



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

DOMESTIC

[FARR HORIZONS – Sangreal, Farrside, Chardonnay et al from Geelong visionary](#)
[ONANNON AGAIN – Full suite of new releases from Messrs Middleton, Hermann & Byron](#)
[ANNA'S AROMATICS – Pristine whites from Marlborough's marvellous TWR](#)
[FAX OF LIFE – Al Timms reproduces Chardonnay perfection from the Macedon Ranges](#)
[LENSWOOD LEGEND – Fresh vintage of Geoff Weaver's immaculate Sauvignon Blanc](#)
[ANAPERENNIAL FAVOURITE – Monster review for Glaetzer's old-vine Shiraz/Cab blend](#)
[NEW PINOT FROM PJ – Charteris plots path to happiness with silky Central Otago](#)
[BOTRYTISED BIODYNAMISM - Sticky Riesling from Huia is pure bliss](#)
[NOIRIEN ANEW – Coolly defined '17 Pinot from Mornington Peninsula's Scorpo](#)
[CROMWELLIAN PURISM – Blazing first review for 2016 Burn Cottage Pinot Noir](#)

IMPORTS

[LEROY, LA REINE - New Bourgogne Rouge et Blanc from Lalou Bize](#)
[ROLAND RESERVE'S JUDGEMENT – Critic's verdict on Moric's "beautiful" Blaufränkisch](#)
[MORE MOREISH MEURSAULT – Range of '16 whites and '15 reds from Domaine Matrot](#)
[GERMAN CHAMPIONS – World Cup failure glossed over by winning display in Decanter tasting](#)
[STOP IT AND TARDY UP – Drop everything to pick up the wines from Vosne star Guillaume](#)
[AMADIEU AMOUR – Prepare to be smitten by Rhône producer's new Cairanne and Gigondas](#)
[ROMAIN REFINED – En vogue and in form, Taupenot-Merme's 2016s wow the critics](#)
[SONA A GUN – Dominik earns highest praise for the wines of Koehler-Ruprecht](#)

DOMESTIC

FARR HORIZONS

"I call '17 a racy vintage for us," says Nick Farr with a slight chuckle. Raciness is relative, and Bannockburn and Bernkastel, say, work off a different scale. But still it's clear what he means when experiencing the purity and acid drive in the Chardonnay. The Viognier, too, has superb varietal complexity with a buoyancy and freshness that few manage to achieve with this grape. "I think you can see the fineness, texturally, and more detail because it was a really prolonged growing season," he adds. "It just didn't get overly warm at any stage and it dragged on and on." The reds for this latest release are from 2016, and they show gleaming, lifted fruit shaded in with soil minerality, suede tannins and whole-bunch notes. For a vintage characterised by plushness and richness, the subtle detail and structure of the Sangreal, Farrside and Shiraz are particularly noteworthy. Drinking beautifully straight out of the blocks, Nick is spot-on when he says the finished article is, somewhat counter-intuitively, similar to '17, with extremely fine, mineral-driven wines.

At play here, of course, are exceptional sites with significant vine age – and Nick Farr on scintillating form as he goes about reading them. Sangreal celebrates its 25th birthday next year, and the Farrside vineyard will turn 18. Drought-resistant, vigorous rootstocks are the go,

allowing the Farris – who dedicate an inordinate amount of time to understanding and improving their soils – to make the most of Bannockburn’s meagre moisture while keeping a healthy canopy to shade the fruit (you can count on the winds to take care of the disease pressure). What that means, too, is that here, now, it’s what happens *below* ground that is the No. 1 factor in determining the quality and profile of the wines. That severely mitigates the influence of “vintage conditions” – and explains the Farris’ remarkable confidence in their winemaking decisions.

And that’s also why this set of Farr releases will, once again, blow you away.



2017 Viognier by Farr RRP \$75

A blend of two vineyards, the first being the original house block planted in 1994, which has friable red soil over limestone leading to sandstone—similar soils to the Sangreal Pinot Noir and By Farr Chardonnay. The second vineyard is a younger planting of unknown clones in red ironstone soil. Good depth to nose with honey, peach conserve, almond and a hint of cinnamon stick. Rich and full on the palate but not heavy. Almost a Valencia orange note, sharp and fresh, giving a sense of cut to a gently mouthcoating wine. Good, fresh length. – Ed Merrison, CellarHand

2017 Chardonnay by Farr RRP \$90

The Chardonnay by Farr comes from the same site as the Sangreal Pinot Noir. North-facing slope of red soil over limestone, planted in 1994; mixture of Dijon clones and P58. About 30% new oak. Gorgeous, integrated nose of classy oak over white peach, fresh pineapple and lemon, with grilled nuts. Immediately revs with power and verve on the palate. Medium-bodied, slippery textured, sleek, oak there but in lovely balance. Very good, integrated length and immediately ready to return for another sip. – Ed Merrison, CellarHand

2016 Farrside Pinot Noir by Farr RRP \$90

Planted 2001 on black volcanic soil over limestone on a northeast-facing slope. The vine rows run east to west to shade the fruit from over exposure; mixture of 114, 115, 777, 667 and MV6 clones. Picked full two weeks after Sangreal in '16. Very floral, pretty and red-fruited - more than I think I expect from this wine, and certainly the foremost impression over bunchiness or oak. Rhubarb and spice (earthy and wood notes) provide nice shading. A flood of beautiful red fruit on entry - macerated cherry and forest berries; uplifting and juicy. Super tannins -fine-grained/suede - build; plenty there but taking time to make their presence felt, as red fruit grips through a mouthwatering finish. Perhaps I see a little more tension in Sangreal but this is thoroughly delicious and - for all that obvious pleasure - subtly detailed. – Ed Merrison, CellarHand

