



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

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SIGN UP

RIESLING DOWNUNDER

The program for Riesling Downunder is coming together beautifully, with a raft of ways to celebrate the great grape between **Friday, 2nd February** and **Wednesday, 7th February 2018**.



Great Southern great *Frankland Estate* is once again spearheading proceedings, while European producers coming out to take part include *Dönnhoff, Heymann-Löwenstein, Georg Breuer, A. Christmann, Wittmann, Dr Loosen, Gunderloch* and *Bründlmayer*.

Riesling Riot is the major tasting taking place in Melbourne and Sydney, while a tantalising masterclass program in Melbourne features sessions on site & style, trials & traditions and the global relevance of Riesling – as well as the big international dry tasting showcasing the finest vineyards of the world's best estates.

Click [here](#) to view the full Riesling Downunder program, and to get your early-bird tickets to Riesling Riot.

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PROST, AUSTRIA!

If it's got Austria in the title, we want to be in the picture. We hope you do, too, because you're invited to come and taste the most comprehensive Austrian wine line-up of the year. The Austrian National Tourist Office in Australia, the Austrian Wine Marketing Board and Winestate warmly invite you to an Austrian National Day Reception at the **Sofitel Melbourne on Collins** from **6pm to 9pm on Wednesday, 25th October**. This will be a chance to taste a broad range of wines that were submitted for Winestate's Wines of Austria panel tasting, including leading lights such as F.X. Pichler, Bründlmayer and Rosi Schuster. In addition, CellarHand will have our own table with wines by Groiss, Pittnauer, Stadt Krems, Emmerich Knoll and Domäne Wachau. Posh canapés and a competition to win Thai Airways flights to Vienna round out the program.



Registrations are essential and places limited – so please sign up today by clicking [here](#).

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COMPILATIONS



SPARKLING SEASON

Blame it on climate change, or whatever, but we called it weeks ago: Sparkling season is here! Once again it's time to peel the foil, loosen the muselet and pop the cork on our complete range of sparkling wines. There's something to suit any budget or occasion. But then let's face it, who needs an excuse? Here's but a snapshot of what we have for you. Please contact your account manager for the full offer.

NV Airlie Bank Cuvée Sparkling Yarra Valley RRP \$21

The non-vintage Airlie Bank sparkling is a blend of 90% Chardonnay and 10% Pinot Noir, sourced from within the Yarra

Valley and produced by Tim Shand and the team at Punt Road. Fresh and vibrant with a focused palate structure of apple blossom and citrus characters with complex brioche notes.

2010 Huia Blanc de Blancs Marlborough, NZ RRP \$41

100% biodynamic, estate-grown traditional-method Chardonnay sparkler from Marlborough's excellent 2010 vintage. Super-fine bead, fresh citrus and lovely fresh baked bread characters. Light citrus and peach fruit retain freshness on the palate. This wine has a creamy fresh dry finish.

NV Stefano Lubiana Sparkling Brut Tasmania RRP \$43

Stefano Lubiana's ever-brilliant bubbles is fresh from winning gold at the **2017 Decanter Asia Wine Awards**. This traditional-method fizz is a 50:50 blend of Chardonnay and Pinot Noir. It's fruit-pure, intense, rich, creamy and complex.

NV Dominique Piron Crémant de Bourgogne RRP \$35

Crémant de Bourgogne can be a great buy when you find something well made that taps into the impeccable Chardonnay potential of the region. This 100% Chardonnay from clay and limestone soils in the village of Corcelles does just that. Round, energetic and delicious.

NV Dr Loosen Riesling Sekt RRP \$39

This Dr. L Sparkling is 100% pure Riesling from the king of the Mosel; a racy little winner.

Jacquesson Cuvée No. 740 RRP \$115

It's a marriage of toasty-richness and bristling freshness here. Compact in the palate with undertones of brioche, marzipan, ginger biscuit, with a coursing vein of green apple, tangy fruit character and lively oyster-shell-like minerality. The bouquet is attractive, a mesh of patisserie, honey and apple/citrus character. It pulses through the mouth with refreshment factor and light, palate sticking fruit-yeast sweetness. It's gulpable and yet fine. It's stunning stuff. 94 points. **Mike Bennie, The Wine Front July 2017**

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ROSÉ RUNDOWN



We just can't help it, can we? A Pavlovian reflex and a guilty pleasure. The second those first few rays of springtime sun creep through, we get that urge to drink pink.

