



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

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DOMESTIC



CROWNED JULES

Congratulations to Julian Langworthy, newly crowned Halliday Wine Companion Winemaker of the Year. As luck would have it, super-talented Jules, who won the award at a gala dinner at the start of August as the man with the hand on the tiller at Deep Woods, has just released the latest set of Nocturne single-vineyard wines. These are the fruit of the long-term family vision that he shares with his wine- and cheesemaker wife, Alana. It's the third set of releases of this range comprising Chardonnay, Nebbiolo Rosé and Cabernet Sauvignon. Alana and Jules haven't put a foot wrong, and this latest batch from the Margaret River power couple is awesome as ever.

2018 Nocturne Nebbiolo Rosé *Lentondelle Vineyard* RRP \$35

MAGNUM RRP \$70

2018, while a great season, provided some challenges for our barrel-fermented rosé. But like the phoenix it has risen from the ashes of its winemakers' anxiety and is epic in its drinkability. The fruit comes from a single site, the Lentondelle Vineyard in the Carbanup sub-region of Margaret River. It's a flat, warm site with fertile, red sandy soils. The grapes were hand-harvested on 2nd April. The fruit exhibited fine flavours at moderate sugar levels with high levels of natural acidity. After chilling, the fruit was whole bunch-pressed directly to old oak for fermentation. The juice was fractionated into free-run and pressings, and this year only the finer free-run fraction was used in the final blend. Fermentation was

wild and no additions were made to this wine at all. This usually takes around three weeks; after 10 weeks and a partial stress-induced winemaker breakdown the fermentation finished! This wine was then matured for a further two weeks in oak un sulphured on gross lees. It was emptied from barrel, settled, filtered, sulphured and bottled on 13th July.

We're extremely happy and relieved at this delicious resultant wine. The texture and acid structure are highlights in what is likely a more approachable and fruit forward release of Nocturne rosé. As always, best drunk from magnum, on a boat, wearing white.... It's a pale salmon dream. – **Alana & Julian Langworthy**

2017 Nocturne Chardonnay Tassel Park Vineyard RRP \$43

2017 is an excellent Chardonnay vintage in Margaret River - likely the best we've seen from this vineyard. January temperatures were quite moderate and February was cool and mild, resulting in a picking date over three weeks later than 2016. The fruit had great flavour at low potential alcohol levels, and amazingly vibrant natural acid.

The fruit is from a single site, the Tassel Park Vineyard in the Treeton sub-region of Margaret River. This tiny 0.37 Ha vineyard is unusual in that it's interplanted with both the classic WA gin gin clone and the Burgundian 277 clone. The gin gin affords great fruit weight and texture while the 277 has great acidity and mineral line. The vineyard faces south and is planted on deep silver-grey sands. The picking date is generally very late on average with comparison to the rest of the region and was again the last Chardonnay fruit we picked.

The grapes were harvested by hand on 13th of April and whole bunch-pressed directly to new, one- and two-year-old puncheons, with no settling or fining processes. This juice was then carefully monitored and spontaneous



fermentation kicked off on day three after pressing. After a three-week ferment the wine remained on gross lees un sulphured until September of that year. In December the wine was emptied from barrel, settled, filtered and bottled.

It's a unique and spectacular site this one, making unique and spectacular white wines. After the hugely successful 2016 incarnation we couldn't be happier with this 2017 Nocturne Chardonnay. It's a touch finer than the previous vintage and has length of flavour that will take your breath away. The trademark minerality is there in spades and it'll be a little hard to actually let it go - though it will be good for our sobriety. – **Alana & Julian Langworthy**

2017 Nocturne Cabernet Sauvignon Sheoak Vineyard RRP \$43

Wow, this was the vintage that nearly wasn't. We had almost 10 days of rain and close to 100mm during the ripening period; we were worried that we wouldn't pick any fruit at all. Fortunately the sun came out and shone for a month straight and we enjoyed almost perfect ripening conditions. With the sun, however, came the kangaroos and birds. They took more than their fair share of fruit and we spent every morning and evening chasing roos from the vineyard. The kids loved it but we can't say we did overly.

Finally the fruit was picked on 6th March, the first Cabernet fruit picked that year. At the time it was

slightly worrying as the fruit, while exhibiting lovely light flavours and ripe tannins, had quite low potential alcohol. We needed not be concerned as after only a few days on skins this wine began to shine and revealed itself as a medium-bodied silky tannin-bearing beauty.