2016 Sangreal Pinot Noir by Farr RRP \$90

Planted 1994 on a north-facing slope of red ironstone on the surface going to limestone to bluestone below. Prettiness as you'd expect, but perhaps a little more brooding than Farrside at this time, with roast root vegetable notes along with red fruit. In fact lots of savoury stuff going on - mineral and spice, oak again an aristocratic backing. Then masses of fruit on the tongue, and a little more shape/clearer line than Farrside, albeit slightly less integrated in terms of flavour right now. Salty, ferrous bloodiness hits the sides of the mouth through the back palate. Length is really pretty and impressive, very mouthwatering. – Ed Merrison, CellarHand

2016 Shiraz by Farr RRP \$75

From the original By Farr vineyard, planted in 1994. North-facing slope; red volcanic soil with a base of

limestone with deep-set sandstone. Co-ferment includes 4% Viognier, while about 15% of the Shiraz clusters are left intact – with about the same percentage of new oak used for élevage. Oak comes across more cedar-like here, against darker fruit than the very bright Pinots. This has alluring depth. Something a little elusive drawing you in - perhaps just a sense of beautiful Shiraz ripeness (all kinds of cherries) complicated by heady, almondy Viognier perfume. Lovely fruit strikes the palate straight away - plush in feel but there's a lovely core density - not chewy, but substantial like firm fruit flesh, with good energy chasing it through and keeping it lithe. Juicy tannins; really stains the palate with fresh flavour and dash of creamy oak. So moreish. – **Ed Merrison, CellarHand**

[Go to headlines](#)

ONANNON AGAIN

“So lovely. You’d be mad not to.” That was how **Gary Walsh** of **The Wine Front** concluded his note on the '16 Chardonnay, and it kind of sums up the ease with which you can settle into the wines made by Sam Middleton, Kaspar Hermann and Will Byron at Onannon. 2016 was the harvest from which the chaps added a top tier to the range with a Pinot each from Leongatha and Red Hill. So with a few vintage rolls, the reels have spun into place and we’ve hit the jackpot with a fresh, exciting and complete offering from Onannon. Class everywhere you look.

2017 Onannon Pinot Gris RRP \$32

Handpicked from Onannon's vineyard in Red Hill. Pressed immediately and given a few hours hang time before a final squeeze to get some grip. Settled overnight. The juice is racked straight to old barrels with some solids. A combination of wild and inoculated yeasts are used. Once ferment has finished, the lees are stirred a few times before sulphur is added to prevent MLF. It's then basically left alone until filtration and bottling. The 2017 has more volume in all aspects than the previous releases. A tint of bronze from some skin contact. Quince and pear on the nose, lots of spice too: musk and lavender. The palate really

attacks; it's a mouthful of flavour: lychee, mirabelle plum and camomile. It seems a little denser, but has good tension too. - **Will Byron, Onannon**



2017 Onannon Mornington Peninsula Chardonnay RRP \$39

100% 95 clone Chardonnay from a single site in Tuerong. Fruit is crushed into the press. After pressing it's settled overnight and then racked to barrel. We played around with different levels of solids. A combination of yeasts were used to help build some complexity. No MLF. 20% new French oak, 10 months in barrel. The nose is smoky with grilled hazelnut, nectarine, ghee. Very tight, clean attack, a pure

soda/mineral mid-palate. It's more delicate than '16 with better oak integration, and finishes with clean, chewy savouriness. - **Will Byron, Onannon**

2017 Onannon Rosé RRP \$28

50/50 Cabernet and Merlot. Handpicked and pressed immediately. The juice is settled and fined lightly to remove some tannin and colour. The juice is racked cleanly and split between barrel and tank for fermentation. Clean, quick ferments follow. Once fermented the wine is sulphured to prevent MLF, and then matured for a few months until filtration and bottling. The 2017 has slightly more colour than the

2016. It shows a little more candied fruit on the nose, but has cherries and rhubarb on the palate. The finish is dry and clean. Savoury is the mission statement. - **Will Byron, Onannon**

2016 Onannon Gippsland Pinot Noir RRP \$43

*This is a blend of two vineyards, one from South Gippsland the other from East Gippsland. 100% destemmed, 15% new French oak. Beetroot leaf, Cunliffe & Waters Christmas cherries, shiitake mushroom with a whiff of petrichor. Delicate entry, sour red fruits, some pomegranate and Asian spices. Builds some sweeter red fruits and then finishes with a savoury grip. - **Will Byron, Onannon***

2016 Onannon Mornington Peninsula Pinot Noir RRP \$39

*Flint, graphite, red cherry, rosehip. Soft and generous to taste, quite ripe and fleshy, sweet fruit, sweet finish. Lots to like in ease of drinking and plush, soft spoonful of fruit. 91 points. **Mike Bennie, The Wine Front** February 2017*

2016 Onannon Leongatha Pinot Noir RRP \$62

*It's a shimmering bright garnet with a purple hue, a core of beautiful ripe fruit, subtle with fine tannins, refreshing acidity and a savoury overlay that keeps this in the moreish spectrum. 96 points. **Halliday Wine Companion 2018***

2016 Onannon Red Hill Pinot Noir RRP \$62

*It's exquisitely tuned with a core of tangy-tart cherry fruit, judicious use of whole-bunches and oak, really earthy all damp autumn leaves and wood spices. Sapid with shapely, raw silk tannins and satisfying with a denser structure compared with the Gippsland single vineyard wine. 96 points. **Halliday Wine Companion 2018***

[Go to headlines](#)

ANNA'S AROMATICS

This is one of the most interesting producers in Marlborough," wrote UK wine writer **Jamie Goode** following his visit to Anna and Jason Flowerday's place in Renwick at the end of last year. "Interesting" is just the start, though, since Goode went on to give glowing reviews to a stellar range of wines that runs from Riesling to Syrah via the "Marlborough staples" – though the latter go so far beyond the norm in terms of soul, detail, precision and personality as to make them almost unrecognisable.

