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DOMESTIC



ISOLATION CELEBRATION

Congratulations, Frankland Estate - it's time to celebrate! It's 30 years since Judi Cullam and Barrie Smith laid down the first vines on Isolation Ridge in Frankland River. That vision and pioneering spirit of the founders has been matched by the curiosity and resolve of the next generation. "Visits to Great Southern and time spent with winemakers Hunter Smith and Brian Kent and viticulturist Elizabeth Smith have cemented my opinion Frankland Estate is one of Australia's greatest wine producers with a thirst for excellence," as **Mike Bennie** wrote in an article aptly titled "Constant Evolution".

That title was perfectly apt. The Smith Cullam clan are constant in that they espouse values that have never wavered, over all these years of frank self-assessment and dedication to raising quality in every quarter. There is enormous integrity here, in the way Frankland Estate farms its vines, raises wines true to site, and comports itself as pioneer and leader. Organic certification is worn as a badge of honour, and anyone who has witnessed Riesling Downunder – the global sensation that started life as the Frankland Estate International Riesling Tasting – will know that this is an estate where generosity, not ego, rules. Anyone searching for something truly genuine – and aren't we all? – need look no further.

It's a huge honour to lead the birthday celebrations for this wonderful family, and to commend to you their accomplishments – embodied in this magnificent set of single-vineyard releases.

2017 Frankland Estate Poison Hill Riesling RRP \$43

Poison Hill has unique white clay and weathered quartz soils. The winemaking here was pretty classic too. Perfumed, talcy, gently textural and dry with a resonant palate – lovely back palate linger. Sarah Ahmed, Wine Detective, February 2017



2017 Frankland Estate Isolation Ridge Riesling RRP \$43

Riesling from the Isolation Ridge Vineyard. It commands respect. Essence of Riesling. Floral and generally pretty but brilliant with fruit intensity. Lime blossom, honeysuckle, slate and then a gorgeous burst of gunsmoke-infused citrus. Ultra dry. Top class. 94 points. Campbell Mattinson, The Wine Front May 2018

2017 Frankland Estate Smith Cullam Riesling RRP \$53

It's delicious for starters. It's intense with lime and orange oil-like flavour and it boasts an excellent start, a good middle and a terrific finish. It begs you to come back for more but it drives long through the finish too; it's quality all the way. Sweet-edged but thrilling. Quite beautiful. 93 points. Campbell Mattinson, The Wine Front May 2018

2015 Frankland Estate Isolation Ridge Shiraz RRP \$43

This will morph into something rather special – it's too youthful now but already it has the hallmarks of a finely-tuned, expressive Frankland River Shiraz. Heady aromatics of florals, dark fruit, licorice, pepper and wood spices with chiselled tannins and clearly defined oak. Some creaminess on the palate adds another layer of complexity. 95 points. Jane Faulkner, Halliday Wine Companion August 2017

2015 Frankland Estate Olmo's Reward RRP \$89

72% Cabernet Franc, 19% Cabernet Sauvignon, 9% Malbec. All three varieties used in the blend were dry-grown on mature vines on organic-certified Isolation Ridge. The vines are trained on a combination of Scott Henry Trellis system and vertical shoot positioning. Each variety was fermented separately as slowly as possible at temperatures not exceeding 27°C. Open fermentation tanks facilitated working the cap with gentle plunging and pumping over. After fermentation, an extended maceration period allowed desired colour, flavour and tannin extraction. The component wines were blended on completion of malolactic conversion and then aged in French oak for 15 months. - Hunter Smith, Frankland Estate

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GET SMART

“Open a bottle of Stephen Pannell's wine and you will enjoy it. No, you will probably love it.” So wrote wine writer **Ray Jordan** earlier this year in selecting a seriously diverse quartet of wines that epitomised Steve's approach to this whole wine thing. “He combines the best features of the vineyard with sympathetic fruit-enhancing winemaking to produce wines that are suited to the modern style of Australian cuisine,” is how Jordan summarised that approach.

Put like that it sounds pretty simple – but then what's winegrowing about if not making the most

of the specific land where the vines grow, and translating it as best you can as a pleasing drink? And while complexity and structure are often left behind in the headlong rush for simplistic 'smashability', that's not good enough for Steve. It's been his single-minded mission to marry intensity, complexity, balance and length with immediate and enduring pleasure. At the same time, being true to variety and totally faithful to place are inviolable principles. Faultless



viticulture, perfect picking and mindful oak use are all part of the equation, as is an obsession with understanding, harnessing and expressing grape tannins.

