



Welcome to the CellarHand newsletter for July 2017. Here's a little taste of what's going on this month...

DOMESTIC

[FARR TOO GOOD – '15 Farrside & Sangreal plus '16 whites out now](#)

[ONANNON THE UP & UP – Trio takes things up a level with single-vineyard 2016s](#)

[FLYING KIWIS – TWR and Burn Cottage make prestigious Air NZ list](#)

[HANDSOME REFLÉXION – Picture yourself drinking Mount Mary's Fumé Blanc](#)

[MATT'S CUDDLY COUPLE – Time to embrace 2016 Shadowfax Chardonnay & Pinot](#)

[FRESH HEAD - Napoleone appoints hotshot Kai Dambergs as new chief brewer](#)

[FRANKLAND FORGES AHEAD – 2017 Riesling under Rocky Gully & Estate labels](#)

[PLAIN-TALKING TIM – Punt Road's straight-up delicious Pinots from 2016](#)

[DELTA FORCE – New winemaker at the helm of Marlborough Pinot Noir producer](#)

IMPORTS

[QUEEN OF THE CASTLE – Theresa Breuer's majestic 2015 Schlossberg](#)

[OPTIMAL OREGON – J. Christopher's Willamette Pinot from dream vintage of 2014](#)

[UHLEN THE GANG – Heymann-Löwenstein's band of 2015 GGs land in Australia](#)

[ROLAND ON A ROLL – Brilliant brace of '15s from Herr Velich of Moric](#)

[HIPSTER HASSELBACH – Gunderloch's Als Wär's Ein Stück Von Mir & other '15s](#)

[TEARING THROUGH TISSIER – Sancerre sells out fast to move us onto 2016](#)

[PANNOBILE PARAGON – Super review of Pittnauer's archetypal Burgenland blend](#)

DOMESTIC

FARR TOO GOOD



He's a master of the understatement, is Nick Farr. He was hardly fond of 2014 as a red-wine vintage, yet put together a 98-point Farrside and 97-point Sangreal. The 2013 he dubbed "crowd pleasers" and 2012 was a year of "lazy winemaking" but naturally the wines were outstanding and the accolades flowed as freely as ever. So along comes a vintage tailor-made for top-notch Victorian Pinot. "I'm generally quite reserved about the future of any of our wines," Nick confesses, "but the potential of 2015 wines is quite obvious." Indeed! So what a pleasure to unveil these at last. From this auspicious harvest we have the Farrside and Sangreal Pinot Noir, the Shiraz, and the inaugural release

of the spectacular GC Chardonnay by Farr.

Aside from the GC, the whites here are from 2016, a harvest that yielded extremely fine and mineral-driven wines for the Farris. As in 2015, the weather was highly favourable during the end

of February, helping to slowly ripen the fruit and develop more structure and fine tannins. The result is wines that are approachable but with all the elegance of a cool vintage here. This is, in short, an unmissable set of wines from a young master at the top of his game.

2016 Viognier by Farr RRP \$70

The Viognier by Farr is a blend of two vineyards. One is the original house block planted in 1994, which has friable red soil over limestone leading to sandstone—similar soils to the Sangreal Pinot Noir and By Farr Chardonnay. The second vineyard is a younger planting of unknown clones in red ironstone soil. The Viognier is a difficult variety to manage, with the tendency to grow horizontally rather than vertically, being very thirsty and having a tendency to become sunburnt very easily. This prompted Nick's decision to pick the fruit earlier to retain natural acidity while maintaining varietal character, creating a more delicate and refined drink.

Viognier is foot-stomped and left for two or more hours on its skins, to extract phenolics, flavour and texture. The fruit is then pressed, cooled and put straight into barrel with all solids for a natural fermentation. Malolactic fermentation is encouraged with gentle stirring during the end of autumn. The wine is then racked, fined, filtered and bottled 11 months after harvest.

2016 Three Oaks Chardonnay by Farr RRP \$85

The Chardonnay by Farr comes from the same site as the Sangreal Pinot Noir. It's an exposed, hungry north-facing slope of red soil over limestone, planted in 1994. The Chardonnay vines are a mixture of Dijon clones and P58.

The fruit is picked by hand and whole-bunch pressed. All the solids are collected and chilled before being put to French oak barrels (30% new). A natural fermentation occurs over the next two to three weeks at cool temperatures. After fermentation, a bit of stirring helps start malolactic fermentation, which is usually completed by mid-spring. The wine is then racked, fined and lightly filtered before bottling 11 months after picking.



2015 GC Chardonnay by Farr RRP \$115

The most exciting wine from the 2015 vintage is without doubt the new GC Chardonnay by Farr (GC = Gary Charles). With all the knowledge that I have been able to extract from my father (not always easy) we created a high-density planting of Chardonnay and Pinot Noir on an exposed cote. These hillsides facing east, north east and north will be the backbone of the Farr destiny for decades to come. They consist of the most suitable clones, rootstocks, trellising and management you'll find. This is our tribute to what 'Gazza' has achieved and provoked over 40 years not only in our region but for the Chardonnay and Pinot Noir of Australia.