Almost, we say, because of course Marlborough has been blessed with nigh-on preternatural gifts when it comes to growing grapes. Intense aromas, clear pure flavour and delicious freshness are not to be sniffed at. These hard-core terroirists take all that, and with deft touch, subtle thought, and a diehard winelover's verve, turn it into something quite wondrous, every time.

It all begins, as things often do in this part of the world, with a super Sauvignon Blanc (and what better way to prove your chops?). With this vintage roll, we also have the 2017 Pinot Gris and '17 Toru - all irrefutable evidence of TWR's transcendence.



2017 TWR Sauvignon Blanc RRP \$29

This 2017 Sauvignon Blanc is a blend from two special Marlborough vineyards in two different sub-regions. One vineyard is a sustainably-certified (SWNZ) site owned by Guy & Jane Lissaman in the upper Awatere Valley; the second is our certified-organic home block vines here in Renwick (Wairau Valley). Our 2017 release shows distinctive Awatere characters of guava, white currant and elderflower coupled with lovely ripe tropicals and hints of basil and lime from the Wairau fruit. These follow through to the palate - which is fine and soft with vibrant fleshy fruit and great texture, all balanced by a ripe, juicy acidity and lingering minerality. It is utterly delicious! - **Anna Flowerday, TWR**

2017 TWR Pinot Gris RRP \$32

All fruit for this wine was hand-picked and hand-sorted. The grapes were destemmed, crushed then air bag pressed, some parcels had lengthier skin contact time. Free run and pressings were fermented separately. Fermentation took place in stainless steel (64%) and old French oak for texture and complexity. The tank portions underwent slow, cool ferments to retain aromatics. Barrel ferment parcels were carried out in large format neutral oak on full lees, lees-stirred regularly. All parcels given time on ferment lees to provide texture and complexity. This wine is finely structured with great purity & length of flavour and a lovely fleshiness. Lifted aromas of nashi pear, raspberry, red apple and white florals follow onto flavours of the same along with savoury undertones which are balanced by fine, supple texture and lingering minerality. This release is a dry style which has concentration, balance and great texture with layers of flavour. Alcohol 13%; pH 3.35; TA 5.5g/L; RS 4.3g/L. - **Anna Flowerday, TWR**

2017 TWR Toru RRP \$27

First made 12 years ago. Biggest selling white wine after the Sauvignon. Aromatic, fruity and textured. Co-fermented Gewurztraminer, 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**

2016 TWR Gewürztraminer RRP \$43

This vineyard is claimed to have some of the oldest vines in Marlborough. Intense, moderately sweet Gewürz with concentrated Turkish delight and anise flavours. Discreetly luscious with seductive purity, an ethereal texture and an incredibly lengthy finish. 95 points. **Bob Campbell MW, Gourmet Traveller WINE**

[Go to headlines](#)



FAX OF LIFE

In a wine world where cooler is the new cool, Macedon Ranges is really enjoying its day in the sun. The best growers here are doing marvellous things, and the particular brilliance of the region is getting full recognition. It's hardly surprising, since the finest wines produced here marry subtlety and exhilaration in a way that few can match. Al Timms and the Shadowfax team are right up there, and their regional Chardonnay and Pinot Noir are a superb entry point. Al is another of those who never lose sight of the pleasure principle in composing his wines. He's also hell-bent on capturing every detail of Macedon's magic as he

goes about it.

The 2017 releases are smoking examples of how this works. Both pinpoint the intersection of deliciousness and detail – a very comfortable spot to sit in.

2017 Shadowfax Macedon Ranges Chardonnay RRP \$35

Chardonnay from the Midhill Vineyard in the beautiful Macedon Ranges. All fermented wild. Ripper chardonnay. Powerful, textural and long. Essence of the variety. Stonefruit, meal, flint and spice, toasty/cedary oak as added emphasis. No questions here: this is a wine of outstanding quality. 95 points. Campbell Mattinson, The Wine Front

20017 Shadowfax Macedon Ranges 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

[Go to headlines](#)

LENSWOOD LEGEND

An incredible run continues for this wine. Well, not incredible, really – as **James Halliday** says: “It's the outcome of Geoff Weaver's long experience with the vineyard, and his undoubted skill as a winemaker”. Recent harvests in Lenswood have been auspicious, and the definition, purity and tension of this wine are exemplary.

It's a true Australian classic from one of the true gentlemen of our wine-growing scene.