These new releases occupy a plane in the S.C. Pannell range where place is put on a pedestal: Piccadilly, Gumeracha and Echunga for the Adelaide Hills wines, and the Vale itself for Steve's cherished Grenache/Shiraz – this latter showcasing 74-year-old Grenache from the Old McDonald vineyard and Shiraz from Steve's own beloved Koomilya site. Also from the Vale comes Steve's first Cabernet Malbec under his own label – a homage, of sorts, to his dear Wendouree.

At the top of the tree are two spellbinding single-site Grenache wines, one from Old McDonald in Blewitt Springs and the other from Clarendon's Smart vineyard.

Stephen Pannell is a master of contemporary Australian wine, but only because he pays utmost respect to the past, attention to the present and heed to the future. And he also pays back the winelover, in spades, with multidimensional drinking pleasure.

2017 S.C. Pannell Piccadilly Chardonnay Adelaide Hills RRP \$39

*Mendoza clone Chardonnay grapes were handpicked on 3rd and 6th April. Natural fermentation and maturation in a 1000-litre new French oak vat and 500-litre puncheons. No malolactic conversion. Pulled from barrel in late November and sent to a stainless-steel tank for settling on yeast lees for three months before bottling. Alcohol 12.8%; pH 3.2; TA 7.8g/L. - **Stephen Pannell***

2016 S.C. Pannell Barbera Adelaide Hills RRP \$39

*Barbera grapes from Gumeracha in the Adelaide Hills are hand-harvested, crushed, and traditionally vinified in small open-top fermenters. Left on skins for 11 days before being pressed and sent to French oak puncheons, of which 20% are new. Only 10 months in oak before bottling. Alcohol 14%; pH 3.46; TA 6.10g/L. - **Stephen Pannell***

2016 S.C. Pannell 'The Vale' McLaren 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** February 2018*

2016 S.C. Pannell Syrah Adelaide Hills RRP \$39

100% Syrah from Echunga, 410 metres above sea level in the southern Adelaide Hills. The fruit is grown on well-drained, granitic soil, my preference for Syrah. Hand-harvested and vinified in small, open-top

fermenters with 30% whole bunches. A total of 17 days on skins before being sent to predominately old, large, French-oak vats for 10 months. Alcohol 14%; pH 3.78; TA 5.74g/L. - *Stephen Pannell*

2017 S.C. Pannell Smart Grenache Clarendon, McLaren Vale RRP \$62

A finer boned, musky and spicy expression of Grenache here. It's medium bodied, almost strict in structure, with firm dry tannin, pitch-perfect acidity giving energy, fresh raspberry and something like black tea, or that elusive 'mineral' thing, a pleasant perfumed herb character as a counterpoint, and a crisp and very long finish, closing with gustatory tannin and subtle bitterness. Wow. 96 points. *Gary Walsh, The Wine Front* May 2018

2017 S.C. Pannell Old McDonald Grenache Blewitt Springs McLaren Vale RRP \$62

It's pretty, kind of rosy in perfume, a little bit juicy, but also dry and beautifully structured. There's fine insistent tannin giving it shape and texture, almost to Nebbiolo character with its gentle brick dust grip, red fruit and cherry, a layer of spice, new leather and scrub herb, and a long cool, composed finish. Flat out beautiful. Succulence with a serious nature. Bravo. 96 points. *Gary Walsh, The Wine Front* May 2018

2016 S.C. Pannell Cabernet Malbec McLaren Vale RRP \$52

75% Cabernet Sauvignon and 25% Malbec sourced from the end of Amery Road in McLaren Vale. The Cabernet vines are more than 70 years old and the Malbec 25 years old. Both varieties were traditionally vinified in small, open-top fermenters, spending 10 days on skins before being sent to puncheons in April. Blended in July 2017 before being sent back to barrel and bottled in February 2018. Alcohol 14.1%; pH 3.62; TA 6.5g/L. - *Stephen Pannell*

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ABUZZ AT BURN COTTAGE

"Remarkable site that the fruit is grown on here," wrote **Mike Bennie** in the preface to his review of the "lovely" 2015 Burn Cottage Vineyard Pinot Noir. "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."