The wine has an amazing smoothness and calmness that stretches the length of the palate, surrounded with textured fruit and mineral elements. We have been playing with the fruit from these vineyards for eight years, fine-tuning the style of wine that these sites are producing. This is the vintage that saw it all come together with purity and balance. – Nick Farr

The winery yeast always has a nougat aroma and nothing has changed here. You know it's ripe but the aroma spectrum is savoury all the same. Good oak, a little fennel too. Cool, river pebble minerality from front to back, follows a nice line of acidity. Some phenolic firmness. Those savoury elements are repeated

on the palate with lime and fresh pineapple fruit, as well as some marshmallowy oak. Pushes on to great length; autumnal flavours linger. This is seriously good. – *Sam Hooper, CellarHand*

2015 Farrside by Farr RRP \$86

The Farrside vineyard consists of black volcanic soil over limestone on a northeast-facing slope. The vine rows run east to west to shade the fruit from over exposure. It's a mixture of 114, 115, 777, 667 and MV6 clones. Although the Farrside and Sangreal vineyards are only 300m apart, the differing conditions means that this vineyard is picked 10 to 12 days later. The darker soils and cooler growing conditions give a more masculine and edgy wine.

The fruit is hand-picked and sorted in the vineyard, then fermented in an open-top fermenter. Between 40 to 50% of the fruit will be destemmed and then cold soaked for four days. Nick uses only the natural yeast for the fermentation process, which takes roughly 12 days. Grape-stomping (known as pigeage) will occur two to three times a day depending on the amount of extraction required, and the wine is then placed in 50 to 60% new Allier barrels by gravity. It is racked by gas after secondary fermentation, then again at 18 months to be bottled.

2015 Sangreal by Farr RRP \$86

The Sangreal Vineyard is the oldest planting (1994) on a north-facing slope of red ironstone on the surface going to limestone to bluestone below. The rows run north to south, gaining full sun exposure throughout the day and resulting in prettier, more perfumed wines. It's always the first vineyard to be harvested.

Sangreal is consistently made with 60 to 70% whole bunch and aged in new oak. It is fermented in a five-tonne oak barrel with an open-top fermenter, and cold soaked for four days before a natural fermentation of seven to nine days. Once the cap falls, the tank is pressed. The wine is racked only once after malolactic fermentation, then sulphured and bottled, the entire process taking a total of 18 months. The wine is unfinned and unfiltered in order to retain its natural flavour and bouquet. Sangreal is the most seamless and perfumed of the three single-vineyard Pinots.

2015 Shiraz by Farr RRP \$70

Shiraz fruit comes from the original By Farr vineyard, planted in 1994. It lies on a north-facing slope, and the red volcanic soil has a base of limestone with deep-set sandstone.

All fruit is hand-picked from the VSP trellising, with 20% left as whole bunches in the fermentation. Most years we co-ferment between 2 and 4% Viognier with the Shiraz, the date determining whether or not the former is co-fermented and bled back. It is a natural fermentation, with the fruit remaining in the tank for 19 days before pressing. Shiraz sees 18 months in French oak, 20% being new, and is bottled under vacuum.

[Back to headlines](#)

ONANNON THE UP & UP

Good on Onannon. **James Halliday** once commented that the world was their oyster. Well, now they've well and truly shucked it and bolted it down in an emphatic gulp.

2017 marks the 10th vintage under this label for Sam Middleton, Kaspar Hermann and Will Byron. Fittingly, the milestone is marked with a bold, self-assured statement of intent in the guise of two brilliant single-site wines, one from Gippsland and the other from the Mornington Peninsula.



2016 Onannon Single Site Leongatha Pinot Noir RRP \$71

The vineyard is close planted, dry grown and the Onannon boys use the D5V12, 777 and MV6 clones. Fruit 100% destemmed into separate fermenters with minimal SO₂, then cold soaked for six days before fermentation kicks off. Primary fermentation took eight days with temperatures reaching 34 degrees. The wine was kept on skins for an extra two weeks to build and complex the tannins. Once pressed, it was settled overnight before being racked to barrels to sit on gross lees. Racked again prior to bottling late December.

Floral and red fruited to sniff, with vanilla pod, Indian spices, earth and smokiness lying beneath. Velvety feel in the mouth,

with fine, polished tannins. Very good concentration of fresh, ripe raspberry and red cherry fruit, with the complex undertones suggested by the nose. Edgy acidity gives it a terrific, raspberry sorbet-like cut on a finish that is long, fresh and pretty. - *Ed Merrison, CellarHand*

