



Welcome to the CellarHand newsletter for March 2018. Here's a little taste of what's going on this month...

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DOMESTIC

WILYABRUP WONDER WOMAN



“Vanya’s contribution to the evolution of wine at Cullen is detail, and a push to unite still further the wine with the land on which it’s grown.” So wrote **Victoria Moore** of London’s **Daily Telegraph** in her recent article entitled *The soul of Western Australia in a cosmic Cabernet*. Moving onto a new release of her Vanya and Diana Madeline, the point is as apt as ever. These wines as expression of the Cullen vineyard encapsulate that quest for greatness that is embarked upon by grower and drinker alike: the interwoven threads of time, place and person that result in a unique, irreplicable and fascinating tapestry.

The other point here is that Vanya’s contribution is itself evolving, so that every season is an unmissable sequel. To speak of classics – and the combination of Cullen, Wilyabrup and Bordeaux grapes is as pure a classic as you’ll find – is to conjure up too fixed an image. This relationship is too fluid, too dynamic, to be summed up that way. As Victoria Moore has it: “Cullen wines have something. An elegant classicism, yes, but also soul.”

In that same piece, Vanya herself conveys the notion of a cycle that still allows for the marvellous

mystique of the denouement. “It’s such a beautiful thing: giving to the land and then at the harvest you get back.” Both 2015 and ‘16 in Margaret River were years where Mother Nature repaid the gracious grower in full. And now, after a little time to mellow, fill out and fill in that detail, it’s time for you to reap what this nature-loving wonder woman of Wilyabrup has sown.

2016 Cullen Diana Madeline RRP \$140

Very deep, bright purple/red colour leads into a sweetly ripe, rich berry and violet bouquet which is fruit-driven, vibrant and fresh. Blueberries and herbs. Wonderfully elegant and piercingly intense. An outstanding wine. 97 points. Huon Hooke, The Real Review November 2017

2015 Cullen Vanya Cabernet Sauvignon RRP \$550

The colour is not very dark but is a very bright and deep purple/red. The bouquet speaks of violets and mixed berries; oak is barely evident. The tannins are very fine and the wine is subtle, elegant, and beautifully balanced. Wonderful cedary complexity. Elegance personified. It’s all about the purity of the fruit. A beautiful wine. 98 points. Huon Hooke, The Real Review

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MODERN MARVEL

“Open a bottle of Stephen Pannell’s wine and you will enjoy it. No, you will probably love it.” So wrote **Ray Jordan** of **The West Australian** in his recent column about this treasure of the Aussie wine scene. Jordan sees the uniting principle of Steve’s range as this: “They are all immensely drinkable”. We couldn’t agree more.

Our man in McLaren Vale is, of course, extremely clear when it comes to his vision for his vines and land, and how they should translate to a heightened enjoyment of life. It’s one thing to see it, another to do it - year in, year out. And so we raise a glass to Steve. You should, too; you’ll probably love it.



2017 S.C. Pannell Pinot Grigio RRP \$28

If you think Pinot Grigio is thin and flavourless, then this beaut little Adelaide Hills offering will change your mind. Fresh and delicate yet with texture and lovely lemon, apple and pear characters. Lip-smacking flavoursome finish. 92 points. Ray Jordan, The West Australian

2017 S.C. Pannell Basso Garnacha RRP \$28

This is Pannell’s take on a modern Grenache, which is sourced from McLaren Vale. It’s designed as an early release and has no filtration at bottling. It’s a beautifully seductive expression of Grenache, with perfumes on the nose and succulent medium-bodied fruit right on the palate. So, so good for current drinking. 93 points. Ray Jordan, The West Australian

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

Wow, this is a serious statement of a blend that Pannell has developed quite a following for. The varieties are native to Spain and work so well in McLaren Vale and Barossa’s warm climes. Has rich plum and red fruit characters, with firmish tannins and savoury chalkiness. Lovely medium weight and a dry savoury finish that is ideal for so many red meats or cheeses. 93 points. Ray Jordan, The West Australian