2017 Geoff Weaver Sauvignon Blanc RRP \$29

The late vintage reflected the ideal growing conditions throughout the season. Laidback technical/vinification parameters set the scene for the wine. The bouquet is precise and strongly varietal, but it's not until the palate that the wine sets sail, and does so in fine style with citrus and apple taking control on the long finish. It's the outcome of Geoff Weaver's long experience with the vineyard, and his undoubted skill as a winemaker. 95 points. James Halliday, Halliday Wine Companion

[Go to headlines](#)

ANAPERENNIAL FAVOURITE

The 2016 vintage in Ben Glaetzer's hallowed, old-vine pocket of the Barossa keeps on picking up praise. The harvest yielded such alluringly layered aromas and flavours allied to elegant structure, a perfect complement to the small, cool ferments that are the cornerstone of Ben's winemaking. Ben's Anaperenna knocked **Huon Hooke's** socks off, and the Baron of the Barossa also put in a knockout performance in last month's **Gourmet Traveller WINE** panel tasting of Top Barossa Shiraz. Amid a large field of heavy-hitters - many with huge reputations and price tags to match – the 2016 Amon-Ra was placed third, appealing to a widely diverse set of judges.



This is a vintage to remember for Glaetzer, and here's worthy recognition of great wines that pull off uncanny harmony between power and grace.

2016 Glaetzer Anaperenna RRP \$55

Very deep, bright, youthful red/purple colour. The bouquet is intense and plummy, with sousbois and foresty nuances plus some spice notes together with creosote, tar and charcoal. A massive wine, deep and rich and concentrated, with profound flavour and tremendous persistence. The tannins are powdery and drying, but the richness of the wine more than balances it. Licorice, graphite and plenty of char-oak. A tour de force. 96 points. Huon Hooke, The Real Review

2016 Glaetzer Amon-Ra RRP \$100

Starts with concentrated, dark and red fruits on the nose and some glimmerings of savoury, cigar box development. The palate is firm and dry without being stern as there's good depth of fruit. Alcohol brings warmth to the finish. "A deep colour," found [Andrew] Caillard. "Fresh inky blackcurrant, blackberry aromas with aniseed liquorice notes. Plush, chocolaty wine with ripe dark berry fruits, classical chocolaty tannins, lovely richness and volume with persistence." Gourmet Traveller WINE Magazine 'Barossa Shiraz' Panel Tasting

[Go to headlines](#)

NEW PINOT FROM PJ

"Somewhere between primary fruit and complexity lies the path to happiness," says PJ Charteris of his latest release. And you'd be tempted to take directions from a bloke whose passion for talking, composing and consuming good wine seems absolutely undimmed.

His 2016 Central Otago Pinot comes from two clones on two vineyards, Archangel at Queensberry (halfway between Cromwell and Wanaka) and Doctors Flat in Bannockburn. Just over half the blend (57%) is the Dijon 667 clone from Hawkesbury, with the balance Abel from Archangel. All up, there's 28% whole bunches in there, with the rest whole berry.

"Having worked with Hawkesbury for a number of years now, I am continually intrigued by the depth and complexity of character we achieve from what some in the past would have called marginal grape-growing sites," says PJ. "The Hawkesbury 667 clone gives an openness and ethereal nature providing perfume and lift while the Archangel Abel clone delivers weight and abundance, which builds the silky palate I like to see in this wine."

This has become a standard-bearer for Central Pinot at this price point. PJ's got that pleasure thing worked out.



2016 Charteris Central Otago Pinot Noir RRP \$46

Briary spice and plummy fruit build slowly and gently on the nose. The primary fruit aromatics are subtle with an underlay of whole bunch complexity adding perfume and intrigue. The entry shows plush but

refined fruit, gently wrapped in a cloak of spicy whole bunch flavour. The tannin is silky and soft yet abundant with generous fruit richness driving the length of the wine. Subtext oak and acidity give this wine an air of effortlessness. Drinking well now and reaching a very happy place in 3 to 5 years. - PJ Charteris

[Go to headlines](#)



BOTRYTISED BIODYNAMISM

A good noble sticky is a handy thing to have – and a tricky thing to find. At CellarHand we're fortunate to count on the botrytis induced by the riverbank location of several of our German growers. But there you head quickly into lofty grand-cru single-vineyard bottlings when perhaps all you need is a nip of nectar to put with a good pud. Huia's Riesling is all that and more – a gorgeously pure, luscious and fresh, you just can't go wrong.

2014 Huia Pinot Noir RRP \$43

A beautiful bouquet of Pinot Noir with a beguiling and seductive package of aromas - wild flowers, wild fresh berries, a light savoury and dried herb layer, texture and form, complex, youthful. On the palate - delicious! youthful and charming, but also tense and poised with fine firming tannins, palate-engaging acidity, a core of ripe fruit and wild florals, long finish. Decant for service or cellar (preferred) till 2019 then try again. 96 points. Cameron Douglas MS, camdouglasms.com

2017 Huia Botrytis Riesling 375ml RRP \$27

Deep golden hues with aromas and flavours of honey and quince, apricot and golden queen peaches. Creamy, sweet and very lush on the palate with spices of cinnamon and ginger then kombucha and peaches, quinces and apple. High acidity and long finish. Delicious! 94 points. Cameron Douglas MS, camdouglasms.com

[Go to headlines](#)

NOIRIEN ANEW

The CellarHand team made an enjoyable pilgrimage to Paul Scorpo's vineyard and winery in late autumn, joining Paul and winemaker Duncan Buchanan for a blind tasting of top Mornington Peninsula wines, including their own. It's good to remind yourself of the virtues of a region while picking out those touches that mark out the cream of the crop. The Scorpo squad is remarkable for its strength in depth - and the highs are getting even higher. The twin pillars of Chardonnay and Pinot Noir are impeccably represented at the entry point by Aubaine and Noirien. Both wear the virtues of Mornington Peninsula with clarity and pride, while offering the kind of nuance and interest that's tough to find at this price. Noirien 2017 is here, and it's up there with the very best we've seen from this label.