2016 Onannon Single Site Red Hill Pinot Noir RRP \$71

This wine is from the Red Hill vineyard which we manage with the help of our trusty vineyard worker, Martin. The vines are 23 years old now. It's a warm site, sitting at 90m with a northern exposure. The fruit is handpicked and the portions that made this wine were 100% whole bunch fermented. We used both the clones that the vineyard is planted to: MV6 and 777. We use small one-tonne fermenters and after tipping the fruit carefully in, we wrap them up so no air can get in and no CO₂ can escape. After 2 weeks we will open the fermenter to check the ferment and if need be give a very light foot stomp. We kept this wine on skins for four weeks after which it was pressed and a portion sent to barrel for a barrel ferment. The remaining wine is sent to barrel once dry. Natural MLF finished within 10 weeks, after which time the wine was racked and sulphured. We bottled the wine in late December. - *Will Byron, Onannon*

Rosehip, cranberry, raspberry, vanilla, green herbs. Light and lean in the palate, good sweetness of fruit, fine structure, firm, tense and long in flavour. Length and drive. Class. 94 points. *Mike Bennie, The Wine Front* February 2017

[Back to headlines](#)

FLYING KIWIS

Congratulations to the biodynamic duo of TWR and Burn Cottage! They've cemented their place in the Kiwi elite having once again been included in the **Fine Wines of New Zealand** classification. Toru, TWR's three-way field blend, and Burn Cottage's Pinot Noir from the eponymous vineyard, have essentially been recognised as modern classics: exemplary, unique and thoroughly recognisable.

The list is compiled annually by six of New Zealand's top independent wine experts including Masters of Wine Alastair Maling, Michael Brajkovich, Sam Harrop, Simon Nash and Steve Smith, along with Master Sommelier Cameron Douglas. "The basis of the Fine Wines of New Zealand classification is to recognise enduring excellence," says **Simon Nash MW**. "This is the achievement of an outstanding record of excellence by top wineries and wines over an extended period."



2016 Te Whare Ra Toru SV5182 RRP \$28

Marlborough gewürztraminer, riesling and pinot gris as a co-fermented blend. Aroma, texture, spice and a sizzle of citrusy/stonefruit-like flavour through the finish. It's easy to knock over a few glasses and yet it has a bit of class too. A mouthfilling white. 91 points. *Campbell Mattinson, The Wine Front* February 2017

2015 Burn Cottage Pinot Noir RRP \$92

Remarkable site that the fruit is grown on here. Verdant, buzzy with Bambi-like scenes of animals and flowers and insects and stuff. Biodynamic farming, loads of care, a selected place to grow great grapes. Good ingredients.

Clever winemaker, Claire Mullholland, and in the mix the wonderful consultant in Ted Lemon from Littorai, California. Good release here too.

Deep, moody, dark cherry and dark chocolate, clove and dried rose petals, sweet earth and undergrowth scents. A growl of perfume. Supple in texture with some serious concentration, but elevated on fresh acidity, spice, a spread of fine, silty tannins. Has some extension through the palate, leaves a trail of sweet fruit and a savoury character that feels moreish. Just lovely, here. 95 points. *Mike Bennie, The Wine Front* May 2017

[Back to headlines](#)

HANDSOME RÉFLEXION

Time for a little bit of something different from Mount Mary. The Middletons had a bit of extra Sauvignon Blanc up their sleeve from the 2015 harvest, and have put it to good use with a barrel-fermented savvy that is rich with gastronomic possibilities.

2015 Réflexion Fumé Blanc RRP \$46

The vines which bear the fruit for this wine were planted in 2008, on a south-facing slope. The 2015 Réflexion Fumé Blanc is 100% barrel-fermented Sauvignon Blanc. The winemaking methodology follows other Mount Mary white wines, where the fruit is pressed relatively hard to give the wine a phenolic texture. Fermentation is conducted with a high solids component for added complexity,

while a higher fermentation temperature (than would be considered typical for Sauvignon Blanc) is encouraged, to give the wine less overt primary fruit and more secondary complexity.

This wine shows aromas of honeysuckle, melon and a hint of passionfruit. The palate is rich with perfectly balanced riper flavours of peach and melon, combined with some more typical Sauvignon Blanc characters of green apple and passionfruit. The acid and phenolic component gives the wine a tremendous chalkiness adding interest and length to the palate. – *Sam Middleton, Mount Mary*



[Back to headlines](#)



MATT'S CUDDLY COUPLE

They make a bloody handsome duo, do Matt Harrop's regional expressions of Chardonnay and Pinot Noir from the Macedon Ranges. People have really taken them into their hearts since they first appeared side by side in 2013 - so much so that the vintage rolls seem to come hard and fast.

Once again, 2016 offers abundant joy on both sides. "Round, cuddly wines", Matt says. Embrace them.