The fruit was simply destemmed and fermented in 4.5-tonne static fermenters. After 12 days on skins and a peak ferment temperature of around 25 degrees Celsius, the wine was pressed to tank and settled briefly, before being transferred to a combination of new (25%) and two-year-old barrels to undergo malolactic conversion. This wine was racked only once in this time and, after 15 months in oak, was emptied from barrel, settled, clarified and bottled.

The Sheoak vineyard makes expressive, medium-bodied Cabernets that bear some semblance to a modern version of luncheon claret. I am as happy with this Cabernet as any I have been involved in making. While it's amazingly accessible on release, two to three years' further maturation will really make this amazing wine shine. – **Alana & Julian Langworthy**

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NICK'S KNACK

It won't surprise anyone to hear that someone with the surname "Farr" has been judged as the creator of one of Australia's best Pinot Noirs. But it's happened again, with Nick a podium finish with his 99-point 2015 Tout Près at the Halliday Wine Companion Awards.

That particular wine has sold out but we still have limited quantities of another close-planted Pinot from that same year – the RP.

Plus take a look at these exceptional raps for Farrside and Sangreal from 2016. (Not to mention that incredible Shiraz...)



2016 Farrside Pinot Noir by Farr RRP \$90

Here 40-50% of the grapes are destemmed, the remainder left as whole bunches, and this increases complexity with its foresty, gamey (in the good sense), spicy overlay to the black cherry and plum fruit. The outstanding feature of this wine is the weight, suspended by some magic just above the palate – you sense it rather than taste it. 96 points. **James Halliday, Halliday Wine Companion 2019**

2016 Sangreal Pinot Noir by Farr RRP \$90

Always made with 50-70% whole bunches and 60-70% new oak maturation for 18 months. While the power of the wine is typical Farr, this vintage bestows a measure of linearity – a sinuous line to the palate that links and loops around the complex flavours of forest floor/spice and wild strawberry. 97 points. **James Halliday, Halliday Wine Companion 2019**

2015 RP Pinot Noir by Farr RRP \$115

This brilliant Pinot is one of the two top wines in the Farr stable. It's an exotic, decadent style which smacks of whole-bunch fermentation giving a herbal, root vegetable note to its multi-faceted perfume. Concentrated, opulent and fleshy: a totally satisfying drink. 97 points. **Huon Hooke, huonhooke.com**

2016 Shiraz by Farr RRP \$70

From the original vineyard planted in '94, open-fermented with 2-4% Viognier, 20% whole bunches,

matured for 18 months in French oak (20% new). Complex and rich? Of course, it's Farr. Skilfully sculptured? Ditto. The key to this compelling Shiraz is its seismic power and endless length. 97 points. **James Halliday, Halliday Wine Companion 2019**

BURN COTTAGE LIT



The '16 Burn Cottage looked spectacular right out of the blocks, but we had to wait a while before a review cropped up to show that we were telling the truth. It was **Gary Walsh** of **The Wine Front** that got there first, declaring it "delightful", while his site-mate **Mike Bennie** chimed in with his verdict: "Thought this was outstanding". Yep. it is.

2016 Burn Cottage Vineyard Pinot Noir RRP \$93
Fragrant and rosy, scrub herb, plum and cherry, spice and subtle oak. Medium bodied, great flavour, smooth feel, and a 'settled' character to it, supple fine grained tannin, slightly earthy and malty in the finish. Delightful. So well done. 95 points. Gary Walsh, The Wine Front

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CHARDY SHEBANG

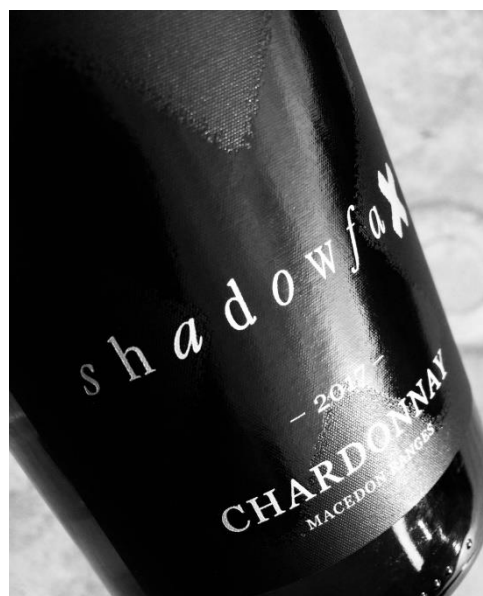
2017 + Chardonnay + Victoria = Winner. It's a pretty simple formula. (And you can substitute other words in there - like 'Pinot Noir' - and it'll still hold.) Really, we're seeing some special stuff and it's hard to see how any lover of this grape variety could fail to be moved and exhilarated in equal measure. Here are a few to try:

2017 Shadowfax Chardonnay RRP \$35

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

2017 Onannon Chardonnay RRP \$39

This is smoking Chardonnay, and a little smoky with it too. The struck match, almond, nectarine and citrus leads the way, then into a palate that's singing in clear voice. Flinty, bright, juicy, almond and stuck match – finesse and power – crunch of green pear and grapefruit to close. Oak lends some spice and structural scaffolding, but feels a minor player. Magnificent. It's one of those "Am I 95 or 96 points here?" wines, and while I used to be indecisive, I still don't much like putting numbers on bottles. 96 points. Gary Walsh, The Wine Front



2017 Farr Rising Chardonnay RRP \$49

Lovely settled complexity on the nose: salted corn, seaspray, lemon meringue, white peach and nutmeg.

Good cool citrus bite to it on entry; medium bodied, savoury, salty characters in the mouth with pithy grapefruit; medium bodied and chiselled. Gently mouthwatering with pith and salted nuts on the finish. Superb, taut, energetic release. – **Ed Merrison, CellarHand**

2017 Chardonnay By Farr RRP \$90

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**

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BRIGHT & AIRLIE



Eager beaver Tim Shand of Punt Road was first out of the box in showing the CellarHand team a range of ready-to-go 2018s, and boy do these look good. The Airlie Bank range is now firmly established as the antithesis of second-label mediocrity, instead existing in its own right and with its own sense of freedom and personality. The Franc became an instant classic, the sparkling ludicrous value, the Sauvignon Blanc a reminder that this can be a damn nice drink, and the latest Gris on Skins is an absolute ripper. Tim didn't wait; you shouldn't hesitate either!

NV Airlie Bank Cuvée Sparkling RRP \$22

This is a blend of 90% Chardonnay and 10% Pinot Noir fruit sourced entirely from the Napoleone Vineyard in the Yarra Valley. Each bottling represents a blend, being one part from the grandfather base tank (the oldest element being 2010) along with one part from the current vintage. The wine sees full MLF, as well as small injections of new oak and brandy spirit. – **Tim Shand, Punt Road**

2018 Airlie Bank Sauvignon Blanc RRP \$22

After just two vintages, we seem to have slipped easily into a winemaking style that suits both the vineyard and the drinker who wants a bit more from savvy. The fruit is picked early from Block 10 on the Napoleone vineyard, just before maturity. Pressed hard, then fermented warm on full solids in old hogsheads. To maintain freshness and lock in the trademark Yarra passionfruit character, we bring the wine together in tank in May, and bottle soon after. – **Tim Shand, Punt Road**

2018 Airlie Bank Gris on Skins RRP \$23

Picked from a block of gris on the Napoleone vineyard which is nurtured to hang a touch longer, with better tannin maturity than the fruit picked for the Punt Road Pinot Gris. Whole berry and whole bunch ferments are conducted in isolation in one-tonne open pots. They were pressed separately to oak this year, but in the end both went in their entirety into the blend, so the overall result is 50:50. The bunch ferments developed a very significant funk this year, and it was good to see this in the finished wine. The berry ferments supply musk flavour and fruit sweetness. It's all about the bunch though: Campari, aniseed and kombucha. Unfined and minimally filtered. – **Tim Shand, Punt Road**

2018 Airlie Bank Franc RRP \$23

Now into our fifth instalment of this wine, the fruit practically picks and makes itself. I have never seen a winemaking style (whole bunch, old oak, early bottling/release) resonate so quickly with amateurs and connoisseurs alike. Franc seemed to enjoy the warm, dry conditions the most of all varieties in 2018. An excellent, even crop was set, with no green berries. We let it hang, and have achieved the deepest and most profound flavours you'll have seen in this wine. Hallmark punchy aromas and bright fruit are still there though. - **Tim Shand, Punt Road**

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BRAVO BASSO

Well done, Stephen Pannell, who's back on a winning streak after cleaning up with three trophies at the **Royal Queensland Food & Wine Show** with his 2017 Basso Garnacha.