2016 S.C. Pannell 'The Vale' RRP \$39

This is a blend of Shiraz and Grenache from McLaren Vale. It's smooth and medium-bodied, with Grenache dominant. The lifted perfumes of rose petal and spicy plum are alluring. The palate is seamlessly structured, with smooth tannin integration and subtle oak - the result of the use of a very big 5000L French oak vat. Super stuff. 95 points. Ray Jordan, The West Australian

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OVER-ACHIEVER WEAVER

You can't help but love **James Halliday's** tasting note for the 2015 version of Geoff Weaver's Sauvignon Blanc from the Adelaide Hills pioneer's Lenswood vineyard. It's not a note that evokes savvy, so much as this particular, cream-of-the-crop example. Halliday sees in the wine all the tropical fruits you could wish for. "Even a Dutch master couldn't display them on a single canvas". It's an image of infinite colour and precise detail, like the wine itself. "Despite this embarrassment of riches, the palate finishes fresh and crisp", Halliday adds. Not a still life, but a picture of pure vitality.

If you find it hard to recall the scintillating pleasure of drinking the best Sauvignon Blanc, this'll do far more than jog your memory; it'll jolt you back to life.



The 2016 rendition is out now, and it's another masterpiece. Finesse, pristine fruit and magnificent length. Bravo!

2016 Geoff Weaver Sauvignon Blanc RRP \$29

The grapes are crushed, destemmed and gently air bag pressed. The juice is clear settled and cold fermented to dryness. The approach is to retain the fresh aromatics of the fruit and not to generate any harsh extractives which produce coarseness on the palate. Lifted aroma of pear, cut grass and hints of flowers. Fresh, fragrant and complex. Nothing heavy or vegetal. Fresh fruit with a lively, juicy

richness on the palate and a lingering, fresh acid edge to the finish. Full, long and delicate. It's a lively, tightly structured wine but with a generous, supple mid palate and a fine, long, savoury finish. - Geoff Weaver

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EFFORTLESS CHALMERS

It's like a one-stop shop to get you through the week. Or day: lunch, mid-afternoon, dinner. Three wines – a white, rosé and red – one price, one mission: to refresh. The Vermentino, Rosato and Nero from Kim and Tennille Chalmers have skipped along merrily to the 2017 vintage. A truly compelling trio, in any language.

2017 Chalmers Vermentino RRP \$27

A top Australian vermentino from Chalmers. Pure and perfect aromatics in the scented pear and citrus sphere. The palate is deliciously crunchy with green apple and lemon flavours. I adore the flavour, texture, length and slightly chalky frame. 93 points. Toni Paterson MW, The Real Review

2017 Chalmers Rosato RRP \$27

Whole-bunch pressed (no saignee), wild yeast, 63% aglianico fermented in barrel, 33% sagrantino and 4% nero d'Avola co-fermented in stainless steel. The whole bunch pressing is reflected by the very pale pink colour, the barrel fermentation by the spicy overtones to the bouquet. The palate is dry, but juicily fruity, with an even flow of small red fruits from start to finish. One for the nerds, but also for those who know just how high Australian standards are by world comparison, thanks to our winery technology. 93 points. *James Halliday, Halliday Wine Companion*



2017 Chalmers Nero d'Avola RRP \$27

100% de-stemmed, wild fermented in open fermenters. Fermentation typically goes for 20 days. Then pressed to stainless steel tank where it undergoes natural MLF on lees. Bottled without fining and with little or no filtration after about 6 months to retain freshness. Lifted red fruit perfume on the nose with cola nut, smoked meat and earthy spice. Very fresh and easy-flowing on the raspberry-inflected palate, with fruit threaded through a soft mesh of tannin. Tidy but unfussy, at ease with itself and drinks equally effortlessly. To my mind, the best yet release of this wine. – *Ed Merrison, CellarHand*

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ALTER EGO

Already in its third incarnation, the gothic revival from Isolation Ridge is back. It's the wine that sees Hunter Smith and brother-in-law Brian Kent travel back in time and across continents to carve a thrilling rendition of yesteryear Germany out of a single-raw material: organic Riesling grapes. Handpicked a little later in the season, wild-fermented in foudre, matured on fine lees and dressed to kill in rustic-fronted flute.