2016 Shadowfax Macedon Chardonnay RRP \$35

From two vineyards, Midhill and Mount Macedon - the latter at an altitude of 650m. 20% new oak. Fruit is in the white peach/nectarine zone, with a touch of nutmeg and nougat oak. Ample on the palate, full and juicy, but it maintains good shape and finesse, helped by a zing of high-altitude acidity which adds a certain crispness to the finish. A real pleaser. - Ed Merrison, CellarHand

2016 Shadowfax Macedon Pinot Noir RRP \$37

Fruit from the Midhill, Macedon and Big Shed vineyards. A deliberate winding back on the whole bunch from 2015 - this is about 20%. Fairly deep garnet in colour and ripe fruited on the nose - macerated cherry, raspberry almost into blackberry territory, with cherry blossom floral notes, earthy spices and biscuity oak. The fruit is plush and dense on the palate, with notably high levels of fresh grape tannins adding substance and, with the juicy acidity, keeping its shape and presence through the fresh, cocoa-dusted finish. - Ed Merrison, CellarHand

[Back to headlines](#)

FRESH HEAD

Napoleone Brewers has tapped the hottest talent around with the appointment of a new head brewer. Kai Dambergs has just stepped into the role, and comes with a reputation for outstanding technical expertise.

Kai joined Punt Road's beer brethren after making a fantastic impact at Hargreaves Hill, during a three-year stint in which the brewery grew significantly and made some brilliant drinks. Before that, Kai helped to establish the White Rabbit brewery in Healesville. He moved there from his brewing role at Little Creatures in Fremantle, where he had been since 2007.

Kai has a degree in Food and Technology Management, and has also dabbled in cider and wine production, both through Little Creatures and family connections. It's precisely this blend of skill and creativity that makes this fermentation hub hum, and we can't wait to taste the fruits of his labour at Napoleone.



NV Napoleone Pale Ale RRP \$80 per case (24 x 330ml)

ABV: 4.5%

IBU: 35

YEAST: US- 05, SO- 04

MALT: Gladfield Pale Malt, Munich, Medium Crystal

HOPS: Magnum (bittering), Summer, Cascade and Columbus (whirlpool and dry hop)

Brewed more as a traditional pale ale, this beer is well balanced with dry hop additions of Summer, Cascade and Columbus giving it floral citrus and stone fruit characters. Rounded out with a reserved malt character and subtle bitterness this is an easy drinking, sessionable APA.

Napoleone Breakneck Porter RRP \$80 per case (24 x 330ml)

ABV: 5.1%

IBU: 35

YEAST: SO- 4

HOPS: Magnum (bittering), East Kent Goldings (whirlpool)

MALT: Pale Malt (Gladfield), Munich, Medium Crystal, Chocolate and Brown.

An impressive specialty malt bill gives this beer plenty of dark chocolate, caramel, burnt toffee and coffee with a dry espresso finish. Let this one warm up and watch it develop, you won't be sorry...

Napoleone Rauchbier \$85 per case (12 x 500ml)

ABV: 5.7%

IBU: 25

Yeast: Saflager w- 34/70

Malt: Gladfield Manuka Smoke, Munich, Pilsner

Hops: Magnum (bittering), Saaz (whirlpool)

A smoked German style lager using Manuka wood as the smoke source. Nose has notes of ham hock and smoked bacon sweetness with touches of peppery spice. Palate lends very much from the nose with rich ham hock, smoky sweet bacon and peppery spice with a dry, crisp, peppery finish.

[Back to headlines](#)

FRANKLAND FORGES AHEAD

There are few scarier things in wine than running out of Frankland Estate rizza. We've had those beautiful single-vineyard '16s on hand, of course, but this Rocky Gully and Estate are



indispensable options at different price points.

Hunter Smith, who makes the wines with brother-in-law Brian Kent, kindly sat down to write his characteristically in-depth technical notes at the weekend. Never one to blow his own trumpet, he was nevertheless moved to comment on his satisfaction in the accompanying email: "In retrospect I would say the results are arguably one of the best vintages for some time." Quite a call, given the ludicrously high standards here.

On another note, Hunter was in Sydney recently, conducting a Shiraz benchmarking masterclass with **Ned Goodwin MW**. The line-up included Rhône royalty such as

Gonon, Clape, Chave, Gangloff and Sorrel, as well as some homegrown superstars. Needless to say the Frankland Estate wines - so cool, refreshing and elegantly layered - looked bloody great among that lot.

2017 Rocky Gully Riesling RRP \$21

A cold and wet winter in 2016 delayed budburst. A wet spring and cool dry conditions throughout summer provided an exceptional year for Riesling. Generous blossom and stone fruit, citrus and melon on the nose. Bath salt, talc and delicate spice undertones. A nicely weighted wine with a generosity of flavour and white stone fruit. Delicate and precise on the palate with generosity of fruit, persistent length of flavour and soft texture. – *Hunter Smith, Frankland Estate*

2017 Frankland Estate Riesling RRP \$29

This wine was made from 100% certified organic Riesling grown according to certified organic principles in the family's estate vineyards. A selection of small ferments was made from parcels of fruit harvested in some younger vines planted in 2006 on a high ironstone rocky ridge in the ironstone "coffee rock" that is classic soil from the property at Frankland Estate. This combines with some of Frankland Estate's original parcels of Riesling planted in 1988. Grapes are pressed immediately on arrival at the winery with the juice left to settle in tank over night before being racked. The wine was then fermented in stainless steel tanks at relatively low temperatures (less than 14 degrees Celsius) over 4-6 weeks with minimal intervention in order to obtain the purest expression of the pristine fruit. The wine was then left on its fermentation lees prior to bottling.