We've put together a comprehensive compendium of all things rosé. This is but a glimpse of what we have for you. Please contact your account manager for the full offer.

2016 Pittnauer Pitt Nat Burgenland RRP \$48

After Gerhard Pittnauer's very successful pétillant naturel experience with the 2015 vintage, he decided to go on with the idea of a natural sparkling wine in 2016. This uber-vibrant rosé comes from parcels with red wine grapes in conversion to

biodynamic viticulture, mainly Syrah and Merlot.

2016 Pierre Amadiu 'Roulepiere' Rosé Côtes-du-Rhône RRP \$37

The Roulepiere wines of Pierre Amadiu are always rock-solid regional expressions that are approachable and refreshing, as well as carrying the regional hallmarks of the southern Rhône. Now under screwcap, this blend of Grenache and Cinsault shows floral, raspberry and redcurrant notes alongside a clutch of dried herbs and dash of spice.

2016 Farr Rising Saignée Geelong RRP \$32

Multiple pinot noir clones, hand-picked, pressed, wild-fermented in used French oak, matured for 10 months. Salmon-pink; has the mouthfeel of pinot noir table wine - it's more than a rose. Rose petal, cherry blossom and spice aromas lead into a supple, long palate raising the bar on its complex web of spices. The magic lies in the retention of pinot varietal fruit. One of the best rosés going around, year in, year out. 95 points. **James Halliday, Halliday Wine Companion 2018**

2016 S.C. Pannell Rosé Nebbiolo Adelaide Hills RRP \$35

A beautifully focused and textured rosé of delightfully pale salmon hue, elegant rose hip and violet aromas and understated wild strawberry fruit. It is bone dry and savoury, nuanced with understated tamarillo fruit. The real secret here is its texture, masterfully fine and beautifully refined, with tannin, acid and phenolics melding seamlessly into one on a very long finish, never bitter nor coarse. Masterful. 94 points. **Tyson Stelzer, Australian & New Zealand Wines of the Year 2017**

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DOMESTIC

TOP FLIGHT FARRS

First it was dad, now it's mum's turn to be honoured with a new top-tier wine from Nick Farr. These two additions, both grown on the close-planted Côte vineyard, join Tout Près to complete a holy trinity at the very top of the Farr tree.

The GC Chardonnay, named for Gary Charles Farr, received its first release from the 2015 vintage. It didn't hang around for long, and you'd understand why if you tasted the wine that **Campbell Mattinson** hailed "a Chardonnay of presence if ever there was one". "It's rock solid from start to finish but the boom of flavour as you swallow is quite something else," he went on. "It makes no sense but it's both coiled and booming at once." Indeed, it makes no sense - but the Farr family and their wines follow their own logic and set their own soaring standards.

Alongside the second release of GC, we have the debut of the RP Pinot Noir by Farr. The initials stand for Robyn Pamela, in recognition of the matriarch. "It's not only the support and gofering that Robyn has endured for Gary's 40-year career. She's been in the vineyard and planted the first vines, driven the tractors, filled barrels and pigeaged at midnight," says Nick. "If we are ever a man down Robyn has always been the first one we've called to fill the void no matter the job, no matter the time of day. You can always count on mum." A new Farr release is always momentous. It's especially exciting to have another real occasion to announce. These three wines set the bar even higher for a truly great Australian estate.

The wines are released at the start of November.

2016 GC Chardonnay by Farr RRP \$115

This and the new RP Pinot comes from the Côte Vineyard. The family's been playing with the fruit from this meticulously planned, planted and farmed site for more than eight years, waiting for things to come together perfectly. It's a close-planted parcel on an exposed slope, with hillsides facing north, northeast



and east. The vineyard will be the backbone of the Farr dynasty for decades to come. It comprises the most suitable clones, rootstocks, trellising and management you'll find for the Farr's landscape. The fruit is hand-picked then whole-bunch pressed in the winery. All the solids are collected and chilled before being put to barrel (35% new French oak). A natural fermentation will occur at cool temperatures over the next one to two months, and then a small amount of stirring helps start malolactic fermentation. The wine is then racked, fined and lightly filtered before bottling 11 months after picking. A complete Chardonnay. - **Nick Farr**

