



Welcome to the CellarHand newsletter for July 2019. Here's a little taste of what's going on this month...

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### *DOMESTIC*

#### **FARR HIGHER**

Nick Farr and father Gary are known for not wasting words. It's a fair point; they don't waste them. And yet you get more insight from a few plain-spoken sentences here than from your average annual wine magazine subscription. There are various reasons for the economy of words. One is that the FARRs operate on such an elevated plane that much low-level stuff is immaterial. The 2018 harvest, which bestowed the grapes for this offer's Viognier and Chardonnay, marked Gary's 40th year making wine in Bannockburn. This family's been puzzling out those "one percenters" – those onerous unseen tweaks that ultimately make the difference between good and great – for decades. While much of the big end of Aussie Pinot town is on its first round of close-planted trials, for instance, the FARRs are several cycles down the track. If they knock it, it's because they've tried it. They're not wondering what results these viticultural or cellar techniques could yield – they're working out how to edge them closer to perfection on their particular patch.



There's not a lot of room for conjecture here. Why talk about what might happen when you've already been there, done that and proved it? The Sangreal site turned 25 years old this year, while Farrside is nearing its 20th birthday. The Farris know what works for these vines because they're seriously hardcore about excellent wine, and they've left no stone unturned in lifting the vineyards to the highest level imaginable. But don't ever mistake that self-assuredness for complacency; it's simply not in the Farr nature to relent.

Yes, the hits keep coming but that alone is not what makes each release a blockbuster event. It's a riveting evolution because with vineyards this good, experience this rich and refinements this intricate, the pleasures are boundless in scope and character.

#### 2018 Viognier by Farr RRP \$78

*A rich, concentrated viognier with fleshy orange-crush and white-apricot flavours, set in a chalky, fresh texture. Drink now. Screw cap. 92 points. Nick Stock, [jamesuckling.com](http://jamesuckling.com) July 2019*

#### 2018 Chardonnay by Farr RRP \$95

*Some quite intense peaches and melon here, set in a ripe and textural palate that winds a savoury edge into the finish. Stylish, layered chardonnay. Drink now. 93 points. Nick Stock, [jamesuckling.com](http://jamesuckling.com) July 2019*

#### 2017 Farrside by Farr RRP \$95

*An exotic and rich red with ripe-strawberry, plum and orange-peel character. Medium to full body. Soft and fresh finish. Even better in a year or two. Drink now or hold. 94 points. Nick Stock, [jamesuckling.com](http://jamesuckling.com) July 2019*

#### 2017 Sangreal by Farr RRP \$95

*A plush and rich pinot with lots of ripe fruit, such as cooked strawberries and rhubarb. Full body. Velvety tannins and a flavourful finish. Drink or hold. 93 points. Nick Stock, [jamesuckling.com](http://jamesuckling.com) July 2019*

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### ISOLATION RIDGY DIDGE

Congratulations to certified-organic trailblazer Frankland Estate for scoring back-to-back number 1 hits on the **Real Review**. New releases from the Smith Cullam clan's Isolation Ridge vineyard were awarded Wine of the Week in consecutive weeks from the site authored by **Huon Hooke** with MWs **Toni Paterson** and **Bob Campbell**. The Isolation Ridge Riesling was rated number 1 from 45 Great Southern Rieslings from the 2018 vintage. Meanwhile the Shiraz from this same hallowed site came first among 48 Shiraz wines from the 2016 harvest in South West Australia.



Hunter Smith, sister Lizzie and her husband Brian Kent really are working wonders with this enchanting estate, and it's great to see that magic appreciated.

**2018 Frankland Estate Isolation Ridge Riesling RRP \$43**

*This outstanding wine is lovely now and the track-record shows it will age superbly. Delightful aromas of myriad flowers and fresh herbs; frangipani, assorted citrus fruits. It's very intense and bright in the mouth, with vibrant fruit and acidity combining seamlessly. Expressive, refined, tautly focused. 96 points. Huon Hooke, The Real Review June 2019*

**2018 Frankland Estate Poison Hill Riesling RRP \$43**

*Wonderful clarity to this Riesling with white peaches, minerals and hints of spearmint. Full-bodied, dry and fruity. Beautiful length. Stones and tangy fruit at the finish. Organic wine. Drink now. Screw cap. 94 points. Nick Stock, jamessuckling.com July 2019*

**2016 Frankland Estate Isolation Ridge Shiraz RRP \$43**

*I love everything about this wine. It is beautifully medium-bodied, with focused cherry and mulberry flavours; there is a very faint and gorgeous thread of spice running through the palate; the fruit has a coolness to it, which I always love, and the price is excellent for a wine of this quality. Balance, composure and deliciousness. 95 points. Toni Paterson MW, The Real Review June 2019*

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**PORT OF COOL**

“A little bit of Touriga goes a long way in a blend, I feel,” wrote **Gary Walsh** of **The Wine Front** recently when writing up a wine from Touriga’s foremost cheerleader down under, Stephen Pannell. Widely regarded as the highest-quality grape in the production of red Port, as well as for Portuguese table wines, Touriga has long held a fascination for Pannell. The McLaren Vale maestro’s Tempranillo Touriga blend has practically owned its own trophy at the **Australian Alternative Varieties Wine Show** for the best part of a decade, while both this and Grenache Shiraz Touriga have been trophy

winners at the **Royal Melbourne Wine Awards**. And who’s to say precisely what the Touriga splash brings to the ’18 Arido? Don’t know, don’t care – it’s a ripper rosé anyway!