A very crystalline Riesling on the nose with hints of white citrus flower and blossom. The soft and delicate approach builds with a combination of lime and bath salts. Delicate crystalline flavours on the palate show a dry precise Riesling with texture, spice and delicate acidity that give the wine focus and fantastic length. – *Hunter Smith, Frankland Estate*

2014 Frankland Estate Isolation Ridge Shiraz RRP \$43

Deep crimson. Highly perfumed - with rich fruit and a light floral quality. Very intense and deeply fruited on the palate but the fruit is not overly sweet (that's good). Darker and more savoury on the palate, with a touch of black olive already. Spice and pepper from oak and fruit. Chewy and fresh on the long, tangy finish. 17/20. *Julia Harding MW, jancisrobinson.com* December 2016

[Back to headlines](#)

PLAIN-TALKING TIM

"I've said it before and I'll say it again – winemakers who don't bullshit in their tasting notes make better wines," writes blogger **Andrew Graham** of **Australian Wine Review**, citing Tim Shand of Punt Road as exhibit 'A'. "There is enthusiasm, but it's also backed by reality. It's easy to just make up things as a producer, but here, you feel like you're living the vintage first hand."

The comments were made about Tim's accompanying notes for the two Pinots from the fast-and-furious 2016 vintage. A couple of great drinks, thoughtfully and skilfully put together by an agile mind under tricky conditions. They say a lot about Tim, in fact – and for those who want to know more, he gave CellarHand a hugely insightful, typically candid interview that has been written up on our website. Pour yourself a Pinot and have yourself a read, if you get a chance.



2016 Punt Road Pinot Noir RRP \$29

Despite the vintage challenges, this is a convincingly attractive wine. There's a slightly syrupy edge to the cherry fruit, the acid lower, the stems a little more prominent. But it still follows through with a languid and really quite complex expression that is proper Pinoty, and comes complete with a rasp of tannins to carry the finish. It's not as sexy as the '15, but there is much to chew on here (and more to come). Best drinking: 2018-2022. 91+ points. *Andrew Graham, Australian Wine Review* June 2017

2016 Airlie Bank Pinot Noir RRP \$21

Light and spicy, this is bonier than the Punt Road but still packs in the drinkability (and comes with proper tannin). Importantly there is fruit through the middle for the structure to hang off, even if it's not plush or full. Again, length is admirable for the dollars – no shrinking violet. Again, real Pinot, few dollars, even if doesn't set hearts on fire. Best drinking: 2017-2020. 89 points. *Andrew Graham, Australian Wine Review* June 2017

[Back to headlines](#)



DELTA FORCE

Just a quick note to announce that the reins have been handed over at Delta. Heather Stewart - whose favourite pastimes include rowing on the Wairau River and sailing in the Marlborough Sounds - is now at the winemaking helm at the Pinot Noir estate, replacing Matt Thomson. Before joining Delta, Heather worked harvests in Tuscany and California and spent five years as assistant winemaker at a large family wine company. Welcome aboard, Heather!

2015 Delta Pinot Noir RRP \$28

Even, dark ruby-red colour with slight purple hues, lighter on the rim. The nose is fresh and bright with vibrant and intense aromas of dark red cherry and raspberry fruit, along with lifted dark-red and violet florals and a subtle amalgam of herbs and whole berry fermentation confectionary elements. Medium-bodied, the palate features rich, lively and elegantly concentrated flavours of dark raspberries and black cherry fruit melded with an amalgam of fresh herbs and violet florals. The palate is sweet and succulent, quite fine in expression with supple tannin extraction and flowing line, along with refreshing acidity. The wine carries with drive and energy to an elegant finish of dark cherry and berry fruit. This is an elegantly concentrated, sweet dark cherry and berry fruited Pinot Noir with supple tannins and fresh line and drive. Match with duck and pork dishes over the next 4 years. Dijon clone fruit from the 'Delta Farm' vineyard, fermented to 13.5% alc., the wine aged in seasoned French oak. 18/20 *Raymond Chan, Raymond Chan Wine Reviews* September 2016

2012 Delta Hatters Hill Pinot Noir RRP \$41

Even dark garnet-red colour with suggestions of brick on the edge. This has a full and voluminous bouquet with gentle and ethereal layers of soft, savoury red berry fruits harmoniously melded with layers of dried herbs and secondary undergrowth and game notes along with lifted oak elements. Complexing detail emerges with aeration. Medium-full bodied, the palate features softly rich and succulent, mouthfilling flavours of savoury red berry fruits seamlessly interwoven with complex secondary flavours of dried herbs and undergrowth, and lifted oak. The mouthfeel is integrated with fine-grained, flowery tannins providing positive structure and integrated acidity. The wine has good drive and carries to a long

and lingering finish with secondary undergrowth nuances. This is a harmoniously integrated Pinot Noir with complex secondary and lifted flavours and a fine-grained structure. Match with game meat and casseroles over the next 4-5+ years. Dijon clone fruit, hand-picked and fermented with 10% whole clusters to 13.5% alc., the wine aged 10 months in 55% new French oak. 18.5/20 *Raymond Chan, Raymond Chan Wine Reviews* April 2016