2015 RP Pinot Noir by Farr RRP \$115

The fruit is handpicked 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. We use only natural yeast for the fermentation process, which takes roughly 19 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's racked by gas after secondary fermentation, then again at 18 months to be bottled. - **Nick Farr**

2015 Tout Près Pinot Noir by Farr RRP \$115

Only a touch over 2.5 acres, the Tout Près site has three individual soil types across a three-sided cirque (an amphitheatre-like valley head) that rises above the other vineyards. Each slope consists of its own soil type. The clones that will acclimatise and mutate over time to become the Tout Près clone are currently 113, 114, 115, 667, 777 and MV6. At 7,300 vines per hectare, Tout Près is the estate's original close-planted vineyard. The fruit is fermented with 100% whole bunches in a five-tonne oak fermenter. The wine has the flavour profile and intensity to absorb 100% new Allier French barrels.

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EAGERLY AWAITED EGANS

It was a bumper crop, 2016 at Wantirna Estate. Yep, eight whole barriques of Chardonnay. This place is as up-close and personal as wine-growing gets, ten tranquil acres arrayed across the garden, grape press on the patio, Reg Egan up at night to plunge the Pinot, and daughter Maryann chivvying the “uni-student” third-generation to do the grunt work. (At least they got a nice wine named after them). The wines are rare but not haughty or aloof in the slightest. They make no grandiose claims at all, actually. They just are – and happen to be beautiful with it.

The release is split, as is traditional, between two harvests: 2016 for the Burgundy varieties, 2015 for the Bordeaux blends. An impeccable quartet, as always, from one of the nicest families you could wish to meet.

The wines are released at the start of November.

2016 Wantirna Estate Isabella Chardonnay RRP \$82

The warm 2015 spring had the vines flowering in late October, ensuring that vintage 2016 started on 19th February – pretty early! But the summer had been kind and devoid of any long-lasting heat spikes,

so the Chardonnay fruit was in terrific condition, and even a tiny bit more plentiful than the previous couple of years.

At the CellarHand annual trade day we showed this wine and were asked many times about the winemaking. The most common question was how we'd retained the beautiful fruit but still had some lovely mid palate weight? I'd say mostly that the wine is a reflection of the vineyard as our treatment of the grapes is light-handed. The whole bunches are picked by hand then destemmed straight to the airbag press. After settling the juice off the heaviest of lees, the wine begins fermentation in tank before being transferred to barrel for the majority of the fermentation process. About 25% new French oak is used, the rest a mixture of older barrels. The wine then ages on the lees, but without stirring. The 2016 had 25% malolactic fermentation, an amount that varies each year depending on the naturally occurring malic acid levels. True to our style, the 2016 Isabella is already drinking well, but will certainly age gracefully. - **Maryann Egan**

2016 Wantirna Estate Lily Pinot Noir RRP \$82

On our small 10 acres we have three blocks of Pinot Noir. Each gives us different flavours and composition – one block is fruity; the old original block gives us tannin and structure and the front block develops a spicy character.

In 2016 we decided to try to get just a little more mid-palate weight to the Lily. Not to make a bigger wine, rather a wine with a touch more complexity. So instead of pressing the wine off its skins straight after ferment, we wrapped up the small concrete open fermenter for a few days. We felt that this extended skin maceration would bridge that little gap from the fruit-filled mid-palate to the dry, powdery-tannin finish. Again it's a small fiddle but one that we are really excited by. The resulting barrel and a half has given the final blend something a little more, and as it's but a small component the wine hasn't strayed from the Wantirna Estate style.

Other than this variation we've kept the winemaking as per normal - open-tank fermentation, hand-plunging with some pumpovers, followed by 10 months ageing in the cool, semi-underground cellar, with just one racking before bottling. - **Maryann Egan**

2015 Wantirna Estate Amelia Cabernet/Merlot RRP \$82

2015 has been lauded as one of the top vintages in the Yarra Valley this decade – however, it's fair to say that really we have had a string of terrific vintages and we may have heard 'vintage of the decade' being thrown liberally around.