2017 Scorpo Noirien RRP \$32

Vibrant crimson red, with a nose of cherry, hints of spice and subtle mushroom elements. The palate opens with rich red berries; raspberries, cranberries and cherries. Tones of amaro follow and lead to a cleansing acid finish. - Paul Scorpo

[Go to headlines](#)

CROMWELLIAN PURISM



Burn Cottage's latest release from its own original Garden of Eden was a major news item when it was unveiled last month. Now a few others have had the chance to taste it, fall in love and share the experience.

The first reviewer type to do this is Kiwi Master Sommelier, **Cameron Douglas**. And here's his verdict:

2016 Burn Cottage Vineyard Pinot Noir RRP \$92

A complex and youthful bouquet of red berry fruits, earth and wood messages; cherry and plum with

*some red apple notes, a steely youthful layer with exposed earth, stones and wild flower aromas. Dry, firm, youthful and intense with vibrant tannins showing off some chalky texture, mineral earthy attributes, red berry fruits and wild flowers, a slightly warm moment soon disappears. A lovely example, still developing. Drinking best from late 2019 through 2027. 94 points. **Cameron Douglas** MS, camdouglasms.com*

[Go to headlines](#)

IMPORTS

LEROY, LA REINE

Late June heralded a varied crop of burgundies landing on these shores – fragments, mostly, given the severely reduced yields from the frost-ravaged 2016 vintage. To dwell on the positives: It's Burgundy and it's ace.

From Lalou Bize-Leroy, we have a superb Blanc from 2016, while red duties are performed by a powerful but pretty 2014 – a wine released a year later than the '15 as Madame felt it needed more time. That time has come.

2016 Maison Leroy Bourgogne Blanc RRP \$175

Ripe, open, pretty nose of white flowers, peach, citrus and honey, with suggestions of nutmeg and wet stone. Round and mouthfilling with a honeyed texture – quite a sunny wine with plenty of fruit and mineral input. A sense of succulence continues through the piquant,



mouth-watering finish. – **Ed Merrison, CellarHand**

2014 Maison Leroy Bourgogne Rouge RRP \$166

Shades of both light and dark, with coolness at the same time as brooding undergrowth and earth tones. Spicy cherry and blackberry fruit over gravel, with some implied umami notes. Good sense of depth to the palate, with has immediate power with firm acid drive kicking it along and chewy but fine tannins to frame it. Modern and fresh Bourgogne Rouge with substance and presence. – **Ed Merrison, CellarHand**

[Go to headlines](#)

ROLAND RESERVE'S JUDGEMENT

Bit of a grape for all seasons, Blaufränkisch – which is a bit of a dumb thing to say, since when's it the wrong time for good wine? But you get what we mean; that medium-weight, fresh-cut structure with rich fruit and earth/spice undercurrents. A lot of boxes ticked, there.

Roland Velich - the maverick behind Moric - is a boundary-pusher, not a box-ticker. These wines always take you a bit beyond. The '16 regional expression continues a super run of vintages, while the first review of the '15 Reserve from **Mike Bennie** hints at the greatness that comes from a master working with old vines in special places.



Limestone soils, vines up to 60 years of age, two years in

big oak. No fining, no filtration, just fantastic.

2016 Moric Burgenland Blaufränkisch RRP \$46

Roland had frost in spring but then the season was memorable for its beautiful autumn. The wines have great acidity, he says – a long-term keeper. Here we have about 20-25% whole bunches in the ferment – with, says Roland, very careful maceration of the whole clusters. It's apparent on an extremely floral nose (violets) with bramble fruit. It's a juicy, flowing entry with herbal whole-bunch notes chiming in with the fruit. Gathers spice and gravelly mineral input as

it goes, then with lovely fresh cut from the tannins and acid. – **Ed Merrison, CellarHand**

2015 Moric Reserve Blaufränkisch RRP \$82

Beautiful perfume shows ripe cherries, sour cherries, whiffs of salted liquorice, fennel, mint and undergrowth. The palate has this suppleness and silkiness, molten tannins and sweet, red berry fruit flavours. The flow is lovely, long and satisfying, with a light palate-staining richness lingering after each sip. It's a fuller expression of Blaufränkisch, sweet and earthy, generous and lip-smacking, with a tang of cool acid to refresh. It's a fine wine here. 93 points. **Mike Bennie, The Wine Front**

[Go to headlines](#)

MORE MOREISH MEURSAULT

2016 was the first harvest with Elsa and Adèle Matrot fully grasping the reins at this organic Meursault estate, having coaxed them from father Thierry. A superb legacy to take on, but this wasn't, to say the least, the kindest year in which to kick off the sisters' reign; the estate lost up to 80% of its normal production to the spring frost. It is, unsurprisingly, a fine debut - they're more

than up to the challenge. Engaging, incisive and forthright, they joined the domaine in 2008 and 2010 respectively. And what counts as normal, anyway? “After 2012, 2013 and 2014, not much fazes us anymore,” they told **Allen Meadows** of **Burghound**.

Elsa and Adèle are, quite rightly, in no rush to change anything. “We like the style of our parents,” Adèle told us when we visited in March. So they should. This sixth-generation grower - which counts as one of Burgundy’s first domaine bottlers, having started under the rule of great-grandfather Joseph a full century ago - enjoys enviable prominence on the best wine lists across its native France and far beyond. They’ve cut back on lees stirring and filtration, and are eager to spend even more time out among the vines. But they’re well aware that they’re on a good wicket when it comes to the range, quality and style of the domaine’s wine.