As always, it's a strictly limited-edition wine – but luckily that special site has a number of tempting tricks up its sleeve.

2017 Frankland Estate Alter Weg Riesling RRP \$32

The name means "old way" and this is a throwback to traditional German winemaking methods. It's a wine of great purity and texture, with succulent fruit, a spine of invigorating acidity and a trickle of balancing sweetness.

2016 Frankland Estate Isolation Ridge Riesling RRP \$43

All the hallmarks of this site are at play with camomile and blossom, the lightness of touch on the palate with its citrus notes, some concentration and texture yet the steely freshness and acidity so pure it creates an ultra-fine and long finish. 96 points. *Jane Faulkner, Halliday Wine Companion 2018*

2016 Frankland Estate Chardonnay RRP \$29

Frankland Estate has been working diligently on its chardonnay particularly in the vineyard and it's

starting to show. Lemon-barley water, citrus zest with some ginger spice and daikon radish crunch to the mouthwatering acidity, linear and very refined. 94 points. *Jane Faulkner, Halliday Wine Companion 2018*

2016 Frankland Estate Cabernet Sauvignon RRP \$29

Hand-picked grapes from the Isolation Ridge vineyard were fermented as long and slowly as possible, at temperatures not exceeding 26°C in open pot fermentation tanks that allowed the cap to be worked by plunging and an extended maceration period allowed optimal colour, flavour and tannin extraction. It was aged in 500-litre French oak puncheons, this contributing textural complexity without compromising the opulent natural fruit flavours of the wine. - *Hunter Smith, Frankland Estate*

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BRAVEHEART BEN

Baron of the Barossa Ben Glaetzer couldn't help but bang on about the quality of 2016 in his neck of the woods. The Wallace blend is second out of the blocks after the straight-Shiraz Bishop, and these two wines are liquid proof that Ben wasn't big-noting. He's a master at celebrating the clarity and generosity of his grapes within a seamless framework, but these '16s are quite flawless in every dimension. Can't wait for the flagships!

2016 Glaetzer Wallace Shiraz Grenache RRP \$23

A blend of 78% Shiraz and 22% Grenache from 50- to 80-year-old Shiraz vines and Grenache plantings of between 50 and 110 years of age. Yields are 3.5 tonnes per hectare. Oak contact was minimised for the Grenache to preserve the fruit purity and character. The Shiraz was matured for 16 months in 2- and 3-year-old oak hogshead barrels (80% French and 20% American). This smells of warm bricks, liquorice root, lots of blueberry, cherry, raspberry fruit. Highly fragrant, with violet floral notes, too. Medium bodied, bright sweet fruit up front with dusty, dark chocolate edges. Very harmonious and balanced, this flows really evenly through the palate with fruit travelling long through the finish. Very good release of this. - *Ed Merrison, CellarHand*



2016 Glaetzer Bishop Shiraz RRP \$36

100% Shiraz, cropped at 3 tonnes per hectare. Vines aged 35-120 years old. Fermented in 1- and 2-tonne open fermenters, hand-plunged two to three times daily. Extended maceration was employed to enable good tannin development, so the wine is soft and approachable early. Maturation on lees for 16 months in new (40%) and 2- to 3-year-old oak hogsheads (90% French, 10% American). Deep purple. Really fresh on the nose with blueberry, red and black cherry, pepperberry, sweet spice and sawdust. Soft and seductive on entry, like a warm cuddle. The fruit is ripe for sure, but immediate and fresh in flavour and feel. Texture here is lovely and deep with blue and black fruits rolling through. Very fine tannins have

a soft, enveloping grip to them - and it finishes fresh and moreish too. Seamless for this wine in terms of nose to tail delivery, and not a foot wrong. – *Ed Merrison, CellarHand*

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JULIÉNAS OF GEELONG

The third coming of Nick Farr’s blink-and-you’ll-miss-it Gamay under the Farr Rising label. It’s a wine that got off to a flyer in 2015, immediately sitting comfortably among its peers in the Farr stable, and on the shelves of admirers of this brilliant estate.