The observation is spot-on in pinpointing its unique charm. It's a magical place, with a merry riot of nature on what is, beneath, an incisively masterminded series of plantings laid down to conjure up soulful, enchanting Pinot Noir. Even the blueprint of the vineyard – what could seem more dry and factual? But no – is instead like the score for a symphony. Each parcel of the deceptively steep-sloping amphitheatre has its own chorus of slants, soils and clones.

Elsewhere, you might worry that the combined intelligence of these co-authors would lead to wines that are overthought and overwrought. Not at Burn Cottage. On this humming hillside, it's all about listening, feeling and tasting. It's a sensual experience every time, tracing the intricacies of the season, and watching it all unfurl in the glass and the cellar.



2016 Burn Cottage Vineyard Pinot Noir RRP \$92

Enticing layers of floral, berry and spice notes complement earthy aromatics of wet stone and black tea. With time in the glass, deeper savoury notes and richness from the whole cluster use emerge. This vintage has shown wonderful finesse from the outset, with silky texture and an attractive seamlessness throughout. Focused and very elegant, the wine has fine persistent tannins extending the harmonious finish. Cellaring for up to 7-10 years – *Ted Lemon & Claire Mulholland*

2015 Burn Cottage Moonlight Race Pinot Noir RRP \$68

First released in the 2014 vintage Moonlight Race is a blend of grapes from Burn Cottage Vineyard (35%), Northburn Vineyard (35%) and Mark II vineyard, with a mix of clones in each. 22.5% whole cluster. Similar in style to the regular Burn Cottage label but with more sweet fruit and a sappy influence adding complexity to berry, oak and floral flavours. A subtle and beguiling wine with finely pitched structure that allows access now while assuring a promising future. 96 points. *Bob Campbell MW, The Real Review*

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RED MOON RISING

A red moon is a beautiful thing. It occurs during a total lunar eclipse when light filtering through



the Earth's atmosphere dapples the moon in red. A penumbral lunar eclipse occurred on 11th February 2017, the day Vanya and the team began harvesting the Malbec and Petit Verdot fruit for this field blend from the Mangan Vineyard.

Many of you will be familiar with the Mangan site's superb track record with these Bordeaux varieties, thanks to Vanya's East Block and MMPV. This new wine, which replaces the MMPV in the portfolio, places Malbec into sharper focus and is the perfect entry point for the fragrance, precision and purity of Vanya's certified-organic, single-vineyard reds.

2017 Cullen Red Moon RRP \$32

57% Malbec, 37% Petit Verdot and 6% Merlot. The fruit was hand-harvested from the Mangan Vineyard. The wine spent nine months in French oak with 10% of the barrels being new. In the glass, it's medium red with ruby tinges. The nose shows plum and cherries with lifted floral notes. On the palate, it's medium-bodied with dark cherries, blueberries and savoury notes on the finish. – *Vanya Cullen*

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SMASH HIT HEARTLAND

Langhorne Creek - home to fragrant, lush fruit with deceptive freshness thanks to the cooling effects of the Lake Doctor - has been enjoying its day in the sun over in the UK. Heartland's Directors' Cut, crafted by Ben Glaetzer from his finest Langhorne grapes, was awarded 97 points and a platinum medal at the **2018 Decanter World Wine Awards**. It's worthy recognition for a wine that is bang in the slot for lovers of rich, spicy reds. That may not be you, but sure as hell is

someone you know.

On a lighter note, the 2014 Heartland Sposa e Sposa – the gluggable Lagrein/Dolcetto blend that went into bat early for the Aussie marriage-equality campaign – also charmed the judges in London, coming home with a silver medal.