The latest shipment of wines includes 2016 whites, a Burgundy harvest characterised by **Stephen Tanzer** of **Vinous Media** as yielding “charming, aromatically appealing wines that will give early pleasure”. Staying with his generalisation, which holds with impressions from our visit in March, the results of this vintage are “less ripe and full than the ‘15s and come across as more charming and accessible at the same stage, showing surprisingly fresh aromatics and good typicity”. Along with these, we’re able to offer a small selection of reds from what is roundly regarded as a winning 2015 harvest for Pinot Noir from this blessed part of the world.

2016 Domaine Matrot Bourgogne Blanc RRP \$54 screwcap

100% Chardonnay from vines with an average age of 30 years. Pressed as whole bunches in a pneumatic press. Fermentation with indigenous yeasts in oak barrels (up to 20% new) for eight to 10 weeks at temperatures of 18-20°C. Undergoes complete MLF and is matured on lees for 11 months with some bâtonnage. Racked once before bottling.

2016 Domaine Matrot Meursault 1er Cru Perrières RRP \$272

*A cool, pure and highly restrained nose requires ample agitation to coax the aromas of green apple, mineral reduction, citrus and acacia blossom. The middle weight flavors possess a similar texture to those of the Combettes but with even better delineation and, not surprisingly, markedly more stone influence on the focused, chiselled and built-to-age finale. I like the balance and this is pretty much textbook. 93 points. **Allen Meadows, Burghound***

2015 Domaine Matrot Bourgogne Rouge RRP \$58

100% destemmed Pinot Noir from vines with an average age of 40 years. Indigenous ferment, preceded by a three- to six-day cold soak. Fermentation goes for eight to 15 days. Plunged or pumped over up to twice a day, according to vintage. Matured in young oak for 11 months. Racked after malolactic conversion, then racked and filtered prior to bottling.

[Go to headlines](#)

GERMAN CHAMPIONS

“A consistently high-scoring tasting, showcasing the finesse and ageability of dry German Riesling,” was how **Decanter Magazine** introduced the results of its 2016 Grosses Gewächs panel

exercise. “They’re making wines that easily hold their own with the best dry white wines in the world, and you can really taste that here,” commented judge **Sebastian Thomas** of UK wine merchant Howard Ripley.

A few of our GGs disappeared in the immediate aftermath of Riesling Downunder; the following are still available in varied (but always tiny) quantities and were rated **Highly Recommended** by the guys at Decanter.

2016 Dr Loosen Erdener Prälat Riesling Grosses Gewächs RRP \$181

Perfumed and aromatic, showing citrus zest and citrus blossom on the nose. The palate has a kind of herbal, grassy tinge, alongside sweet peach and tangerine flavours. Slender and layered. 90 points. German Riesling Grosses Gewächs Panel Tasting, Decanter Magazine

2016 Gunderloch Rothenberg Riesling Grosses Gewächs RRP \$107

Bright, heady scents of citrus, balmy lemon and stone fruits. The palate is tart but vivid; an elegant, linear style with smooth power and ripe, balancing acidity. Long on the finish. 93 points. German Riesling Grosses Gewächs Panel Tasting, Decanter Magazine



2016 Wittmann Kirchspiel Riesling Grosses Gewächs RRP \$135
A touch of citrus perfume and plump pear and apple fruits appear on the powerful, phenolic nose, then on the palate is shows lovely balance. It's very ripe, with soft but persistent acidity. Elegant, honest and long. 92 points. German

Riesling Grosses Gewächs Panel Tasting, Decanter Magazine

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

An alluring scent of bergamot and a hint of wood leads into a taut, smooth and powerful palate brimming with citrus, lime juice and spicy mineral flavours. There's a bright citrus acidity and mid-palate texture, before a long, phenolic finish. 92 points. German Riesling Grosses Gewächs Panel Tasting, Decanter Magazine

[Go to headlines](#)

STOP IT AND TARDY UP

Our visit to Domaine Jean Tardy in March was a highlight of a very fruitful European trip to see the growers in the CellarHand portfolio. It's a tiny domaine with vanishingly small quantities of wine produced, and to have so much wiped out - 40% to 50% frosted everywhere except Echézeaux and Chambolle-Musigny, where losses were more like 70% - seems heartbreaking. But Guillaume, like his wines, was in vibrant, gracious and uplifting form.

He's always one of the first to pick, with acidity the key in making the call. The wines, however, have a sweet, succulent core and outstanding perfume on the nose that lasts long after the finish in the mouth. Temperature during fermentation is a crucial factor - cool and long is the go, with a very precise eye on extraction. Finesse and subtlety of aromatics are the result, as well as

outstandingly silky, bright tannins. Oak is judged to perfection, and he leans on lees for flavour, richness and freshness.

Guillaume's relaxed disposition is much more than a farmer's resignation to the fate of vintage conditions; confidence and pleasure in his craft are shining through. He started working with his father, Jean, more than 20 years ago now, and took the helm in the mid-2000s. It's also more than a decade since the share-cropping agreements that kick-started the domaine ceased, and the intimate knowledge of the domaine's small but perfectly formed plots is also telling.



This is the fifth vintage of Guillaume's wines that we've brought in and, of course, we wish there was more wine. However, taking Guillaume's lead, we know to be grateful and enjoy what there is. And judging by the rapturous response to every shipment to date, we're not alone in that. Here, then, is some more glorious red Burgundy to rejoice in.