"Beguiling – that's probably the word that sums it up," says Stephen Pannell of a grape variety with which he is, he confesses, obsessed. The beneficiary of this obsession is the winelover, with the S.C. Pannell range spanning several guises of Grenache - from rosé and the natural-feeling, super-slurpable Basso, via a traditional McLaren Vale blend and Mediterranean-inspired assemblage, right up to single-site expressions with exceptional transparency and definition.

Such faith in the grape is rarer than you might think; despite Grenache's versatility and universal appeal, it accounts for just 6% of plantings in McLaren Vale (and even less in the Barossa). "I think it's come into its own now that many people have ceased making wine as a status symbol, instead growing it essentially as a food. Grenache grows well here and suits our way of life - which is not unreasonable when you think of where it originates from, in Sardinia or Spain."

A notable addition to S.C. Pannell's colourful palette of Grenache is the aforementioned Basso. "The idea for Basso has been bubbling away for a few years," says Steve of this ultra-low sulphur, unfinned and unfiltered number. This was a chance to marry Pannell principles - joyful-drinking wines of character and complexity - with the vibe of the natural wine scene.



At the other end of the spectrum, the same harvest spawned a second top-tier, single-vineyard old-vine Grenache. The Smart Vineyard of Clarendon appears in mesmerising contrast to the Old McDonald offering from Blewitt Springs. "2017 was a really good year to put stake in the ground and showcase what Grenache can do," says Steve.

Diverse but uniformly distinguished, the results are in - and they're quite something to savour.

2017 S.C. Pannell Àrido Rosé RRP \$27

The 2017 vintage was a very cool, mild and stress-free occasion for vines, not winemakers! Good winter and spring rains were followed by a very mild, long summer. The results are wines with ample fruit complexity and great natural acidity. Most importantly however is the delicious fruit freshness. Highly-perfumed with aromas of rose, strawberry, blood orange and Campari. A pink white-wine rather than a light red. The palate is immediate, with balanced acidity and a driving finish beckoning for the second sip. - **Stephen Pannell**

2017 S.C. Pannell Basso Garnacha RRP \$27

Best Red Wine of Show - Royal Queensland Food & Wine Show

Best Grenache, Rhône Varietal or Rhône blend - Royal Queensland Food & Wine Show

Stodart Trophy for Best Young Red Table Wine - Royal Queensland Food & Wine Show

*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 Grenache Shiraz Touriga RRP \$31

*Steve Pannell has always aimed at that indefinable "drinkability" factor in his wine, so open this for an hour or so before drinking. Then you'll see the best of this: the earth, blood and stone characters of the Grenache (54%) revealing themselves as higher notes of violets and pleasing wafts of darker exotic spices lift from the glass before you sip in the sticky, dark cherry-like juices. 4/5 stars. **Tony Love, Herald Sun***

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***

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***

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***

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IMPORTS

VIVA VAJRA

It's a tremendous thrill to bring to you CellarHand's opening offer from Barolo's 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. 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".

We've put together a shipment that celebrates the estate's broad palette of sites and styles. The family excels with all the Piedmont staples – Dolcetto, Barbera, Moscato and the very rare Freisa, as well as Riesling that is far better than it has any right to be. Meanwhile Nebbiolo plays a cameo in a wonderful Langhe Rosso, as well as a starring role in the Langhe Nebbiolo and the highly original, intensely drinkable Claré JC – a wickedly bright, tank-raised, 25% whole-bunch, nouveau-style Nebb.

There's so much to be excited about here, and so much pleasure to plunge into from the word go. It's a joy to be able to present this picture of Piedmont to you, in all its vivid detail.

2017 Luigi Baudana Dragon RRP \$43 screwcap

This is a field blend of white varieties mostly planted side by side, vinified together in an extremely unusual way for Piemonte. The varieties in the Dragon blend are delicate and the first we pick at Baudana every year. Fermentation lasts an average of 7-15 days in vertical vats. Dragon is then aged till the following spring in stainless-steel tanks, with patience and until the wine blossoms into full harmony. It's bright, pale yellow enriched by dry perfume of stone, flowers and summery grass. Dry and slightly savoury on the palate, its crisp freshness is well balanced by ripe flavours. – Giuseppe Vaira