Among those aforementioned peers, here’s a “not a hair out of place” Chardonnay and an absolute, nailed-on spanker of a Shiraz from the celebrated harvest of 2015.

2016 Farr Rising Chardonnay RRP \$49

Chardonnay by Nick Farr. Not a hair out of place. It unfolds in the glass slowly. It’s as much savoury as fruit-driven though given time to breathe it certainly offers plenty of the latter. Green pineapple, pear, grapefruit and meal-like notes drift slowly into woodspice and smoke. Everything here seems harmonious and well placed. 93 points. *Campbell Mattinson, The Wine Front*

2017 Farr Rising Gamay RRP \$43

Gamay grafted onto '99-planted own-rooted Cabernet vines (those planted in 1999). The soil is black cracking clay, with a mix of submerged volcanic pebbles and boulders at one end; at the other a more friable, slightly more vigorous chocolate-coloured soil. Pale but very bright ruby in the glass, with purple rim. Spicy, varietal nose, with cherry almost into blue fruit, a touch of beetroot and earth. The palate again is just as you’d wish, a sprinkling of cinnamon over raspberry and cherry. Lovely supple, pulpy texture within a fine but firm framework of tannin and acidity. Spice and earth cling with tangy fruit through the finish. – *Ed Merrison, CellarHand*

2015 Farr Rising Shiraz RRP \$51

From the original block planted in '94, the warmest site on the vineyard, 85-95% destemmed, 19 days wild fermentation in tank, matured for 18 months in French oak (10% new). For a split second you think this could be the odd man out in the Farr empire, but elegance isn't the mission here - just sustained intensity to the panoply of dark fruits soaring on the almost, but not quite, juicy finish and aftertaste. The quality of the grapes and the skill of Nick Farr make a deadly duo. 95 points. *James Halliday, Halliday Wine Companion 2018*

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IMPORTS

BEAUJ & THE BEAUTIFUL

2015 seemed to get all the hype, and did indeed produce some very good Beaujolais. But 2016 in our experience has eclipsed it. The cru wines from Piron will always continue to develop flesh and complexity over the handful of years following release, but what we love about these is the bright crunchy fruit allied to a real sense of place – communicated through mineral feel and tannin (people are wont to think that Gamay lacks the latter, but it ain’t so – and the best wines show it to great advantage in the guise of

weight, shape and texture).

Here we have an extremely tidy line-up of wines, from Piron's best Villages to date through the juicy, easy-going Brouilly and charming-as-ever Fleurie to an exceptionally classy and complete Morgon Côte du Py.

2016 Dominique Piron Beaujolais-Villages RRP \$25

This is textbook, crunchy fresh, but amply fruited Beaujolais. Cherry and iron, a little spice, fine grained tannin, juicy cherry/raspberry flavour with a seasoning of dried herb and flowers, and a ferrous finish of satisfying length. Beauty. 90 points. Gary Walsh, The Wine Front

2016 Dominique Piron Brouilly RRP \$32

Bright ruby with a classic youthful pink rim. The nose is reminiscent of cool mountain air, alpine herbs, macerated redcurrants, red cherry, green peppercorn spice, orange pekoe tea and hints of marjoram. A second look reveals pretty dried rose petals. Medium bodied, yet mouth-filling flavour of plums, black cherry, and gravelly minerality. Tannins are supple and fine, the acidity on point with freshness and moreish crunch. There is a deceptively long finish, with the red fruits rolling on nicely without ever dominating the sense of old world character and poise. – Tom Brushfield, CellarHand

2016 Dominique Piron Fleurie RRP \$37

Cherry pip, flowers, a spicy and mineral feel. Medium bodied, bright and pippy fruit with a spread of fine grained tannin, cool acidity, and a very good finish, fresh and long. Tasty. 92 points. Gary Walsh, The Wine Front