But while 2015 was earlier than usual, it was a mild summer so the grapes still ripened at their normal rate, without any damage from excessive heat. Merlot was harvested on 10th March and we began the Cabernet on 17th March. Vintage was finished with the Petit Verdot on 23rd March. Even in the "new normal" of earlier harvest dates, this was surprising.

Flicking back through the notes in our analysis book there are little scribblings from Reg as to the fantastic aromas that filled the fermentation area every morning. The fruit was just so fragrant yet still with that savoury character that keeps the wine from being simply fruity.

And every year the composition of the Amelia blend is a little different. The 2015 saw a pretty even proportion of the Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot / Cabernet Franc grapes – around 45% each. Making up the balance is the Petit Verdot, which we really do love. It is fruity yet tannic, with quite a power of flavour. It also tends to ferment a little slower, rarely needing any refrigeration to help control the temperature. Mostly it takes at least five days longer to finish fermenting than the other red varieties so we see some of that lovely extended skin contact character, giving the silky fine tannins. I often think we

could make a single-variety wine from the Petit Verdot but then we would rob the Amelia blend too much! The 2015 is perhaps one of our best Amelias... - **Maryann Egan**

2015 Wantirna Estate Hannah Merlot /Cabernet Franc RRP \$145

As mentioned, the 2015 was rather a gorgeous vintage. The Hannah shows more fruit than the Amelia Cabernet Merlot as we bottle this wine after just 12 months in barrel, specifically to capture this brightness of fruit. The Hannah ages beautifully and a tasting of these wines recently showed the early 2000s looking really lovely. - **Maryann Egan**

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DOTT. DASH

The Chalmers themselves have help transform the Aussie wine landscape with their tireless championing of *multiviculturalism*. Here's something new and historic at once, paying tribute to another key figure of our vinous enlightenment. Handmade by Chalmers from estate-grown fruit, Dott. is inspired by the late Dr. Rod Bonfiglioli, a passionate, eccentric scientist whose dogged determination and visionary foresight brought so much colour, interest and integrity to Australian wine. He sought out these rare grapes for the Chalmers collection, seeing their promise long before the family did, and for that we must all be grateful.

Through years of open-minded experimentation, the Chalmers family has learned that sometimes translating a grapevine to a new environment can give surprising and beautiful results, often producing a wine which is truly unique from its ancestors in Europe yet still achieving quality and authenticity.

Here's a new expression, a truly Australian wine which speaks of its own place and time.

Dr. Rod would have said if you do the research diligently and analyse the results objectively, you can ignore the rule book and forge new ground.



2017 Dott. Malvasia Istriana 500ml RRP \$30

MAGNUM RRP \$93

The 2017 Malvasia Istriana is golden straw coloured and has delicate spiced apple, lemon and hay aromas with a crisp, mineral palate of fresh red apple, fine structure and pleasant acidity. - **Kim Chalmers**

2017 Dott. Pavana 500ml RRP \$30

MAGNUM RRP \$93

The garnet coloured 2017 Pavana has intense fragrance of fresh wild raspberry and Darjeeling tea leaves with a light, vibrant palate of rhubarb, rosehip and geranium with subtle tannin structure around a long acid line. - **Kim Chalmers**

2017 Dott. Schioppettino 500ml RRP \$30

MAGNUM RRP \$93

The 2017 Schioppettino is bursting with white pepper and Dutch speculaas spice aromas with a hint of

jasmine and woody notes. The medium-bodied palate reiterates the anise, cinnamon and cardamom spices with cedar oil and Davidson plum flavours supporting. – Kim Chalmers

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TT TIME

It's a wine deserving of that "modern Aussie classic" tag, the kind of drink that really highlights Stephen Pannell's knack of delivering an apt liquid response to both our wine-growing conditions and dining culture. The 2016 S.C. Pannell Tempranillo Touriga contains about a third Touriga Nacional, and for the first time includes a hefty contribution from Tinta Cão, lending backbone and edgy tannin. It's ready to go now, and is joined by another innovative blend. Amuse is an unconventional ménage-à-trois between Sauvignon Blanc, Grüner Veltliner and Chardonnay, a textured, fresh and original with-or-without-food white for drinking as soon as you get your hands on it.

