorp (the renamed Penfolds Wine Group of the nineties) with the Paso Robles region to the extent where prime Australian cuttings were put into the ground. Paso Robles plays a part in this release, but the stars are key Napa Valley sites. Two decades on we finally taste the wines, made in the Napa Valley by Penfolds winemakers, honouring the house style – right down to A.P John barrels.



2018 Penfolds Bin 600 California Cabernet Shiraz Blackcurrant pastille and coffee (oak) are the major aromatic drivers. Pronounced fine, savoury tannins feature on a palate that is closer to medium than full-bodied. The finish tapers off slightly. (\$90.00) ★★☆☆

A Napa Valley, Sonoma, Paso Robles blend. 78% cabernet sauvignon, 22% shiraz.

2018 Penfolds Bin 704 Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon The plum and dark berry aromas surprisingly encounter those of choc-mint. Oak drives a richly flavoured palate. This wine hails from the Napa Valley, but Langhorne Creek fans will find a friend here. (\$120.00) ★★★★★

2018 Penfolds Bin 149 Cabernet Sauvignon One sniff, and it's clear that this wine is a Penfolds red above all else. The red berry/dark cherry fruit does its level best to shoulder the coffee bean (high roast) oak. I believe the American component of this wine is a blend of Oakville, Rutherford and Calistoga material, but the Californian characteristics are at least partially obscured. (\$220.00) ★★★★★

A Napa Valley (85.1%) - South Australia (14.9%) blend.

2018 Penfolds Quantum Bin 98 Cabernet Sauvignon Again we see the maker's trademark oak, and even a whiff of volatility, but the cabernet sauvignon fully expresses itself. Fruit-wise there's an abundance of cassis with the power to absorb the new oak, and the tannins are managed with precision. Grange-like cabernet. (\$950.00) ★★★★★

A Napa Valley (87.0%) - South Australia (13.0%) blend.

Lester Jesberg

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