

# Onannon



C E L L A R H A N D

## 2014 Pinots & Brand-New Wines from Onannon

Onannon is a young venture that's grown up fast. In fact, there's been some debate over when Onannon *arrived*. The tight-knit band of brothers released their first wine under this label in the very late noughties and **James Halliday** wasted no time in offering an avuncular slap on the back. He was in the know from day one, since Sam Middleton, Kaspar Hermann and Will Byron had all worked various vintages at Coldstream Hills. "Strictly speaking, I should disqualify myself from making any comment about them or their wine, but you would have to go a long way to find three more open-hearted and utterly committed winemakers; the world is their oyster, their ambitions unlimited."



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*Seamless. Succulent. Has some sex appeal but pure fruit flesh and racy length is the go.*

*Campbell Mattinson on the 2013 Chardonnay*

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Sam Middleton

Halliday's local knowledge gave him a head start. Others got to know the wines first - and they loved what they saw. UK wine scribe **Matthew Jukes** raved about the 2011 Gippsland Pinot Noir, an "utterly stunning wine". "It is a magical Pinot with gorgeous succulence and complexity and you should rush out to buy this future cult wine," Jukes told his readers. The team at **Wine Front** really sat up and took notice in 2012. That's when **Campbell Mattinson** hailed "an arresting wine" in the guise of the Gippsland Pinot Noir, dishing out "extra points for complexity. Extra points for length." But it was the Mornington



Will Byron

Pinot from that same vintage that **Mattinson** declared “the wine to really announce Onannon as a producer of note”. His colleague **Mike Bennie** followed his nose, and it led straight to the Chardonnay of the same vintage. “Drinkability is high, fruit feels fresh and pure and the edifice is very well matched to the understated power of the grape. Very suave feel here. Young pedigree.”

That young pedigree has only become more firmly established. “Some Chardonnay just tastes right. This one does,” wrote **Mattinson** of the “tip-top” 2013 follow-up. And then **Halliday** – who some might have said picked Onannon early – saw it mature into something truly remarkable. The 2013 Gippsland and

Mornington Peninsula Pinot Noirs were awarded 96 and 97 points respectively in the **Australian Wine Companion**. “The intensity and length of the palate are mind-blowing, yet (it) retains elegance and length,” wrote Halliday of the Gippsland wine, while its Mornington Peninsula sibling was proclaimed “a wine of utterly exceptional power and concentration, with black cherry and spiced plum aromas and flavours”.

Onannon is, theoretically at least, a side project for Sam, Kaspar and Will; the former two are winemakers at Mount Mary while Will is at Stonier on the Mornington Peninsula. As such it’s important - and gratifying - to see them doing it with a smile on their face. But make no mistake: they are deeply *committed*, to borrow Halliday’s term. This is a serious venture with heart and soul, and the momentum is irresistible. A brand new **Pinot Gris** and **Rosé** from the 2015 vintage have been welcomed with open arms, and the **2014 Pinot Noir** offerings from Gippsland and the Mornington Peninsula will only make Onannon’s champions more fervent in their praise.



Kaspar Hermann

### **THE NEW WINES**

#### **2015 Onannon Mornington Peninsula Pinot Gris RRP \$31**



The grapes were picked by hand and pressed immediately into tank, settled overnight and then racked to both tank and old barrels. A cool fermentation took place over two months during which the wine was stirred regularly to increase texture. After ferment the wine was kept cold to prevent malolactic fermentation.

The wine was then racked from barrel and tank in late June, then filtered and bottled in early July with minimal SO<sub>2</sub>.

### 2015 Onannon Yarra Valley Rosé RRP \$27

Made from 100% Merlot. The fruit was pressed lightly to tank, settled for two weeks, then racked to barrel for fermentation. The wine was kept cold to prevent malolactic fermentation and was then racked to tank, filtered and bottled in July with minimal SO<sub>2</sub>.



### 2014 Onannon Gippsland Pinot Noir RRP \$41



The fruit comes from the Bellvale vineyard in Berry's Creek, owned by respected grower and winemaker John Ellis. It has excellent drainage, with a north-facing hillside position, large natural terraces and basaltic red clay-loam soil of ancient volcanic origin. The 16-year-old vines are densely planted to

numerous Pinot Noir clones. In 2013 we used predominantly 114 and 115. The fruit was handpicked and 100% destemmed into two fermenters with minimal SO<sub>2</sub>. We gave it a four-day cold soak, then inoculated one fermenter immediately and left the other for indigenous fermentation. Primary fermentation was completed in six days and the wine was immediately pressed, homogenised and settled overnight before being racked to barrels to sit on gross lees until bottling in December.

### 2014 Onannon Mornington Peninsula Pinot Noir RRP \$46

The grapes were grown in Red Hill, 100m up on a warm, north-facing slope overlooking Port Phillip Bay. The rich, terra rossa soil is home to mostly 21-year-old MV6 vines, though the vineyard has a small six-year-old planting of the 777 clone. We gave it a few days' cool soak before indigenous fermentation kicked off, which lasted five days. It was then left on skins for a further 12 days, with a plunge every two days to keep the cap fresh. After 21 days on skins all up, the wine was pressed to tank, settled overnight and then put to barrel the next day. Natural MLF occurred within 10 weeks, after which the wine was racked and sulphured. We bottled the wine unfinned and unfiltered in late December.





### **OTHER ONANNON WINES**

#### **2012 Onannon Gippsland Chardonnay RRP \$41**

Subdued bouquet of tingly lemon and lime lollies, faint struck match and fancy oak aromas. A seamless texture, supple with mellow, faintly honeyed fruit flavour and the smooth polish of subtle oak. Drinkability is high, fruit feels fresh and pure and the edifice is very well matched to the understated power of the grape. Very suave feel here. Young pedigree. 92 points. **Mike Bennie, The Wine Front**

#### **2013 Onannon Gippsland Chardonnay RRP \$41**

From the Tambo Estate vineyard, hand-picked and hand-sorted; cool crushed and pressed (with some whole bunches), settled overnight, but used various levels of solids, likewise yeasts; fermented and matured for 10 months in French oak (30% new). A delicious wine, its stone fruit flavours of great length, and not intimidated by the oak. 94 points. **James Halliday**

Some chardonnay just tastes right. This one does. Seamless. Succulent. Has some sex appeal but pure fruit flesh and racy length is the go. It tastes of pear, barley, lime and flint, smells complex, has the acidity just right, and sings through the finish. Bran-like aftertaste. Tip top chardonnay. 93+ points. **Campbell Mattinson, The Wine Front**



#### **2012 Onannon Gippsland Pinot Noir RRP \$41**



Light, bright red; sourced from a single vineyard, and a prime example of not judging pinot noir on its colour, the fragrant, perfumed bouquet of red berry fruits and spices followed by a very long, silky palate that accelerates through to the finish and lingering aftertaste. 350 dozen made. 94 points. **James Halliday**

Onannon wines are made in minuscule quantities but their quality is getting them noticed. Extra points for complexity. Extra points for length. It's a cloudy, acidic style with tangy, foresty cherry notes and earthen/twiggy tannin. A tight wine. An arresting wine. Tangerine acidity. Smoky, twiggy length. Won't be for everyone. But will be adored by many. And will improve with bottle age. 93 points. **Campbell Mattinson, The Wine Front**