2016 G.D. Vajra Pètracine Langhe Riesling RRP \$76

*A courageous and innovative wine, the 2016 Langhe Riesling shows impressive results in this cool vintage. This vineyard was purchased in 1984. The soils are too sandy and well-draining for Nebbiolo. At 480 meters above sea level, the site was also a bit too high. For these reasons, Riesling was planted here instead, marking the first appearance of this variety in the Langhe. The clones were sourced directly from Alsace. This wine only sees stainless steel to preserve the integrity of those lime, honey and tangy grapefruit notes. 90 points. **Monica Lerner, Wine Advocate***

2016 G.D. Vajra Langhe Rosso RRP \$35 screwcap

Our Langhe Rosso is a hug from Piedmont. It's an invitation to explore its different varieties and to get to know its personality. From young vineyards, it is a fruity, delicately complex wine - an ideal companion at the table. It's predominately Nebbiolo, Barbera and Dolcetto, with smaller quantities of Freisa, Albarossa, Pinot Noir. Each vineyard is harvested when it reaches perfect ripeness. The varieties are

vinified one by one, to express their personality and uniqueness. The wine is aged for 18-24 months partially in steel and then in first-, second- and third-use pièces. - Giuseppe Vaira

2017 G.D. Vajra Dolcetto d'Alba RRP \$39

Dolcetto is sometimes considered the ugly duckling of the Langhe. But in a hot vintage such as this, the grape flaunts its inner beauty and charm. The 2017 Dolcetto d'Alba delivers earthy and raw aromas of black fruit, plum and black olive. There are dusty sensations of crushed mineral or granite on the close. The finish offers vibrancy, depth and freshness. 90 points. Monica Lerner, Wine Advocate

2016 G.D. Vajra Barbera d'Alba RRP \$49

This is a dark and nicely balanced wine to drink with hearty pasta dishes topped with grated cheese and meat ragù. The 2016 Barbera d'Alba is a terrific food wine with bright acidity and saline, almost salty flavour qualities. All of this makes your mouth water. Fruity tones of black cherry and dried blackberry wrap thickly over the palate. Fruit is sourced from six vineyard sites and blended here. Give this wine another six months of bottle time before popping the cork. 89 points. Monica Lerner, Wine Advocate



2017 G.D. Vajra Langhe Nebbiolo Claré J.C. RRP \$46

Produced with grapes from younger vines on the estate's vineyards, Claré J.C. is 100% Nebbiolo. In 2017, approximately a quarter of the fruit was vinified with whole clusters. The winemaking protocol follows the 1606 writings of Gian Battista Croce. 25% of the fruit was gently placed as whole clusters at the bottom of the vat, and topped up with crushed juice. After five days, the wine was racked into a closed tank to finish fermentation off the skins, for a more gentle extraction. Malolactic conversion took place in stainless steel. Claré J.C. was bottled in February

2018, after a very short period in vat, so as to retain maximum freshness in the bottle. - Giuseppe Vaira

2016 G.D. Vajra Langhe Nebbiolo RRP \$53

Our focus for the Langhe Nebbiolo is aromatic purity. The fruit comes from our young vines in Barolo, Novello, Sinio and Bricco Bertone. The grapes are handpicked early in the morning so as to capture their quintessential character. Vinification is long and extremely gentle in order to retain lift and tension in this wine. - Giuseppe Vaira

2014 G.D. Vajra Freisa Kyè RRP \$96

The fruit comes from our San Ponzio vineyard in Barolo, which sits at an altitude between 390 and 410m, on clay soil. The perfect time for harvesting Freisa is determined by alternating warm autumn days and cool nights; in general this happens in the second half of October, 20-30 days later than the average. The removal of stems, the most acidic part of the fruit and with the greater charge of green tannins, is essential. The must undergoes a fairly long fermentation, which allows the integration of grape tannins into the wine, followed by a malolactic conversion (equally important for this variety). It is matured for about 12-18 months, depending on the vintage, partly in large Slavonian oak casks and partly in barriques, to give the necessary balance to the wine. - Giuseppe Vaira

2017 G.D. Vajra Moscato d'Asti RRP \$39 screwcap

Moscato d'Asti is a wine of wonderful but little-known potential. Light and fragrant, fresh and without cloying sweetness, it presents minerality and savoury notes that allow you to experiment with food pairing, or just enjoy it by itself. The fruit comes from three beautiful vineyards: Riforno and San Donato in Mango, and Moncucco in Santo Stefano Belbo - and all from old and deep-rooted vines. The grapes are gently pressed before a brief cold settling and then fermentation, which goes for about a week. The first bottling, as soon as November, allows the wine to cheer the Christmas table. – Giuseppe Vaira