[Back to headlines](#)

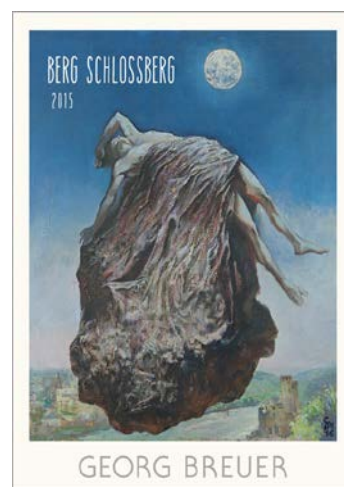
IMPORTS

QUEEN OF THE CASTLE

“Masterpiece” is what **Stuart Pigott** called Theresa Breuer’s 2015 Riesling from the Berg Schlossberg grand cru site in her hometown of Rudesheim. The wine, named for the castle on the hill, appeared at no.3 in Pigott’s Top 25 Dry German Rieslings ranking published on jamesuckling.com in December (pipped by Dönnhoff and Dr. Loosen, in case you’re wondering).

Theresa’s outstanding work in furthering the reputation of this already great estate won her the title of **Winemaker of the Year** from influential European magazine **Falstaff** in 2016. The team has been farming the vineyards organically since 2011 and the wines have become even more elegant and precise in recent years.

The qualities any Riesling lover looks for are distilled to a crystalline purity at Georg Breuer. To say it shines in 2015 is to put it mildly.



2015 Georg Breuer Rudesheim Estate Riesling RRP \$39

Georg Breuer's village Rieslings represent different attributes of the vineyard sites in Rudesheim and Rauenthal through character and palate. Rudesheim brings strong minerality and stone fruit aromas from steep slate and quartz soil.

2015 Georg Breuer Terra Montosa Riesling RRP \$58

375ml RRP \$39

*If you like your riesling dry and racy, then the fine peachy notes and dazzling mineral vibrancy of this sleek beauty should light your fire. The balance is already great, but this should open up substantially with a few years' ageing. A blend mostly from the Berg Roseneck and Berg Schlossberg sites and GG quality as a result! 92 points. **Stuart Pigott, jamesuckling.com** January 2017*

2015 Georg Breuer Riesling Berg Schlossberg RRP \$149

MAGNUM RRP \$305

*In spite of its seriously exotic nose (passion fruit, tropical flowers), this dry Riesling from one of the Rheingau's greatest vineyard sites has great delicacy and poise. Very concentrated and pretty rich, but also still sleek with great finesse and a finish that is outrageously mineral. 4,000 bottles of this masterpiece were made. Spring 2017 release. 97 points. **Stuart Pigott, jamesuckling.com** December 2016*

2015 Georg Breuer Riesling Auslese 375ml RRP \$39

There are some years in which *botrytis cinerea* settles in various grapes in the Rheingau vineyards. This shrivels individual grapes producing concentrated sugar and aroma levels. Through stringent hand selection during harvest, individual grapes are separated. The complete healthy, ripe grapes are sorted out for the dry wines and the individual affected grapes go to elegant, sweet dessert wines such as this regional Riesling from Theresa Breuer.

[Back to headlines](#)

OPTIMAL OREGON

“In the wine world, it is easy to become inured to vintage hype, but in 2014 the enthusiasm is warranted,” writes **Josh Reynolds** of **Vinous Media** about Oregon. “Other than some rain early in the season that reduced fruit set in some vineyards, the growing season was pretty much a cakewalk, with hot, dry weather extending from July until the harvest. With the 2014s you’re going to taste winemakers’ Platonic Pinot Noirs—perfectly clear representations of their respective philosophies, albeit mostly emphatically fruit-driven wines from a warmer-than-average season.” With that in mind we’re happy to encourage you to get into a relationship that goes beyond the merely platonic with J. Christopher’s Willamette Valley Pinot Noir.

2014 J. Christopher Willamette Valley Pinot Noir RRP \$74

Forward, fruity and flavourful, this is a quite pretty compendium of raspberry and cherry fruit, accented with a touch of orange peel. As with J. Christopher’s pricier cuvées, it spent 18 months in one-quarter new French oak. Though labelled simply Willamette Valley, the fruit was sourced principally from the prestigious Dundee Hills AVA. 91 points. **Paul Gregutt**, *Wine Enthusiast* June 2017

[Back to headlines](#)



UHLEN THE GANG

Roth Lay is Heymann-Löwenstein’s top wine from the Uhlen grosse Lage (grand cru) in its home village of Winnigen, and it’s little wonder that the 2015 is so hotly anticipated. The wine comes with a couple of other GGs, with **Jancis Robinson**’s German specialist, **Michael Schmidt**, extolling the wow factor of one (Kirchberg) and declaring another - Röttgen - “one of the greats of a great vintage.”