2017 S.C. Pannell 'Amuse' Sauvignon Blanc, Grüner Veltliner, Chardonnay RRP \$31

The first vintage of a unique and amusing dry white blend that hints at a possible future for Sauvignon Blanc. A reasonably high proportion of Sauvignon Blanc (58%) from Carrey Gully in the Adelaide Hills married with 34% Grüner Veltliner from Lenswood and 8% Chardonnay (60% of which was barrel-fermented) from the Piccadilly Valley. It shows grapefruit, lime and white peach with a hint of roasted



nuts and pastry crumbs, finishing with definite white pepper spice. Medium-bodied and mouth-filling with a long, dry finish. Blending is all about creating a sum of the parts; in this case, the Sauvignon Blanc on entry, Grüner Veltliner taking over mid palate and Chardonnay wrapping up the finish. Four grams of residual sugar completes the picture, adding length and enhancing the spice. - Stephen Pannell

2016 S.C. Pannell Tempranillo Touriga RRP \$31

57% Tempranillo, 29% Touriga Nacional, 14% Tinta Cão. Hand-harvested, crushed, and traditionally vinified in small open-top fermenters. Seven months in 500-litre mature French oak puncheons with 20% in new oak. The nose shows abundant Tempranillo black fruits, cherry, fruit bread

& red liquorice, overlaid with Touriga Nacional's pungent fruit, jasmine-scented floral and nutmeg/cinnamon spices. The intense and tightly intertwined flavours of this rich and flavoursome wine are primarily of fresh blackberries and panforte, with a complex spice profile including clove, nutmeg and cinnamon. - Stephen Pannell

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NOCTURNE KNOCKING

Julian and Alana Langworthy are immensely excited about their recently acquired Sheoak Vineyard in Margaret River's Yallingup subregion. This same site was responsible for the fabulous inaugural release under the Nocturne label, from the 2015 harvest.

You could say Julian's got a knack with Cabernet, given that he's the current **Jimmy Watson**

Trophy holder and is the man behind **James Halliday's** Cabernet Sauvignon of the Year. Here's another potent reminder that Langworthys, Yallingup and Cabernet are very fine blending partners.

2016 Nocturne Cabernet Sauvignon RRP \$43

The fruit was picked relatively early on 23th March, preserving some delicacy and bouncy, red-fruit flavours. This fruit was destemmed and fermented in 4.5-tonne static fermenters. After 15 days on skins and a peak ferment temperature of around 26 degrees Celsius, the wine was pressed to tank and settled briefly, before being transferred to a combination of new (25%) and two-year-old barrels to undergo

malolactic conversion. This wine was racked only once in this time and, after 15 months in oak, was emptied from barrel, settled, clarified and bottled unfiltered. The Sheoak vineyard makes expressive, medium-bodied Cabernets that bear some semblance to a modern version of luncheon claret. We are very happy new owners of this vineyard, which will be the beating heart of the Nocturne project. - Julian Langworthy



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THE BIG PINK

There are few sights in the wine world more footless and fancy free than a giant bottle of rosé. That's why these 1.5-litre monuments to pure pink pleasure merit their own news item this month. It's the Chalmers sisters and husband-and-wife Nocturne team who've come to the party in a big way. How can you resist?

2017 Chalmers Rosato MAGNUM RRP \$57

750ml RRP \$27

In 2017 the Chalmers family once again sourced the grapes for their rosato from the highest-altitude, most-prized block at their Heathcote site. For the first time, though, all three of the varieties planted there made it into this unique blend. Aglianico (63%), Sagrantino (33%) and Nero d'Avola (4%) were hand-picked, whole bunch-pressed, and vinified separately. The Nero and Sagrantino parcels were fermented in stainless steel tank, the Aglianico in old French barriques. All parcels were wild fermented with no acid additions, and blended together once dry. The wine has a delightful pale pink hue, with pretty aromas of cassia, cranberry and pomegranate. The palate is dry and textural, with balanced acidity carrying the ripe pink grapefruit, red berries and spice to a sleek and satisfying finish.