2016 Jean Tardy Bourgogne Hautes Côtes de Nuits 'Cuvée Maëlie' RRP \$91

*(from 45-year-old vines in Concoeur, in the hills behind Vosne-Romanée; there was no frost here in 2016 but vines in a small valley just 500 meters away were decimated, according to Tardy; 12.1% natural alcohol chaptalized to 12.8%): Healthy dark red. Ripe, sappy aromas of black cherry, black raspberry and licorice. A medium-bodied wine with sweet berry and cherry fruit flavors framed by a firm edge of acidity and complicated by a leathery nuance. Lovely vinosity here, with an acidulated red fruit character and fine, dusty tannins that suggest this wine will evolve slowly. Tardy told me that Domaine Berthaut-Gerbet and Domaine Arlaud own vines in the same windy, rocky, essentially flat site. 87-88 points. **Stephen Tanzer, Vinous Media***

[Go to headlines](#)

AMADIEU AMOUR

The Rhône valley sits on the remote outskirts of the CellarHand portfolio, but the Amadiou family have established Gigondas as an important landmark. With great regional pride and faith in the traditions of this landscape, Pierre Amadiou has gained admiration here in Australia with wines that are eminently drinkable – never forced or heavy – clean, pure and exuding a sense of local honesty.

We tasted with Henri-Claude and Jean-Marie Amadiou, cousins of Pierre, at ProWein in March and were struck by the consistency of quality across the range. The red Côtes-du-Rhône has been a mainstay of the portfolio for many years, prompting us to take the plunge into the Roulepiere rosé a couple of years back. Having looked at the young, light and fresh Clairette earlier this year, it's time to complete the Roulepiere trio. The white arrives with the new vintage of the red. Further up the range, we've opted for a charming Cairanne (the last vintage bottled as Côtes-du-Rhône villages before Cairanne was promoted to an appellation in its own right), while the expression of Gigondas we're bringing you is the Romane Machotte - a fresh, silky rendition that should prove very popular.

2017 Pierre Amadieu Côtes-du-Rhône 'Roulepiere' Blanc RRP \$23

This fragrant and fruity wine is made from 100% Clairette grapes and offers aromas of peach and floral notes on the nose, with good weight and a lingering, lively finish. – Pierre Amadieu

2016 Pierre Amadieu Côtes-du-Rhône 'Roulepiere' Rouge RRP \$23

Bunches of Grenache and Syrah grapes, grown in chalk and clay soils, are sorted by hand to produce this cuvée. Manual harvests and traditional wine making methods give this wine good concentration and intense fruit aromas of blackberry and plum. Full-bodied on the palate, where a hint of liquorice enhances the pleasantly satisfying finish of this classic Rhône wine. – Pierre Amadieu



2015 Pierre Amadieu Cairanne 'Les Hautes Rives' RRP \$37

*Offering lots of blueberry, blackberry, lavender and peppery herbs, the 2015 Côtes du Rhône Villages Cairanne les Hautes Rives (60% Grenache, 25% Mourvèdre and the balance Syrah) is medium-bodied, silky and polished on the palate, with considerable charm and purity. Brought up all in stainless steel, it's not going to make old bones, but it packs plenty of fruit. 89-91 points. **Jeb Dunnuck, Wine Advocate***

2015 Pierre Amadieu Gigondas 'Romane Machotte' RRP \$49

Full ruby. Potent, spice-tinged aromas of raspberry liqueur and potpourri pick up a smoky mineral accent with aeration.

*Deeply concentrated red fruit and floral pastille flavors take a darker turn as the wine opens up, developing licorice and cola nuances and a hint of cassis. Closes smooth, sweet and very long, showing resonating floral character and gentle tannic grip. 91-93 points. **Josh Reynolds, Vinous Media***

[Go to headlines](#)

ROMAIN REFINED

“Romain Taupenot has been behind the ascent of Taupenot-Merme in recent years,” wrote **Neal Martin** for **Wine Advocate** on tasting these 2016s “It is almost as if fashion has caught up with them, traditionally furrowing their own path of slightly leaner, terroir-driven wines that were as much about texture as fruit, now many growers have changed back more to this style.” It’s obviously a great thing when an estate’s long-term methods, ethos and aesthetics find themselves en vogue, but it means a whole heap more when a steadfast faith is matched with a steady trajectory, as has been the case at this domaine in Morey-Saint-Denis. As Martin notes:

“Meanwhile, I think Romain has refined the quality here in recent years, the wines showing better integration of whole bunches (although everything was destemmed in 2016), tweaking the fruit up just a shade, certainly achieving more refinement and sophistication.”

As elsewhere in Burgundy, 2016 was filled with challenges for Romain and Virginie Taupenot. Overall, production was down 45% from normal thanks largely to frost and mildew. Mercifully, warm conditions in July, August and September allowed this smaller crop to get good and ripe. 2016, Romain summarised to **Stephen Tanzer** of **Vinous Media**, is about fruits and flowers. “The

wines combine the volume and ripeness of the '15s but they're less sweet and show better energy—like a cross of 2015 and 2014," he told Tanzer.

That's an attractive proposition indeed for red Burgundy, and one that **Allen Meadows of Burghound** also found appealing. "I also found much to like in the Taupenot 2016s and particularly so at the villages level," he said.

And so will you.



2016 Taupenot-Merme Bourgogne Rouge RRP \$69

The 2016 Bourgogne Rouge has a lifted, quite floral bouquet that offers pretty blueberry and black cherry fruit.