Produced from vines that are more than 50 years old, this wine is concentrated and dense. It also has the great style and elegance that is the hallmark of Fleurie. Black fruits are cut with good acidity, giving a juicy character to balance the ripe tannins. This beautiful wine will be ready to drink from late 2018. 93 points. Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast

2016 Dominique Piron Côte du Py RRP \$43

This young wine has great potential. It shows weight and a powerful tannic structure as well as bold, ripe black fruits. Coming from the top sector of Morgon, the wine has concentration and richness. It needs to age, and won't be ready before 2019. 94 points. Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast

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JOHANNES IN EXCELSIS

Max Allen's coverage of Riesling Downunder for the **Financial Review** bore the headline "Riesling masterclass: Top German winemakers reveal how they express terroir". The focus was Johannes Hasselbach of Gunderloch, and the fascinating comparison of two wines from his Rothenberg grand cru: his 2016 Grosses Gewächs against the '16 Virgo, this latter fermented and matured in the vineyard. This is further recognition of that fact Johannes is one of the most thoughtful, sensitive winemakers of his generation. Since taking the reins from his dearly departed father Fritz, Johannes has been tirelessly, fruitfully probing.



Rummaging through the records, scrutinising the season, reading the land, rewriting the rules. But he isn't chasing his tail. The Gunderloch line-up is singing, and it's compulsory listening for anyone with an ear for the voice of terroir.

2016 Gunderloch Nierstein Riesling RRP \$43

The dry 2016 Nierstein Riesling is entirely sourced in the Pettenthal and the vines were cultivated to become a Grosses Gewächs. The wine opens clear, fresh and mineral, with ripe but fine white fruit and lemon aromas intermixed with the spicy mineral aromas of the red soil. On the palate, this is a mouth-filling, fresh and charming Riesling of great purity, finesse and elegance. It has a delicious mineral grip and lingering salinity and is a kind of picture book Pettenthal. 91 points. *Stephan Reinhardt, Wine Advocate*

2016 Gunderloch Pettenthal Grosses Gewächs RRP \$96

Still rather closed this is a very concentrated wine with a beautiful balance that makes it taste less powerful than it really is. Major minerality at the very long, powerful finish. And all this at just 12.5% alcohol. Better from 2018. 95 points. *Stuart Pigott, jamesuckling.com*

2016 Gunderloch Rothenberg Grosses Gewächs RRP \$107

Very much true to the precise, pure style I've come to expect from Gunderloch – scintillating, laser-like kaffir-lime-leaf freshness. *Max Allen, Financial Review*

A super-elegant and filigree wine that is both deep and finely-etched with a very long pure finish that's as straight as a laser beam! Best from 2018. 95 points. *Stuart Pigott, jamesuckling.com*

2016 Gunderloch Virgo Riesling RRP \$190

Filigreed layers of character and texture that fanned out across my tongue. Absolutely stunning. *Max Allen, Financial Review*

2016 Gunderloch Rothenberg Auslese 375ml RRP \$70

Lush and exotic in the nose, but oh so racy and brilliant on the palate, this is a stunning Auslese with a mineral finish that is filigree and intense. Best from 2018 through 2040. 95 points. *Stuart Pigott, jamesuckling.com*

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BLAU PUNKED

It was a thing, 2015 in Burgenland. And you knew it, lapping up first the Blaufränkisch from Roland Velich of Moric before turning your attention to the Rotburger and then the Sankt Laurent of Roland's good mate, Hannes Schuster. Hannes duly responded by sending over his very tasty Blaufränkisch towards the end of last year. And, to further brighten up your day, we've had restocks of Moric's belting Burgenlander Blau, too.

