

Domaine A

Stoney Vineyard, in Tasmania's Coal River Valley, was first planted by George and Priscilla Park in 1973. They sold to Swiss couple Peter and Ruth Althaus in 1989. The vineyard was expanded, and the Domaine A label came into being, rising to prominence on the back of some outstanding wines created by Peter. In 2018 Peter and Ruth sold Domaine A to David Walsh, proprietor of Moorilla Estate, and returned to Switzerland. Peter's ground-breaking work is now being honoured by long-standing Moorilla winemaker Conor van der Reest.

The latest releases are testaments to the vision of the Parks and the Althauses, and the winemaking skill of Conor.

2019 Domaine A Lady A I admit that I don't drink much sauvignon blanc, but this wine always attracts my attention. Lady A is barrel-fermented, and far-removed from the typical Marlborough style of sauvignon blanc. The nose offers aromas of mandarin, honey and stone fruit, accompanied by a whiff of gooseberry. Lees contact adds nutty complexity, and is very much a part of the long, creamy palate which finishes acid-fresh. (\$66.00) Cork ★★★★★

2016 Domaine A Pinot Noir Australian wine show judges tend to favour "pretty" pinot noirs – wines that are attractively aromatic, but lacking in weight and structure. They wouldn't like this one. It's strongly varietal in a dark berry/cherry Gevrey-Chambertin kind of way, and the vibrant palate is substantial, firm and balanced. It's just beginning to develop. (\$75.00) Cork ★★★★★

About a dozen years ago I dined with Peter and Ruth Althaus in their home at the vineyard. Peter was a man of strong opinions, as am I. The evening was most enjoyable, and we parted as friends, but the most animated discussion focused on the growing of cabernet sauvignon in a southern Tasmanian vineyard. I maintained that it was unwise at best. Peter was adamant that it could be done successfully. Over the years I've tasted some green Domaine A Cabernet Sauvignons, but this one proves, in part a least, that Peter had a point.

2012 Domaine A Cabernet Sauvignon Ripe dark berry aromas carry a distinct hint of leafiness, but don't allow the vegetal note to fool you. This wine was made from fully ripe fruit. The tannins are in no way green, and the length of flavour is admirable. This is a wine comparable in style to those of the Médoc, and, at ten years of age, it's still very fresh. (\$110.00) Cork ★★★★★☆

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