2014 Heartland Sposa e Sposa Lagrein/Dolcetto RRP \$22

Silver medal, Decanter World Wine Awards

Plump dark fruit, spicy chocolate, peppery spice and oak nose. Complex palate, high acidity, dark juicy tannins and fresh finish. 92 points. 2018 Decanter World Wine Awards

2014 Heartland Directors' Cut Shiraz RRP \$39

Platinum Medal, 2018 Decanter World Wine Awards

The grapes are selected from some of the best Shiraz vineyards in the region. These vineyards are chosen for the consistent intensity and texture of the fruit. The strictest pruning techniques are used. The fruit for Directors' Cut Shiraz was harvested at night and then crushed to small open top stainless steel fermenters. After 24 hours of skin contact fermentation was commenced with our Rhône isolate yeast. Following 9 days of cool fermentation on skins and pumped over 3 times daily, the wine was transferred to French and American oak hogsheads for 14 months. – Ben Glaetzer, Heartland



Savoury, juicy, seductive dark fruits on the nose, the palate has long and luscious savoury cedar wood, vanilla and coconut complexity to the vibrant fresh red fruit, delicious touch of vanilla in the finish. 97 points. 2018 Decanter World Wine Awards

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CREAM OF CLARE

What a double whammy this is: a roll onto two of the finest Clare Valley Riesling vintages of the 21st century. 2012 was always felt to vie with 2002 as the very best, and then along came 2017 to



challenge them both.

And here we have Sam and Tom Barry's single-vineyard clos Clare rizza leaping to '17 for the young release, and '12 from the museum. So much to love there, the young 'un showing all the perfume, lift and purity of fruit, the elderly statesman with all the tertiary glory chiming in while retaining a luscious freshness.

2017 clos Clare Riesling RRP \$32

As the third generation of the Barry winemaking family, we now hold the keys to this boutique

winery. Riesling is the Clare Valley's signature variety and this is our ninth vintage from clos Clare's

Riesling patch, adjoining the historic 'Florita' vineyard in Watervale. The 46-year-old dry grown vines were hand-harvested on 21st of February and taken to The Wilson Vineyard at Polish Hill River, where they were chilled for 24 hours prior to whole bunch pressing and vinification. The 2017 Watervale Riesling has beautifully lifted aromatics of apple, grapefruit and lemon. The palate has great drive and generosity of flavour, grapefruit, lemon and citrus peel, with a soft, chalky texture and a juicy line of acid.

- Tom & Sam Barry

2012 Clos Clare Riesling RRP \$39

Bright, light straw-green; from 42-year-old vines, the grapes whole bunch pressed and cold-fermented; the bouquet is filled with blossom aromas, and the palate has remarkable depth to its layers of ripe citrus fruits, the length equally impressive. Drink now or later. 95 points. *James Halliday, Halliday Wine Companion* October 2012

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MACEDON MARVEL

We were immediately smitten with the Little Hampton vineyard, thanks in part to the infectious, barely contained enthusiasm of Shadowfax's then vineyard manager – now winemaker- Al Timms. The long, cool 2017 growing season marks the third single-vineyard offering from this super-cool site 720m up in the Macedon Ranges. It's thoroughly enchanting once again – crystal clear evidence that Al's faith in the site was more than justified.

Accompanying this is Shadowfax's regional Pinot, which knits together fruit from the Little Hampton, Midhill, Mt Macedon and Big Shed vineyards. They come together in a harmonious, layered Pinot with regional signature writ large.



2017 Shadowfax Pinot Noir RRP \$37

This is savoury, well-fruited, has a sense of power and yet remains varietal and lively throughout. Forest berries, twiggy spices, a suggestion of mint. I wouldn't exactly call it velvety in texture but it's on the way there; it certainly has good mouthfeel. Quite impeccable from all angles. 93 points. *Campbell Mattinson, The Wine Front* May 2018

2017 Shadowfax Little Hampton Pinot Noir RRP \$62

Light to medium red colour with purple tints. It has a superbly fragrant perfume, multi-faceted and lifted, with charm and refinement, the finish long and satisfying with light, gentle, fine-grained tannins. 93 points. *Huon Hooke, The Real Review* May 2018

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FLOWERDAYS ON FORM

It's into its third year now, the **Fine Wines of New Zealand** list – and TWR have made it onto every one. The list – compiled by six MWs and one Master Sommelier – began with fewer than 50 wines

and has grown to a little over 60 in that time. It's refined company to keep, and Anna and Jason Flowerday well and truly deserve their place among them.



The biodynamic duo's Toru – the Gewürz, Riesling and PG blend – is the wine you'll find there, and its aromatic allure, texture, purity and depth are a common thread through all of the estate's wines. Exhibit A: a Sauvignon Blanc fit to break down barriers, erase prejudices and restore faith in a classic grape grown in a beautiful region.