This estate’s Riesling is always exhilarating, and it’s been in the form of its life in recent years. 2015 is one for the ages – don’t let it pass you by!

2015 Heymann-Löwenstein Riesling Schieferterrassen RRP \$58

MAGNUM RRP \$117

Quite honeyed, toasty, but still with that scintillating dart of searing acidity to keep you sweating on your forehead with the whoosh of freshness. It shows scents of rockmelon, ripe stone fruits, ripe apple, honey, toast. The palate is soft, spreads on its gentle gloss of honey on fruit character, and yeah, that acidity crackles beneath. Delicious, simply. 91 points. **Mike Bennie**, *The Wine Front* February 2017

2015 Heymann-Löwenstein Riesling Kirchberg RRP \$79

The fragrance is showing the acceptable face of spontaneous fermentation with vegetal aromas of elderflower and mint. First Riesling of the day and already the WOW factor! If there is such a thing as crunchy passion fruit, this is it, and rhubarb and sorrel lend a sappy green and invigorating edge. Lifted even more by an almost steely acidity. 18/20 *Michael Schmidt, jancisrobinson.com* August 2016

2015 Heymann-Löwenstein Riesling Röttgen RRP \$96

Subtle nuances of honey and lanolin reflect the ripeness of the fruit, the influence of spontaneous yeasts has been channelled into an exquisite herbal fragrance, a hint of violets adding a wonderful flowery touch. On the palate the Röttgen demonstrates fruit picked at the point of perfection with an excellent balance between sweet, juicy and mineral attributes. Full body, great substance and exhilarating freshness make the Röttgen one of the greats of a great vintage. 19/20 *Michael Schmidt, jancisrobinson.com* August 2016

2015 Heymann-Löwenstein Riesling Uhlen Roth Lay RRP \$140

MAGNUM RRP \$363

DOUBLE MAGNUM RRP \$561

An enticing nose of fennel pollen, coriander, white peach and kumquat sets the stage for a silken-textured, expansive palate at once lush and piquant. The piquant elements are woven glowingly into the long-lasting finish here so as to maximize invigoration while avoiding outright bitterness, while green herbal essences lend a cooling aura. Underlying wet stone acts as a Mosel signature, and subtle salinity serves for saliva-inducement. I last tasted this from both casks of it in September 2016, and have tried to do justice to a composite impression in a single tasting note. The wine was due to have been bottled in the spring of 2017. 93-94 points. *David Schildknecht, Vinous Media* June 2017

[Back to headlines](#)

ROLAND ON A ROLL

Burgenland might seem to inhabit a slightly far-flung corner of the CellarHand portfolio if it weren't for the fact that our three producers have put this very special corner of Austria on the contemporary wine map. They are, of course, Rosi Schuster, Pittnauer and Moric. Dive into the 2015s from this trio, and you'll immediately banish any thought that this is a niche interest. This month the focus is on Roland Velich of Moric, and a pair of eye-catching reviews on recently landed wines.

2015 Moric Hausmarke Super Natural RRP \$43

Pear, lime, radish and pepper, some fennel, slight sage and sizzled butter note. It's medium bodied, pear and spice, juicy peach too, and similar acidity, chalky texture and a slight bitterness on the finish. Like this. Very interesting. 91 points. *Gary Walsh, The Wine Front* June 2017

2015 Moric Blaufränkisch RRP \$43

MAGNUM RRP \$91

Wet earth and smoke, blueberry and ripe cherry, Dutch liquorice, plenty of spice too. Medium bodied, mineral water feel to the acidity (perhaps makes sense when/if you taste it, but work with me...), purple fruit like mulberry and boysenberry, a pleasing burr of fleshy tannin lending grip, dry and savoury to close, with that pippy kind of just-ripe berry acidity to kick it along. It's a wine with a pulse, and heaps of character. 93 points. *Gary Walsh, The Wine Front* June 2017

2013 Moric Reserve Blaufränkisch RRP \$80

Bramble fruit, juniper berry, liquorice and pepper, with maybe a slight sniff of caramel. Medium bodied, racy cranberry acidity and gravelly, silty tannin, with a good amount of depth and fleshiness, yet still carries the nerviness of this juicy and fascinating grape. Finish is precise and pretty long. Vibrant and charged with energy. 93 or 94 points, but who's counting? 94 points. *Gary Walsh, The Wine Front* April 2016

[Back to headlines](#)

HIPSTER HASSELBACH

Don't worry, we're not about to tell you that Gunderloch is the new grunge. It was **Jancis Robinson** who tongue-in-cheekily used the H-word in reference to Johannes Hasselbach's somewhat cool Als Wär's Ein Stück Von Mir Riesling. This is Johannes' "piece of me", where he hit an imaginary reset-button to look back how his grandparents made wine. The focus is on the grapes and he uses every part of it: up to 72 hours on fully crushed grapes; minimal clarification; natural yeast fermentation; long time on lees – at the same time being certain not to lose or alter anything (no artificial yeasts, fining or aromatisation of any kind). The 2015 comes from 100% healthy fruit comes from young vines in the top site Nackenheimer Rothenberg, blended with grapes from a parcel of 35-year-old vines from Hipping in Nierstein. The result is a tautly strung wine with extraordinary aromatic expression.