**2018 S.C. Pannell Arido Rosé (Mataro, Grenache, Touriga) RRP \$27**

*Orange peel and spice, a bit smoky, raspberry, but certainly falling more towards earthy and savoury than simply fruity. Dry, packed with dried herbs and citrus, firm almost chalky texture, dry finish with a zesty orange tang. A bit ‘intellectual’, yet easy to smash. 93 points. Gary Walsh, The Wine Front January 2019*



### 2017 S.C. Pannell Grenache Shiraz Touriga RRP \$31

*A little bit of Touriga goes a long way in a blend, I feel. Dark cherry, baking spices, some liquorice, Brazil nuts, floral notes. It's medium bodied, fleshy and rounded, savoury with ample dark fruit, a slightly earthy character, silky tannin, and some raspberry freshness in with dark nutty chocolate on a furry tannin finish of fine length. Super drinking. 93 points. Gary Walsh, The Wine Front June 2019*

### 2017 S.C. Pannell Tempranillo Touriga RRP \$31

*Consistently one of Pannell's best blends, this has a rich, dark-fruit core of cassis and toasted spices with a blackberry edge, too. The texture is smooth and glossy. Good balance and a very bright finish. A blend of 50% Tempranillo, 46% Touriga, 2.5% Graciano and 1.5% Mataro. Drink or hold. Screw cap. 92 points. Nick Stock, jamessuckling.com July 2019*

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## ADVOCATING FOR ANAPERENNA

"There's not much new to report from owner-winemaker Ben Glaetzer, other than that he continues to make some stunning wines from Barossa Valley fruit," wrote Joe Czerwinski of *The Wine Advocate* in his intro to the '17 wines. OK, agreed, Ben Glaetzer making good wines from these stately old vines is old news, but still we thought we'd share Joe's thoughts on this relatively recent release. The Amon-Ra score makes it 10 vintages on the trot that this wine has scored 95 points or more in Advocate (in fact, only one of those was a 'mere' 95); this in itself is a tremendous feat in the post-Parker bigger-is-better days. And even then, it was Anaperenna that managed to steal the show...



### 2017 Glaetzer Wallace Shiraz Grenache RRP \$23

*Yes, the 2017 Wallace Shiraz-Grenache blend is heavily weighted toward Shiraz (as usual), but it's the Grenache that makes itself known on the nose, adding lovely florals and raspberries to the slightly darker toned fruit of the Shiraz. Medium to full-bodied, this is supple yet crisp—perhaps a bit youthful and angular—but finishes with silky tannins and plenty of length. In another year or two, it might rival the impressive 2016. 90+ points. Joe Czerwinski, Wine Advocate June 2019*

### 2017 Glaetzer Bishop Shiraz RRP \$37

*A rich Shiraz with plenty of ripe blackberry and plum aromas and flavours, as well as baking spices. Quite long, plush and assertive tannins. Drink or hold. Screw cap. 92 points. Nick Stock, jamessuckling.com July 2019*

### 2017 Glaetzer Anaperenna Shiraz Cabernet RRP \$55

*I love what Glaetzer's inclusion of Cabernet brings to the 2017 Anaperenna Shiraz-Cabernet Sauvignon, giving it additional fragrance and length. Lifted aromas of mint, raspberries and dark chocolate mark the nose, while the full-bodied palate is rich and velvety but never heavy, framed by supple tannins that turn silky on the long, long finish. Showing great focus, energy and intensity, expect it to still be going strong in a decade. 97 points. Joe Czerwinski, Wine Advocate June 2019*

### 2017 Glaetzer Amon-Ra Shiraz RRP \$100

*A profound example of Ebenezer fruit and skilled winemaking, the 2017 Amon Ra Shiraz is full-bodied and velvety in texture, picking up more nuances the longer it sits in the glass. Floral and mint notes appear on the nose, along with a mix of raspberries, blackberries and baking spices. There's plenty of new oak, but it's been mostly absorbed into the wine, leaving a drink that's rich and sumptuous. And just when you think it's over, a bit of liquorice appears on the long finish to add a pleasant finale. 96 points. Joe Czerwinski, Wine Advocate June 2019*

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### PRESS ON PJ

"The real story is how a Hunter Valley Shiraz winemaker can return to his nest in Central Otago and make a Pinot Noir with finesse its surname, denying the bombastic notes that afflict many Central Otago Pinots." This was **James Halliday** in a June **Weekend Australian** column on PJ Charteris.