2017 TWR Sauvignon Blanc RRP \$29

Highly aromatic nose with elderflower and exotic fruit that tends towards guava, but with citrus and wet stone

suggestions. It's less exuberant in the mouth where it's restrained and zesty, with mineral inflection matching the juicy intensity of firm stone fruits and lime. The finish has zip and a chalky grip, with well integrated, ripe acidity ensuring that the complete wine carries through to a good length. - Ed Merrison, CellarHand

2017 TWR Toru RRP \$28

Fantastic bouquet loaded with aromatic spices, citrus and tree fruit flavours showing off apples and d'anjou pear then lemon and whispers of baking spices. Silken textures with precise fruit flavours and long finish. Fine Wines of New Zealand 2018

First made 12 years ago. Biggest selling white wine after the Sauvignon. Aromatic, fruity and textured. Cofermented Gewürztraminer, Pinot Gris and Riesling. Lovely pear, table grape and lychee fruit buttressed with some citrus character. Very pretty but also has a serious side. Multidimensional and quite delicious. 91 points. Jamie Goode, www.wineanorak.com December 2017

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DE PURY PRAISE

The Yeringberg wines from what Sandra de Pury called the “near faultless” 2015 vintage in the Yarra Valley were rapturously received when they were released in April. At the time, no reviews had yet been published on any of the reds, while coverage of the whites was effusive but scant.

Since then there's been a raft of reviews which may tempt people to snap up the remainder of what is always a limited harvest from a very special vineyard.

2015 Yeringberg Marsanne Roussanne RRP \$66

From historic Yeringberg, a white blend of subdued style yet plenty of character. Pear and spicy/floral potpourri aromas with a smoky overlay make an appetising introduction. Rich and complex with a well balanced



drying signature. 93 points. *Ralph Kyte-Powell, The Age* May 2018

2015 Yeringberg Viognier RRP \$45

Very different wine to the Marsanne Roussanne of the same vintage. Open for business. Lively with crushed spice and stone-fruit flavour, apricot essence and honeysuckle combined with slate and dry-but-heady fennel. Musk-like notes. Finishes dry but flashed with flavour throughout. Ready to drink now. 92 points. *Campbell Mattinson, The Wine Front* May 2018

2015 Yeringberg Shiraz RRP \$85

Impeccable wine. Needs a few years to integrate fully but its cherry-plum flavour, swoosh of smoked cedarwood, lifted spice notes and meaty/clovey aftertaste are all presented in immaculate shape and form. It's fresh, frisky almost, with finely inscribed tannin and excellent length. Elegance in a glass. 93+ points. *Campbell Mattinson, The Wine Front* May 2018

2015 Yeringberg Cabernet RRP \$98

At the intersection of flavour and finesse, beauty is to be found. This is an elegant, fine-fingered wine with juicy boysenberry, ripe blackcurrant, bay leaf and clove notes shimmering throughout, whispers of creamy, resinous, cedarwood oak having just-enough influence without going too far. Tannin is ripe, fine-fingered, exquisite. If you look closely you see grass, dry tobacco and peppercorn notes. It's quite a treat. 95 points. *Campbell Mattinson, The Wine Front* May 2018

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IMPORTS

BENVENUTO VAJRA

It is with enormous pleasure that we welcome G.D. Vajra of Barolo to the CellarHand portfolio. We've long been enormous fans of the wines and – through various personal means – enjoyed crossing paths with the Vaira family. It's clear they share so much in common with CellarHand and the growers in our portfolio: tremendous pride in their origins and values; commitment to family and home; and a spirit of adventure. On top of that, as leaders in their field with open minds and broad horizons, we feel this is a real meeting of minds, hearts and wills.



As is always the case with CellarHand, this addition to the family owes much to an existing friendship. Stephen Pannell lived in Barolo for a time and worked vintage with the Vairas. He fell for their warmth, generosity and immaculate wines. Steve will henceforth be importing the wines into South Australia – and it was he who, when the time was right, kindly suggested that his surrogate family in Vergne should hook up with us as exclusive importer for the rest of Australia.

We didn't need a second invitation. Many of the team tasted with brothers Giuseppe and Isidoro at ProWein in March before a couple

more of us headed to the family home to walk the vineyards in spring and take an even closer look at what promises to be a very bright future for the estate.