Joining this release we have the Pettenthal GG, magnums of the otherwise sold-out Rothenberg GG, plus some more of Gunderloch's supremely easy-going Jean Baptiste Kabinett.



2015 Gunderloch Jean-Baptiste Riesling Kabinett RRP \$32

Flinty and fresh on the nose, with a bright and stony fruit aroma, the 2015 Riesling Kabinett Jean Baptiste is light and filigreed, round and piquant, as well as refreshingly salty in the finish. A delicious Kabinett. 89 points. *Stephan Reinhardt, Wine Advocate* August 2016

2015 Gunderloch Als War's Ein Stück Von Mir Riesling RRP \$39

Johannes Hasselbach's 2015 Riesling trocken Als Wär's Ein Stück Von Mir was picked during the last ten days in September. Macerated for 24 hours and fermented 70% in stainless steel and 30% traditional oak vats, this is a very delicate and typical red slate Riesling. Subtle, fresh and mineral on the nose, this is a light to medium-bodied, round, intense and juicy wine. It is also piquant, fresh and salty with a very good, grippy finish. Drink between 2017 and 2021. 88 points. *Stephan Reinhardt, Wine Advocate* August 2016

2015 Gunderloch Pettenthal Riesling Grosses Gewächs RRP \$87

The 2015 Nierstein Pettenthal Riesling trocken GG opens like a serious terroir and food wine with a lovely, clear, fresh and smoky bouquet of crushed stones, white and yellow fruits and toasted pine nut aromas. Round and piquant on the palate, this juicy, elegant and well-balanced wine develops a very long and refreshingly mineral and salty finish; it has great finesse and lovely fruit aromas. Everything here is discreet but persistent. This is a delicious wine full off finesse and mineral tension. There are stone-licking

mineral flavors in the slate-like and grippy aftertaste. This is a gorgeous Pettenthal and probably one of the finest and most enjoyable ones. 93-94 points. *Stephan Reinhardt, Wine Advocate* August 2016

2015 Gunderloch Rothenberg Riesling Grosses Gewächs MAGNUM RRP \$280

Can the 2015 Nackenheim Rothenberg Riesling trocken GG top the excellent Nackenheim "1er Cru"? Wow, it can! This wine is very clear, precise and very deep on the stony and smoky—or rather flinty—nose. There are ripe stone fruit aromas that come along as more discreet and spicy, with crushed slate notes. On the palate, the minerals buffer the lively acidity and give an almost mealy, round and silky texture. This is a noble wine with a stimulatingly salty and vibrating finish. If you don't want to miss one of the greatest wines made from the red slope in 2015, then this is surely a wine to buy. 94-95 points. *Stephan Reinhardt, Wine Advocate* August 2016

[Back to headlines](#)



TEARING THROUGH TISSIER

Are the classics making a comeback? A few things have got us wondering, such as the gently rising popularity of Cabernet and the return to favour of flavour in Australian Chardonnay. The fact that our pool of 2015 Roland Tossier Sancerre was drained in less than five months might point towards the same thing. This wine was always very good – pure and steeped in what the pretentious call *typicité* – and whether it's a universal trend or something specific, it's certainly striking a broad, resounding chord.

2016 Roland Tossier Sancerre RRP \$43

A little bit of hedgerow is the only herbaceous note on a restrained and pure nose that is mostly fruit and mineral: a bit of green apple and lemon, gooseberry with that typical impression of wet stone and a sense of roundedness (creamy lees). Dry and restrained as it goes in, too – a sense of firmness to the fruit, with good intensity of flavour and it has nice contours without being sharp at all (again, perhaps lees-induced softening). Lime, apple and blackcurrant on the palate, which has clear hints of flint and smoke; highly typical in that regard. A little chalky phenolic bite on the finish and a pleasant hint of leaf there, with mouthwatering – but not harsh – citrusy acidity. Very pure, pretty good length. – *Ed Merrison, CellarHand*

[Back to headlines](#)

PANNOBILE PARAGON

OK, there was an element of fake news in that bit where we said Moric was going to hog the Burgenland limelight this month. This wine – and a very fair evocation of it – had to rate a mention. Blaufränkisch, Zweigelt and Sankt Laurent... good old Gerhard's done it again.

2014 Pittnauer Pannobile RRP \$64

Raspberry and dark cherry, sweet brown spices, dried flowers and herbs, but quite savoury too with something like a porcini mushroom flavour. Medium bodied, but plump and fleshy, with a mass of fine tannin and crisp 'mineral' acidity, and a finish that's dry, spicy and quite long. Engaging. Wonderful to drink. 93 points. *Gary Walsh, The Wine Front* June 2017