2017 Nocturne Nebbiolo Rosé MAGNUM RRP \$71

750ml RRP \$35

2017 was a great season for our barrel-fermented rosé. Light, fine flavours became present in the fruit at nice low sugar levels, allowing expressive generous wines that are nicely in check with regards to alcohol. The fruit comes from a single site, the Lentondelle Vineyard in the Carbanup sub-region of Margaret River. It's a flat, warm site with fertile, red sandy soils. The grapes were hand harvested on 3rd April. After chilling, the fruit was whole bunch-pressed directly to old oak for fermentation. The juice was fractionated into free-run and pressings but ultimately all of the fractions were used in the final blend. Fermentation was wild and no additions were made to this wine at all. After 10 weeks in oak un-

sulphured on gross lees, the wine was emptied from barrel, settled, filtered, sulphured and bottled. We're extremely happy with the resulting wine. The texture and phenolic structure are highlights in what is a very fine and subtle rosé which continues to push the boundary of high-end rosé production. That said, drink it on a boat wearing white.... It's a pale salmon dream. – Julian Langworthy

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AFFAIRS OF THE HEARTLAND

Seems so bloody obvious that the mere act of writing it seems superfluous. Love is, of course, love and we're voting a resounding "YES!" for marriage equality in Australia.

Props to our friends in Langhorne Creek, too. It's two years now since Heartland took the step of donating \$1 to the campaign for marriage equality for every bottle sold of their Dolcetto Lagrein blend. Fast forward and we have what should be a non-issue in a fair society coming to a head. Heartland's highly individual blend has been rechristened Sposa e Sposa,

but still with the same message, same pledge and, yeah, same great taste. Vote yes!

2014 Heartland Sposa e Sposa RRP \$22

"Under Italian DOC rules, it is not possible for grapes from different regions to marry," reads the back label. This is a blend of Lagrein and Dolcetto, which would never be allowed in Italy. A dollar from every bottle goes to support the campaign for marriage equality. This is quite the marriage - blackberry and plum aromas are supported by oak and spice. 90 points. Ben Thomas, The Weekly Review May 2017

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MONTEVECCHIO MAKEOVER

Those super slurpable bistro blends from Chalmers have got a new look, just in time for spring. Montevécchio, the range that takes in a rosso, bianco and rosé blend in addition to a varietal Moscato, is looking fresh and vibrant. Fitting, really, as this is what the wines deliver, at a price and with a lightness of touch that makes them an everyday go-to. We've just rolled vintage onto the 2017 Rosso and Rosato, while the white and the sweetie are on track to roll vintage around Christmas.

2017 Montevécchio Rosato RRP \$24

A blend of Lambrusco Maestri (77%) and Lagrein (23%), the 2017 Montevécchio Rosato is a plush wine with aromatic spice and flavours of orange rind, pomegranate and rosehip. – Kim Chalmers



2017 Montevercchio Rosso RRP \$24

A field blend of Lagrein (47%), Nero d'Avola (25%), Sagrantino (15%), Schioppettino (9%) and Refosco (4%). This is a vibrant, mid-weight red with aromas and flavours of cherry, forest fruits and white pepper. Just 12% alcohol and bloody delicious. – **Kim Chalmers**

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IMPORTS

HATS OFF, HATTINGLEY

Hearty congratulations to our chums in Hampshire, who've once more been crowned world champions for their sparkling wine. Emma Rice and Jacob Leadley, winemakers of Hattingley Valley, declared themselves "over the moon" to pick up the trophy for best Blanc de Blancs at the **Champagne & Sparkling Wine World Championships** in London a few months back. It's the second time the estate has been named world champion after winning the best sparkling rosé award a couple of years back. Competition founder **Tom Stevenson** – one of the world's leading authorities on bubbles – tweeted: "A truly distinctive, extraordinarily classy blanc de blancs. Well done Hatters!" The wine in question was the 2011 Hattingley Valley Blanc de Blancs en magnum. Bad news is that we sold out of the standard bottling of this earlier this year. Good news is that there's still a chance to share the justified joy behind the hype. Here's how:



2013 Hattingley Valley Classic Cuvée RRP \$80

48% Chardonnay, 33% Pinot Noir, 17% Pinot Meunier, 2% Pinot Gris. 25% barrel fermented in four-year-old white burgundy barrels, 21 months on lees. Acidity 8.3g/L. Fruity, apples and peaches nose. Fruity, frothy, friendly. Straightforward and a good, tight, pointed finish. Bit of chalkiness. 16.5/20 **Tamlyn Currin**, jancisrobinson.com