2015 Rosi Schuster Blaufränkisch RRP \$35

Peaty, meaty, pepper and spice, but with a core of juice bramble fruit. It's medium bodied with spiced sour cherry flavour, fine but silty tannin, and a lively finish that closes



with a sweet orange tang and dried herb. This is a delicious drink, with a point of difference. 91 points. *Gary Walsh, The Wine Front*

2015 Moric Blaufränkisch RRP \$43

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*

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THE JOY OF SECHZEHN

A massive thanks to all those who came out in droves to dive into the gold-soaked spectacle that was Riesling Downunder. Overall, more than 1,500 people, amateur and professional alike, came to one or other of our events in Melbourne, Sydney and Adelaide. If you couldn't make it... sorry. If you could, and did, then good on you - we hope you found plenty of wines to love, drink and share.

So many bloody lovely wines from 2016, the highlights reel would run for days. So instead here's a few scattered gems.



2016 Paul Blanck Riesling RRP \$32

The fruit comes from vineyards with sand and gravel soils around the village of Kientzheim, including a good whack from the Schlossberg grand cru. The juice is extracted with infinite care in an air-bag press. Fermentation in temperature-controlled stainless steel with indigenous yeasts, generally lasting four to 10 weeks. Textbook Alsace, with flashes of flint and smoke across ripe orchard fruits. Textured and flavourful, with presence and limey punch through the finish. - *Ed Merrison, CellarHand*

2016 Domäne Wachau Bruck Riesling Federspiel RRP \$35

An intense bouquet of wild herbs and lime that's far removed from the riesling norm. Cool and rather powerful yet quite tart this is a challenging wine but it has a lot of character. Drink or hold. Screw cap. 91 points. *James Suckling, jameessuckling.com*

2016 Georg Breuer Rudesheim Estate Riesling RRP \$39

The 2016 Rheingau Riesling Rudesheim "Estate" is super clear, bright and elegant on the nose, with lovely stony-mineral notes, almost stone dust but also beautiful concentration. On the palate, this is a round, juicy, very fruity but clear, piquant, well-structured and finely mineral Rheingau classic at 11.5% alcohol. It drinks perfectly today and will also do so over the next 15 to 20 years. Sweetness and acidity are in perfect balance here (8.4 grams per litre). A highly filigreed and delicate Riesling. 91 points. *Stephan Reinhardt, Wine Advocate*

2016 Bründlmayer Riesling Kamptal Terrassen RRP \$43

This properly dry riesling is so juicy and attractive. Plenty of depth, but tastes almost weightless. A wealth

of white fruits, lemon zest and lemon blossom character, but also a hint of smoke. Drink now. 92 points. *Stuart Pigott, jamessuckling.com*

2016 Dönnhoff Tonschiefer Riesling RRP \$43

A finely-nuanced medium-bodied dry riesling with plenty of floral delicacy, but also a firm mineral backbone and a long filigree finish. Drink or hold. Made from organic grapes and Fair'n Green certified. From the excellent Leistenberg site. Screw cap. 92 points. *Stuart Pigott, jamessuckling.com*

2016 Heymann-Löwenstein Schieferterrassen RRP \$58

MAGNUM RRP \$117

Ripe pear and white peach deliver a delightful combination of ripeness and primary juiciness, and the midpalate impression is a flattering combination of stuffing and creaminess. Regionally typical suggestions of tarragon and anise cool a lingering finish that gains welcome invigoration by way of lime zest piquancy. Given this wine's low acidity, the overall effect is quite sumptuous, and a faint but entirely supportive hint of sweetness is engendered by close to seven grams of residual sugar. Fortunately, there is animating freshness, and I was amazed to discover that there is nearly 13% alcohol here, as there is no heaviness. 89 points. *David Schildknecht, Vinous Media* January 2018



2016 Koehler-Ruprecht Kallstadter Saumagen Auslese Trocken RRP \$114

Slight smoky funk at first (reduction), but there's considerable power, ripeness and concentration behind it. They make it a Koehler-Ruprecht classic and in keeping with that it won't be released until fall 2018. The long, complete finish suggests this has a couple of decades of ageing potential. 94 points. *Stuart Pigott, jamessuckling.com* December 2017