G.D. Vajra Barolo Chinato RRP \$140

Barolo Chinato is an ancient Piedmontese digestif. The wine used as a production base is Barolo Albe of the current vintage. The "chinatura" is the addition of infusions of about 30 herbs, rinds and roots, including Cinchona Calisaya, hence the name. The blend is about 85% DOCG Barolo Albe and 15% hydro-alcoholic extracts of aromatic and medicinal herbs. We choose those favoured for their specific digestive, decongestant and relaxing properties, drawing liberally from the rich floral heritage of the Alps that hug Piedmont. Spices, brown sugar and the peel of organic oranges from Sicily complete the process. – Giuseppe Vaira

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LA SPINETTA ON THE CHARGE



“Year after year Giorgio Rivetti's Piedmont winery has earned a fame that has made it a leading ambassador of Langhe wine throughout the world, and the labels with the rhinoceros are present in the finest restaurants on all continents.” So goes the **Gambero Rosso** Italian wine guide's entry for this trailblazing estate. We're pleased to offer a neat and diverse little range here, with their ever reliable Tuscan Sangiovese being the outlier among a pack of Piedmonese pearls.

2014 La Spinetta Il Nero di Casanova Sangiovese RRP \$35

Sangiovese grapes come predominantly from the Casanova vineyard in Terricciola, with the balance (20%) from the Sezzana site in Casciana Terme. Casanova's 20-year-old vines sit on calcareous soils with ocean sediments at an

altitude of 250m. It has a southern exposure, and takes in La Spinetta's Casanova winery. The vineyard is sustainably farmed, with no use of pesticides or herbicides. Alcoholic fermentation goes for 9-10 days in temperature-controlled rotofermentors before malolactic fermentation take place in medium-toast French oak, where it spends nine months. It's transferred to stainless steel vats for two months before bottling, and is then aged for a minimum of six months in bottle.

**2014 La Spinetta Langhe Nebbiolo RRP \$49
375ml RRP \$37**

The 2014 Langhe Nebbiolo is an attractive, entry-level wine. Sweet tobacco, herb, mint, licorice, anise and dried flowers help shape this soft, open-knit Nebbiolo. Drink it over the next few years. 89 points. Antonio Galloni, Vinous Media

2014 La Spinetta Barbera Ca di Pian RRP \$53

The 2014 Barbera d'Asti Ca' di Pian is terrific, especially for a year that was so challenging for Barbera.

Dark cherry, plum, smoke, tobacco, licorice and grilled herbs add shades of nuance, but it is the wine's overall balance that is most impressive. The 2014 is perhaps a touch slender. Otherwise, it is impeccable, not to mention tremendous value. 89 points. **Antonio Galloni, Vinous Media**

A rich and fruity wine with oyster shell and dark berry character. Some wet earth. Medium to full body. Flavorful finish. Serious. Well done for 2014. Drink now. 91 points. **James Suckling, jamesuckling.com**

2015 La Spinetta Barbaresco Gallina RRP \$272

100% Nebbiolo from the Gallina site in the village of Neive in the Barbaresco production zone. It's a five hectare south-facing site on calcareous soils, and the vines have an average age of between 54 and 60 years. Alcoholic fermentation takes place in temperature-controlled rotofermenters and lasts between six and seven days. The wine undergoes malolactic conversion in oak, where the wine is aged for between 20 and 22 months. From these new, medium toast French oak vessels it's transferred to stainless steel vats for three months before bottling with no fining or filtration. It is then rested for a further 12 months in bottle before release.

2014 La Spinetta Langhe Bianco RRP \$96

100% Sauvignon Blanc from 36-year-old vines on the south-facing sandy soils of the Mango site, which sits at 500 metres above sea level. Barrel fermented in 2,000-litre French oak casks, where the wine undergoes malolactic conversion and about 12 months' maturation. It is then transferred to stainless steel for almost two years before bottling.

2015 La Spinetta Lidia Chardonnay RRP \$153

This wine, named in honour of Lidia Rivetti, is 100% Chardonnay from 37-year-old vines on the south-facing sandy soils of the Mango site, which sits at 500 metres above sea level. Barrel fermented in 2,000-litre French oak casks, where the wine undergoes malolactic conversion and about 12 months' maturation. It is then transferred to stainless steel for almost two years before bottling.