2013 Hattingley Valley Rosé RRP \$90

Pinot Noir 59%, Pinot Meunier 36%, Pinot Précoce 5%. Acidity 10.6g/L and residual sugar 9g/L. This wine has some bite, in the best possible sense. Acidity is ultra perky, it's all red apple and white strawberry in the palate with a toothsome chomp that sits amongst the vibrant fizz of the wine. Fragrance is on point; red berries, vanilla, smoke. The wine is powerful, racy and very refreshing. The finish is so good – like a sip of fresh grapefruit juice. Those who like labels would call it 'an excellent aperitif style'. And it is. 94+ points. **Mike Bennie**, *The Wine Front* December 2016

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DRY & TO DIE FOR

It's often the top single-vineyard bottlings that hog the headlines in stellar vintages. Naturally enough, too – it's hard not to gaze at the stars that burn brightest. But the great thing about an exceptional harvest is how evenly the bounty is shared out, with regional and village wines getting

a real chance to shine. Such is the case with Germany 2015 – a vintage Ernst Loosen described as “balm to the winemaker’s soul”.

Here’s a chance for everyone to smother themselves in that balm, with this little selection of dry Rieslings for everyday enjoyment.

2015 Villa Wolf Wachenheimer Riesling RRP \$28

Typically exuberant and exotic aromas for this part of Pfalz jump out of the glass. Tangerine zest, white peach flesh and white-pepper spice bound through a juicy palate which has that distinctly regional bath salt dimension. The wine is fleshy and just rich enough before the acid line darts through the succulent finish. Sam Hooper, CellarHand



2015 Georg Breuer Rudesheim Riesling RRP \$39

Lime and ripe peach on the nose anticipate the juicy abundance of fruit on a clear, polished palate, set off by stony and alkaline undertones. The finish is bright and tangy, with mouthwatering salinity and delightful buoyancy. 90 points. David Schildknecht, Vinous Media September 2017

2015 Dönnhoff Estate Riesling RRP \$40

From volcanic soils the 2015 (Estate) Riesling Trocken is lovely, pure, refined and mineral on the nose, displaying ripe white fruit aromas and crushed stone flavors. On the palate, this is a tension-filled, lovely, juicy and intense Riesling of great elegance, lightness and finesse. “This is a typical Riesling from this part of the Nahe valley and it’s far too good for an Estate Riesling,” says Helmut Dönnhoff. The grapes are from south/southeast-facing vineyards (Oberhausen, Felsenberg and Kieselberg) and ripen later, sometimes they are picked pretty late - about in the middle of the main harvest. But there are parts that are picked in the very end. This is a gorgeous Riesling and the best Estate Riesling I have ever tasted here. 90 points. Stephan Reinhardt, Wine Advocate December 2016

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BLAU FOR NOW

We raved a bit about 2015 in Burgenland – justifiably, too, as it produced fabulous reds. You seemed to agree, judging by the hasty disappearance of the likes of Rosi Schuster’s Rotburger and Moric’s Blaufränkisch. Gerhard Pittnauer’s Blaufränkisch serves as a curtain-raiser for the 2016 reds in this part of Austria, and what a rousing introduction it is! Not a big wine by any measure, but a real charmer in the way of the best Beaujolais. Fresh, sleek and beautifully balanced, it’s a lovely wine to spend time with, allowing layers of flowers, fruit and spice to infuse your soul.

2016 Pittnauer Blaufränkisch RRP \$32

Blaufränkisch from vineyards in the village of Heideboden in Burgenland, Austria. Wild yeast fermented and matured for 12 months in used



barriques. Pale purple in colour. Evocations somewhere between serious cru Beaujolais and northern Rhône on the nose. Violets, firm red cherry, maraschino and earth. On the palate there's fresh, firm-fleshed but not particularly sweet fruit. It's medium-bodied and juicy at its heart, with definite tannin presence and bright acids giving shape and drive. Again, there's firm cherry and plum, with white and black pepper notes plus cinnamon. It lingers really nicely with a real sense of cohesion between fruit, acidity and fine, dusty tannin. Taut and fine-tuned, this spreads long across the palate and feels like it will open beautifully in the glass. - **Ed Merrison, CellarHand**

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