Many will need no introduction to what **Antonio Galloni** of **Vinous Media** calls “a world of sublime hand-crafted, artisan wines of the very highest level”. But to those who do, it's now run in the second generation by Giuseppe, Isidoro and Francesca Vaira, lovingly overseen by father Aldo and mother Milena. It was Aldo that founded G.D. Vajra, kicking off with a counter-cultural twist by returning to his ancestors' land in the early '70s, when all else were deserting the countryside

in droves. That spirit of tradition with an adaptive streak characterises this far-sighted outfit. Indeed, Aldo's decision to embrace the rogue 'j' on the label – a print error that happens to hark back to the pre-1920s spelling of the family name – says a lot about the clan's capacity to roll with it and nimbly fuse its roots with the future.

Over the years they've acquired coveted holdings in their home commune of Barolo as well as Novello, Sinio and Serralunga – this latter home to the stupendous wines they produce under their Luigi Baudana label.

The family excels with all the Piedmont staples – Dolcetto, Barbera, Nebbiolo, Moscato and the very rare Freisa, as well as Riesling that is far better than it has any right to be. Barolo Albe has made a name for itself as one of the best-value Barolos going, while Bricco delle Viole has cemented a reputation as one of the finest cru Barolo wines period (though the aforementioned Luigi Baudana wines – entrusted to the Vairas in



2009 – give it a run for its money). At the more everyday level, there's a wonderful Langhe Rosso, Langhe Nebbiolo and the highly original, intensely drinkable Claré JC – a wickedly bright, tank-raised, 25% whole-bunch, nouveau-style Nebb.

So much to look forward to, then. Our first shipment of G.D. Vajra wines will land midwinter down under. It will be a full and whole-hearted celebration of this great estate, with young wines from 2016 and '17 through to the brilliant Barolos from 2014.

We can't wait.

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ROTER HANG FIRE

Johannes Hasselbach was a standout at Riesling Downunder back in February, capping off a year where he'd completed a total overhaul of the winery/cellar by showing his most accomplished wines to date – and hammering home the point that this shining star is on the rise.

His Rheinhessen range duly got noticed and picked up by many of you - but you'll be surprised to learn there's still a spread of Johannes' 2016s available. They've just been comprehensively reviewed by **David Schildknecht** of **Vinous Media**, another person convinced of the quality and pleasure these Roter Hang Rieslings offer.

2016 Gunderloch Als Wär's Ein Stück Von Mir Riesling RRP \$39

*Issuing largely from the Rothenberg plus a bit of Hipping, and reflecting spontaneous fermentation largely in cask, this represents a leap in quality over the basic Gunderloch Gutsriesling. Zesty, juicy and strongly seed-inflected tangerine and lime mingle on the nose with suggestions of crushed stone and smoky black tea, while on the palate, even as there is palpable lees-enrichment for a satiny texture, the concentrated fruit exhibits a sense of transparency to comparable mineral elements. As was the case with the corresponding 2015, there is mouthwatering salinity to the finish. (My tasting note on the 2014 instalment of this wine explains its name, which is an unfortunate translation of that which appears on the German label: "Als wär's ein Stück von mir.") 90 points. **David Schildknecht**, **Vinous Media** May 2018*

2016 Gunderloch Nierstein Riesling RRP \$43

This 100% Pettenthal leads with penetrating fresh lime and tangerine, accompanied by smoky black tea and bracing ocean breeze. Silken in feel and infectiously juicy, it finishes with surprising buoyancy (given nearly 12.5% alcohol) as well as striking transparency to smoky, alkaline and mouthwateringly saline mineral nuances in shimmering interaction with citricity and bittersweet inner-mouth floral perfume. Incidentally, the wine harbors just a single gram of residual sugar. 92 points. *David Schildknecht, Vinous Media* May 2018



2016 Gunderloch Riesling Pettenthal Grosses Gewächs RRP \$96

At between four and five grams of residual sugar, this is in what until recently would have been considered the normal range for a Gunderloch Grosses Gewächs. The hints of resin and lanolin from casks in their fifth use are less usual, but site-typical lemon and tangerine as well as smokiness born of these soils all come through on the nose and on a flatteringly silken-textured, glycerol-rich palate. Fresh fennel adds cooling appeal to a lingering finish that brims with animatingly bright juiciness, smoky intrigue and mouthwatering salinity. 93 points. *David Schildknecht, Vinous Media* May 2018