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

Italy's first single-vineyard Moscato comes from vines of between 35 and 40 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. It's yellow with green tints, sweet with dried apricots and crisp peach and pineapple, with remarkable freshness and brilliant fruit flavours, bright acidity and a zingy finish. 5.5% alcohol by volume.

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WUNDERBARBARESCO!

Antonio Galloni of Vinous Media refers to it as “one of Barbaresco's under-the-radar jewels” and we've just landed a precious little bounty from this humble, genuine and quite brilliant grower.

Many have come to know the Cigliuti family for the quality of the Langhe Nebbiolo, which is currently sold out. But if you haven't searched further into the range, we'd urge you to do so. We have two cru Barbera wines with serious pedigree here, as well as limited amounts of the excellent Vie Erte and Serraboella Barbaresco from 2012 and 2014.



2015 Cigliuti Barbera Serraboella RRP \$53

Cigliuti's first vintage of this 100% Barbera wine was 1964. The fruit comes from 17-year-old vines 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.

Cigliuti's 2015 Barbera d'Alba Vigna Serraboella is very pretty. Inviting, pliant, with soft contours and lovely overall depth, the 2015 will drink well upon release. This is a relatively mid-weight, restrained style for the vintage. Sweet floral notes add perfume through to the finish. I would prefer to drink the 2015 over the next few years. 90 points. Antonio Galloni, Vinous Media

2015 Cigliuti Barbera Campass RRP \$58

100% Barbera from 27-year-old vines on clayey soils on the Campass vineyard in the Serraboella cru, 350m above sea level. Fermented in steel vats at controlled temperatures followed by 18 months maturing in new and second-use French oak barriques.

Dark cherry, plum, smoke, licorice, tobacco and menthol infuse the 2015 Barbera d'Alba Campass. A bold, racy wine, the 2015 has much to say, in a more flamboyant, racy style than the Serraboella. The Serraboella emerges from a single parcel of older vines in the Serraboella hillside. The 2015 spent 18 months in oak, with about 50% new French oak barriques. Even at this early stage the French oak is nicely integrated. 91 points. Antonio Galloni, Vinous Media

2014 Cigliuti Barbaresco Vie Erte RRP \$96

100% Nebbiolo from 17-year-old vines from the Barbaresco cru of Bricco di Neive. The site is 350m above sea level on calcareous and sandy soils. The fruit is fermented and macerated in steel vats at controlled temperatures before maturation of 26 months in Slavonian oak barrels.

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

2012 Cigliuti Barbaresco Vie Erte RRP \$96

Dark cherry, chocolate, spices including a shake of pepper and plenty of dried rose perfume. Plush and welcoming, with rich mixed berry flavour, a floral mouth-perfume, grainy open weave tannin, and a long tea-laced finish. Grew in the glass and laid the charm on pretty thick. Very nice indeed, as they say. 94 points. Gary Walsh, The Wine Front

2014 Cigliuti Barbaresco Serraboella RRP \$140

100% Nebbiolo from the Serraboella cru in Neive. The site sits on calcareous soils at 350m above sea level, with a southwestern exposure. The vines are aged between 25 and 55 years old and yields are about 4 to 4.5 tonnes per hectare. Fermentation and maceration takes place in steel vats at controlled temperatures. The wine is matured for 26 months in Slavonian oak casks and mid-sized French oak casks.

The 2014 Barbaresco Serraboella has quite a bit more volume and greater breadth than the Vie Erte, as it so often does, along with quite a bit of tannic heft. Here, too, readers will have to be patient, as the 2014 is austere, unyielding and massively tannic. Dark cherry, plum, tobacco, smoke, licorice and dried herbs are some of the many notes that inform this decidedly virile, potent Barbaresco. Readers who can wait will be rewarded with a super-expressive wine. 94 points. **Antonio Galloni, Vinous Media**

2012 Cigliuti Barbaresco Serraboella RRP \$124

The 2012 Barbaresco Serraboella is deep, fleshy and pliant, with lovely concentration and plenty of nuance, all in the mid-weight style of the year. Dark cherry, plum, smoke, mint and dark spices all meld into the supple finish. Readers will need to be patient, though, as the 2012s need time to fully come together. The 2012 was aged 70% in cask and 30% in tonneau. This is everything one could want from a Barbaresco from this part of the zone. 93+ points. **Antonio Galloni, Vinous Media**

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