

2022 Championship – Other Red Varieties

This is always a fascinating class, but it's never easy to judge. Differences in variety, region and winemaking approach make it a challenge at times to place one wine ahead of another. One thing's certain. Our winemakers and viticulturists are doing some great work with this category. This time the “old” – malbec from Langhorne Creek - edged out the new – mencia from McLaren Vale. It was very close indeed.



Medallion Winner 2020 Bleasdale Generations

Langhorne Creek Malbec A vibrant blueberry/red berry medium-bodied style which is fine, savoury and long. A classic example of the variety. (To be released in May - \$35.00) ★★★★★
<https://www.bleasdale.com.au/>

2021 Oliver's Taranga Vineyards McLaren Vale Mencia The intense floral, red berry aromatics are captivating, and the persistent palate is beautifully balanced. Mencia could be the next big thing. (\$30.00)

★★★★★

<https://www.winesquare.com.au/catalog/product/view/id/20866/s/2020-oliver-s-taranga-small-batch-mencia-mclaren-vale/>

2020 Bleasdale Second Innings Langhorne Creek Malbec Although it costs 37% less than its top-rated partner from Bleasdale, it certainly doesn't play second fiddle. He Second Innings has similar blueberry aromatics, with a hint of rose petal and is deliciously drinkable. (To be released in June/July - \$22.00) ★★★★★

2020 Z Wine Hilder Ancestor Vine Barossa Mataro The price may surprise, but please remember that this impressive red comes from a small block of 145 year old vines. It shows classic dark berry/graphite varietal characteristics, and the long, satisfying palate is balanced by fine, firm tannins. Well worth cellaring. (\$300.00) ★★★★★
<https://zwine.com.au/product/2020-hilder-ancestor-vine-mataro-copy/>

2021 Big Easy Radio Looking Forward to Yesterday McLaren Vale Merlot Why aren't there more merlots like this – super-fresh, supple and packed with drink-now plummy flavour? Delicious. (\$35.00) ★★★★★
<https://www.bigeasyradio.com/>

2018 Scion Rutherglen Durif Powerful, perfectly ripe dark berry fruit shines on both nose and palate, with a whiff of spices. This wine is beautifully balanced, and in no way heavy or chunky. (Not yet released) ★★★★★

2020 First Drop Wines McLaren Vale Touriga Nacional The berry/spice nose is enhanced by a pronounced floral component, and the palate is fine and silky. Sumptuous drinking. (\$25.00) ★★★★★
<https://www.firstdropwines.com/wine/2020-nacional-touriga-nacional>

2019 Atze's Corner Wines Giant Barossa Valley Durif A wine of substance, structure and balance, delivering a big serve of dark berry flavour. An excellent steak accompaniment for lovers of big Aussie reds. (\$35.00) ★★★★★
<https://atzes.com/products/the-giant-durif>

2018 Xanadu Stevens Road Margaret River Graciano Quite ripe, but fresh, with an earthy overtone. The palate offers good fruit, but the acidity is prominent. (\$80.00) ★★★★★
<https://xanaduwines.com/product/2018-stevens-road-graciano-2/>

2020 Kilikanoon Ashton Clare Valley Mataro Ripe dark fruits flood the palate, backed up by persistent fine tannins. It isn't as substantial as some mataro/mourvèdre, but still delivers the goods. (\$55.00) ★★★★★
<https://kilikanoon.com.au/>

2019 d'Arenberg The Anthropocene Epoch McLaren Vale Mencia Attractive red berry aromas with a floral touch. The palate is firm, but there's no shortage of flavour. (\$32.00) ★★★★★
<https://www.darenberg.com.au/the-anthropocene-epoch-2019>

2020 Purple Hands Colours of the South Barossa Valley Mourvèdre Vibrant, intense and ripe with a rustic earthy edge. Generously flavoured. (\$28.00) ★★★★★
<https://www.purplehandswines.com.au/product/2020-colours-of-the-south-barossa-valley-mourvedre/>

2019 Geddes Wines Seldom Inn McLaren Vale Petit Verdot Rich and plummy, with blackcurrant pastille overtones. A firm, fruit-driven style of good length. (\$25.00) ★★★★★
<https://geddeswines.com.au/seldom-inn>

2019 Heirloom McLaren Vale Touriga The intense floral/plum aromas carry a hint of reduced character, and the palate is opulently satisfying. (\$30.00) ★★★★★
<https://www.winedirect.com.au/heirloom-vineyards-mclaren-vale-touriga>

2019 Vinaceous Voodoo Moon Margaret River Malbec Fresh blueberry/mulberry. Has good fruit but is a little firm for its weight. (\$25.00) ★★★★★
<https://www.vinaceous.com.au/product/voodoo-moon-malbec/>

2020 Artwine Pack Leader Clare Valley Cabernet Franc Shows blackcurrant and a touch of oak. Generous fruit is supported by supple tannins. (\$40.00) ★★★★★
<https://www.artwine.com.au/>

2019 Xanadu DJL Malbec ★★★★★☆

2019 Lillypilly Petit Verdot ★★★★★

2021 Bleasdale Cabernet Franc ★★☆☆

2020 Salena Estate ex-PRESS-ion Touriga ★★

We always enjoy judging this category. The progress being made with traditional varieties like malbec and mataro (mourvèdre) is clear to see, and newcomer mencia is definitely making its mark. We also admired the work with merlot (Big Easy Radio), touriga (First Drop) and durif (Scion and Atze's Corner).

PREVIOUS WINWISE CHAMPIONSHIP WINNERS

2019 Bleasdale Generations Langhorne Creek Malbec
2017 Shingleback Kitchen Garden McLaren Vale Mataro
2016 Mount Majura Vineyard Mondeuse
2014 Bleasdale Second Innings Malbec
2012 Dutschke 80 Block Barossa Merlot
2009 Charnwood Estate Mudgee Merlot
2009 Terra Felix E'vette's Block Mourvèdre
2009 The Old Faithful Sandhill McLaren Vale Grenache
2009 Symphony Hill Reserve Petit Verdot