The palate is medium-bodied with fine, slightly grainy tannin, although it just needs a little more fleshiness to develop on the finish. If it does, it may perch at the upper end of my banded score. 86-88 points. Neal Martin, Wine Advocate

2016 Taupenot-Merme Saint-Romain Rouge RRP \$80

Domaine Taupenot-Merme owns 1.3Ha of Pinot Noir vines in Saint-Romain. These grow in the Le Marsain, En Poillange and Le Marsain lieux-dits, and have an average age of 45 years.

2016 Taupenot-Merme Chambolle-Musigny RRP \$181

The 2016 Chambolle-Musigny Village has a tight-knit bouquet, earthier than the Auxey-Duresses with a touch of damp woodland complementing the sultry black fruit. The palate is medium-bodied with supple tannin, bright red berry fruit laced with sea salt, leading to quite a precise and sappy finish that has more joie-de-vivre than the aromatics. Given the challenging growing season, this is a great success. 88-90 points. Neal Martin, Wine Advocate

2016 Taupenot-Merme Gevrey-Chambertin RRP \$181

The 2016 Gevrey-Chambertin Village has been a consistent performer at the domaine. It has a clean and precise bouquet although it does not quite convey the same energy and fruit concentration as the Morey-Saint-Denis. The palate is medium-bodied with fine tannin, elegant and bright with tart red fruit with a tang of spice towards the finish. This seems to meliorate as it goes on. 88-90 points. Neal Martin, Wine Advocate

2016 Taupenot-Merme Morey-Saint-Denis 1er Cru La Riotte RRP \$272

The 2016 Morey Saint Denis 1er Cru La Riotte has an expressive and engaging bouquet, a mixture of red and black fruit, pressed flowers and bergamot tea, complex and gaining intensity with aeration. The palate is medium-bodied with supple tannin, very well-judged acidity, maybe a little conservative but very precise with a sense of energy and tension conveyed on the finish. Fortunately there is a good volume of this wine this vintage – try to buy some. 91-93 points. Neal Martin, Wine Advocate

[Go to headlines](#)

SONA A GUN

It's been quite a year for Dominik Sona and Koehler-Ruprecht in Australia. In the 12 months since Dominik came out for trade day last August, interest in the wines has risen rapidly to something more closely reflecting the fame of this estate – its uniqueness as much as its brilliance.

A couple of things are at play here. It's taken time, as it always does, for recognition to build; we only started bringing these wines in the back half of 2014. Dominik, whose big grin and jolly demeanour belies a strong drive and fierce intelligence, won a lot of people over last year and then his 2016s were rightly recognised as some of the finest wines of what turned out to be a surprisingly wonderful harvest in Germany.

We won't go on – not now, at least – since **David Schildknecht's** essay on the '16 Saumagen Auslese trocken speaks volumes. But this icon of Pfalz is an absolute gem, and here are a few ways of digging into it.

2016 Koehler-Ruprecht Riesling Kallstadter Kabinett trocken RRP \$29

Sourced from the Steinacker and Annaberg and not bottled until July 2017, this delivers suggestions of chalk dust on the nose, accompanied by zesty lemon and pungent oregano for a faintly Muskateller-like impression. It's softer in feel than I had anticipated from the vintage, but comes back with abundant and refreshingly bright, chalk-suffused fresh apple and lemon juiciness. At 11.5% alcohol, you get a sense of delicacy rare among Koehler-Ruprecht Rieslings, let alone others from the Pfalz. 89 points. **David Schildknecht, Vinous Media**

2016 Koehler-Ruprecht Riesling Kallstadter Saumagen Auslese trocken RRP \$113

This wine's 12.5% alcohol (at analytically nearly complete dryness) reflects virtually the highest achievable must weights for Koehler-Ruprecht in this vintage – barely crossing the legal threshold for Auslese – and very little fruit reached that point. Alkaline and saline sea breeze, smoky marjoram, pungent lemon zest and corn shoots with high-toned evocations of sour mash, gentian distillate and mothball make for a head-turning aromatic display. The silken, almost custardy palate brims with bright



fresh lemon, sweet corn and white peach while perpetuating haunting florality. But the overwhelming and striking palate impression is of a multifaceted mineral suffusion and protein-rich savour, featuring Chablis-like suggestions of sweat, oyster liquor, chicken stock, chalk dust, and invigorating piquancy of lemon seed. This shakes up your entire mouth and milks your salivary glands. Good luck resisting the next sip, or indeed cellaring and then trying to keep your corkscrew away from sufficient bottles to insure that you enjoy at least some of them in what is sure to be an even more glorious maturity. This bottling is set to go on sale in September 2018. It's hardly a coincidence that few dry Pfalz Rieslings today quite measure up to either the best of

those being rendered by Sona and Schmitt, or the minuscule quantities of Riesling from this same site being bottled by Sona's former boss and Koehler-Ruprecht proprietor Bernd Philippi. 95 points. **David Schildknecht, Vinous Media**

2015 Koehler-Ruprecht Pinot Noir RRP \$35

Fermented in stainless steel and aged for two years in large oak casks. Woodsy, smoky nose with forest berries. Open-knit and fleshy on the palate, which is pleasingly even with enlivening acidity through the finish. The tannins frame it well – with a certain rusticity but no roughness to detract from a bright and natural-feeling, ripe and moreish Pinot Noir. **Ed Merrison, CellarHand**

[Go to headlines](#)