2016 A. Christmann Idig Riesling Grosses Gewächs RRP \$149

The delicious paradox of this great dry riesling is the way it is built on an imposing scale, but is very pure and super straight without any hint of heaviness, even on the very long powerful finish. You'll need to be patient for at least a couple of years if you want to experience all the subtle nuances, but the ripe mirabelle note is already delightful. At least thirty years of ageing potential. 96 points. *Stuart Pigott, jamessuckling.com* December 2017

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CIGLIUTI BOOTY

"Cigliuti remains one of Barbaresco's under-the-radar jewels," wrote **Antonio Galloni** of **Vinous Media** following his visit last year. "Over the last few years, the wines have become especially notable." Claudia Cigliuti continues to do a super job of expressing the vineyards so lovingly nurtured by father Renato, in and around the family home on the Serraboella hill in Neive. We're pleased to have landed a suite of '15s in addition to the always fantastic Vie Erte Barbaresco from 2014.



2015 Cigliuti Dolcetto d'Alba RRP \$37

Cigliuti's 2015 Dolcetto d'Alba is an attractive, mid-weight wine with good varietal character. Sweet red cherry, tobacco and menthol are nicely delineated. Firm tannins give the wine its hearty, somewhat rustic personality. The Dolcetto was aged entirely in steel. This is a relatively austere style for the vintage. 88 points. *Antonio Galloni, Vinous Media*

2015 Cigliuti Langhe Nebbiolo RRP \$53

Cigliuti's 2015 Langhe Nebbiolo is a terrific entry-level wine. If anything, the Langhe Nebbiolo is a very serious wine at this level, as it has considerable

tannic clout underpinning the fruit. Lifted aromatics, finely sculpted red fruits and firm tannins are front and center. Deceptively understated, the 2015 Langhe Nebbiolo packs a good bit of energy and intensity into its mid-weight frame. The Langhe Nebbiolo is a tank of Vie Erte Barbaresco juice given a shorter aging time of five months in tank and five months in cask. For all intents and purposes, it is a Barbaresco in all but name. 91 points. *Antonio Galloni, Vinous Media*

2015 Cigliuti Barbera Serraboella RRP \$53

Cigliuti's first vintage of this 100% Barbera wine was 1964. The fruit comes from vines with an average age of 17 years from the Serraboella cru in Neive. The site has a southeastern exposure and is situated at 350m above sea level on clayey soils. The must is fermented in steel vats at controlled temperatures. The wine is aged for 18 months in second- and third-use French oak barriques.

2014 Cigliuti Barbaresco Vie Erte RRP \$96

Cigliuti's 2014 Barbaresco Vie Erte is all class. A wine of nuance and translucent beauty, the 2014 has a lot to offer. The flavors are bright, precise and finely sculpted, with veins of supporting tannin and lively acidity that give the wine energy. I imagine the 2014 will appeal most to readers with classically-leaning palates and those who can be patient, as the wine will need at least a few years to unwind. Bright red stone fruit, chalk, mint, white pepper and expressive floral notes linger on the persistent, pointed finish. The 2014 is a fabulous Vie Erte. 93+ points. *Antonio Galloni, Vinous Media*

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HUBER HUMDINGER

"Love a German Pinot, there's something about them that really appeals to me," wrote **Gary Walsh** of **The Wine Front** in the intro to his review of the schtupendous Spätburgunder from Julian Huber's hometown of Malterdingen. There's no doubt the quality of wines from this variety is on the up in many parts of Germany, and there's no doubt this trend will continue. Leading the way, though, is Germany's warmest region – Baden – and its hottest property, Weingut Bernhard Huber.