2016 Gunderloch Riesling Rothenberg Grosses Gewächs RRP \$107

MAGNUM RRP \$280

Like the corresponding Pettenthal, this displays brightly, infectiously juicy lemon and tangerine typical for these adjacent Einzellagen, and those are also what strike one prominently and pungently on the nose. In re-tasting six weeks after its early August bottling, I was reminded of kumquat by the wine's enhanced aromatic pungency, pithy density and piquant grip. The feel here is lean and firm when compared with that of other dry Gunderloch 2016s, accompanied by formidable impressions of dusty stone suffusion and smoky black tea infusion. The finish is gripping and forcefully energetic, albeit less flattering than that of either the corresponding Hipping or Pettenthal. Incidentally, the age of cask employed was the same as in the Pettenthal, but here I don't notice it, which Hasselbach hypothesized is on account of Pettenthal's inherently more delicate and sensitive personality. 93 points. *David Schildknecht, Vinous Media* May 2018

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GNEISS, GNEISS BABY

This indispensable expression of the Wachau has had a bit of a facelift – pretty minor, just a little burnishing to remind people that, despite its very friendly price tag, it has serious chops. The label now bares the word gneiss, a nod (or “gnod”?) to the high-grade metamorphic rock that typifies these steep terraced vineyards over the Danube, where Riesling thrives. That, and bit more pop and bling to the vibe of it, with Riesling now celebrated in large orange script.



Riesling makes up just 3% of the Austrian vineyard, a fact oft forgotten because the quality and prevalence in our market is disproportionately high. Mind you, such are the impeccable holdings at Domäne Wachau that rizza accounts for 20% of plantings. So, you see, this deserves something special. It's a great-value expression of a world-class variety/terroir pairing – and now with a bit more fanfare on the front of the bottle.

2017 Domäne Wachau Riesling Federspiel RRP \$28

Handpicked grapes from small terraced vineyard plots surrounding Spitz, Dürnstein and Weissenkirchen. All stainless steel. The relatively warm 2017 harvest expresses itself in a wine that is little riper than is typical. Stone fruits and limey citrus present and correct. Again, the palate is a little softer and fuller, with good fresh fruit intensity carried well by the acidity, which leaves it finishing brisk and crisp. – Ed Merrison, CellarHand

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VALLEY OF THE KINGS

It's English Wine Week over in – well, England – and it comes as the awards season on that side of the world is in full swing. Cue, as per usual (*hang on – there's already a "usual" in the sphere of pommie fizz?*), a swag of silverware for Hattingley Valley. Most notably, the Hampshire Estate picked up the **WineGB Awards** trophy for **Most Outstanding Classic Cuvée NV** for its 2014-based NV Hattingley Valley Classic Reserve. The same wine also got gold at the **2018 Sommelier Wine Awards** a couple of weeks earlier, while the 2014 Hattingley Valley Rosé won silver at the same event and matched it at the **2018 International Wine Challenge**.



Of course, we don't generally go in for gongs among our portfolio; the point is that the growing, making and drinking of these Hattingley Valley wines is sheer class. Still, the international recognition means a little more when a country (little old England, eh?) is putting itself on the world wine map. We're really proud to be working with this exceptional estate, and hope you'll get a chance to delve into the wines soon.

NV Hattingley Valley Classic Reserve RRP \$80

50% Chardonnay, 30% Pinot Noir, 19% Pinot Meunier, 1% Pinot Gris. Lovely hedgerow notes on the nose, plus crisp apple fruit and a slight wheatiness giving complexity to the

finish. The autolysis is very well expressed here, giving genuine complexity in a classic style, yet retaining that verdant English meadow freshness. 17/20 Richard Hemming MW, jancisrobinson.com May 2018

2014 Hattingley Valley Rosé RRP \$90

The 2014 Rosé is a blend of 60% Pinot Noir, 40% Pinot Meunier and 20% Pinot Noir Précoce. Now this is a very impressive sparkling Rosé. It has a succinct bouquet of freshly picked strawberry, red cherry and a touch of green apple, all precise and quite mineral-driven. The palate is fresh on the entry with a slight waxiness to the texture. It has more complexity than its peers and it fans out gloriously with hints of praline and strawberry towards the vivacious finish. This is one to serve to the next person that refutes the idea of great English sparkling wine. 92 points. Neal Martin, Wine Advocate July 2017

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