2014 Huber Malterdingen Pinot Noir RRP \$64

Has an earthy/lead pencil thing going on over dark and sour cherry, with a little spice and sap. It's medium-bodied, vigorous and energetic, with again that lead pencil stuff, and a slaty mineral feel. Perhaps some orange peel on the finish too, and a lick of kitten's tongue tannin to close. Lovely stuff. You

can smash it, or contemplate it, but either way it's a fine glass of Pinot Noir. 93 points. *Gary Walsh, The Wine Front*

2013 Huber Alte Reben Pinot Noir RRP \$96

MAGNUM RRP \$206

Plenty of smoky whole bunch spice here, along with a fair amount of toasted hazelnut oak, dark cherry and dark chocolate. Lively and spicy in the mouth, a medium-bodied frame, cherries, sausage and roast nuts again, with a pulsating acidity, grainy tannin, and a long tangy finish, a mineral feel, closing with a distinctly umami aftertaste. Different expression of Pinot Noir, but so worthy. 94 points. *Gary Walsh, The Wine Front* July 2017

2013 Huber Sommerhalde Pinot Noir Grosses Gewächs RRP \$132

MAGNUM RRP \$297

The Sommerhalde charms with a seductive perfume of exotic spices, orchard blossom and fine cigar smoke. On the palate things get a little more intense with lashings of fleshy plums and juicy morello cherries making the early running, only to be reined in by flavours of dark chocolate, dust from the grindstone, roasted hazelnuts and a subtle mix of herbs and spices. Still youthful, but *already very elegant*. 18/20 *Michael Schmidt, jancisrobinson.com*

2013 Huber Bienenberg Pinot Noir Grosses Gewächs RRP \$132

MAGNUM RRP \$297

Quite reserved in its fragrance, the Bienenberg nevertheless grants delightful glimpses of bramble, blackberries and bonfire smoke. The palate is far more generous and reflects the Bienenberg's proximity to the Black Forest by a gâteau-like richness of sweet cherries, but although the fruit is juicy and the texture creamy, assertive tannins and healthy acidity make sure that the wine is not lacking in structure. 17.5/20 *Michael Schmidt, jancisrobinson.com*

2013 Huber Schlossberg Pinot Noir Grosses Gewächs RRP \$164

MAGNUM RRP \$346

None of Huber's Grosse Gewächse are short of fruit, but although the Schlossberg exhibits its fair fragrance of plums and blackberries, they merely act in support of a darker and deeper minerally expression. Shaved pencil, graphite and forest undergrowth represent a most intriguing and almost mysterious composition of aromas. On the palate the fruit of dark berries insists on its juicy ways, supported by fine spices, but then a cool stony notion takes command. Compact structure, full body and firm grip demand to be given time to agree on harmony. 18/20 *Michael Schmidt, jancisrobinson.com*

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ASTI STICKY STOCK

There's nothing quite like the joyous fragrance and liveliness of proper Moscato, and you don't get more proper than Italy's first single-vineyard wine from the nation's highest appellation for the variety. For that is what you get when you pour a glass of La Spinetta's Bricco Quaglia, a sweetie we're delighted to have back in stock in both screwcapped 750ml and handy halves. Anyone who missed the vintage roll of the La Spinetta Langhe Nebbiolo would be well advised to





check out this one, too – a wine that scratches that Nebb itch with both authenticity and crowd-pleasing approachability.

2017 La Spinetta Moscato d’Asti Bricco Quaglia RRP \$40

375ml RRP \$28

Italy's first single-vineyard Moscato comes from vines of between 33 and 38 years old, on a calcareous and sandy-soil, south-facing slope at an elevation of 300m. Farmed sustainably, with no use of herbicides or pesticides.

2014 La Spinetta Langhe Nebbiolo RRP \$49

100% Nebbiolo from the Staderi cru in Neive. The vines grow at 270m altitude on calcareous soils with a southern exposure, and are between 20 and 23 years old. The vineyard is managed sustainably, with no use of herbicides or pesticides. It undergoes alcoholic fermentation for 7-8 days in temperature controlled roto-fermenters followed by malolactic fermentation in oak. It spends 12 months in medium toast, used French oak barrels and is later transferred to stainless steel vats for two months. After bottling, it is aged for another 12 months in glass. It is not fined or filtered. It has aromas of dried rose petals and plum and blueberry fruit. It's full-bodied, rich and chewy with dusty tannins and a juicy yet elegant finish.

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