"He's like that dog, digging up its prize bone, smelling its essence but then burying it again until he thinks it's at its best," continued Halliday. "In fact, there are two bones: the '17 Central Otago Pinot Noir and the '14 The Winter Vineyard Pinot Noir. The '14 came after the best vintage in Central, and

the question was whether it was released too early. Both wines now released come 100% from small vineyard sites in Bannockburn, the one released young ('17) labelled Central Otago, the other ('14) released years later entitled The Winter Vineyard."

With PJ's puppyish friskiness and dishevelled coiffure, you kind of get the canine analogy. And you'll be hounding us for these wines once you've digested this praise from Australia's pre-eminent wine authority.

### 2016 Charteris Hunt Vineyard Riesling RRP \$39

*Delightful approach with honeyed apple notes, faint pastry characters, lemon blossom, lemon barley water notes. Palate has freshness, more precise citrus and green apple flavours, zingy acidity, clean lines and a good, long, mouth-watering finish. Pristine kinda deal. Delicious. 92 points. Mike Bennie, The Wine Front*

### 2014 Charteris Astral Vineyard Chardonnay RRP \$53

*It's concentrated. It's a blaze of struck match funk. It has grapefruit and sweet lime, peach nectar and barley sugar. It explodes, it sizzles, it burns and it blooms. It can't be pigeon-holed other than under the heading An Experience. It's not-so-much sulphides soaked in water, as sulphides nestled in a spread of flavour. It all feels harmonious but it also feels a bit much, the latter likely a personal response only. 93 points. Campbell Mattinson, The Wine Front October 2017*

### 2017 Charteris Central Otago Pinot Noir RRP \$46

*Poor weather at flowering decimated the yield of this wine (140 dozen bottles) and the Riesling. This is the magic of PJ's pinot in fair weather or foul – a highly fragrant, multi-spice bouquet dances in the glass, the light-to medium-bodied palate reflecting 30% whole bunch in a nigh-on apologetic fashion. 96 points. James Halliday, The Weekend Australian*

### 2014 Charteris The Winter Vineyard Pinot Noir RRP \$74

*Only 250 dozen produced and held in the winery for five years. From patches of deeper soil on the vineyard 36% whole bunch, 64% whole berry. Juicy plum and cherry fruit has a plushness along with the Charteris hallmark of elegance. 97 points. James Halliday, The Weekend Australian June 2019*



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### PINOT FILE UPLOAD

One grape, three price points, producers, regions and vintages all rolling at once. Offers a panoply of pleasures, does Pinot, and this trio sums that up well.

Not much more to add given that two of these winemakers – Tim Shand of Punt Road and Al Timms of Shadowfax – pen some of the most thorough and thoughtful tasting notes going.

### 2019 Airlie Bank Pinot Noir RRP \$23

Coming out of a dry winter 2018, spring was unpredictable and unsettled in the Yarra Valley. The tempestuous weather never led to much rain, however (just weird flowering/fruit set), and we headed into Christmas with dam and soil water levels low. On the plus side, canopies and the fruit zone were disease-free, so it was a low pressure year on this front.

Sensing an awkward ripening period if these conditions persisted (which they did), we decided to ameliorate vine balance in our Pinot Noir blocks by fruit thinning quite hard at the end of véraison. Some 4-6 bunches per vine were taken off the 777 and 115 blocks (the traditional source of Airlie Bank Pinot Noir). Winemakers were on hand throughout to ensure that the thinning had maximum efficacy, with only slow and weak bunches removed. Arguably, this technique acts more as a pre-emptive triage in the vineyard than any “doubling down” of vine resources on the remaining bunches. The net effect was that when it was time to decide on picking, the fruit ripeness was homogeneous across the blocks and we could proceed with haste. We unashamedly manage irrigation in the Airlie Bank blocks to promote freshness and vibrancy in the fruit over weight. Lush canopies give the vine the engine capacity to ripen fruit in difficult years, and provide dappled shade to the fruit zone. This can trim more than 8 degrees off the fruit

temperature on a 35 degree plus day. Our average crop for the Pinot blocks was 3.5 tonnes per acre, and the fruit came in at 12.5 Baumé with no shrivel or sunburn. Flavours were darker than 2018 and 2017, ripe cherries into plums.

With production of a spring-style Pinot in mind, we carefully plan the method of extraction and fermentation. 50% of this wine is whole-bunch fermented, which is done as 100% whole bunch ferments in 5-tonne open fermenters. This is a carbonic process; stomping does not occur until after day 10, and only once per day at that point. Due to tannin ripeness, the duration of steeping was longer this year; the ferments were pressed at 16 days. The other 50% is whole berry, with two daily pumpovers and no plunging. We aim to retain raspberry fruit flavours by a long cold soak, cooler ferment temperature and minimal berry breakdown. These were wild ferments, which generally started spontaneously on day three of the cold soak. Pressed immediately it hits zero Baumé.

The blended wine is then held in tank, where malolactic fermentation starts spontaneously. Post MLF, the wine is held unsulphured on lees for five months. Unfined, it is rough filtered through rockstoppers and bottled in mid-winter with minimal SO<sub>2</sub>. – **Tim Shand, Punt Road**



**2018 Shadowfax Macedon Pinot Noir RRP \$32**

The fruit comes from the Little Hampton, Midhill, Mt Macedon and Big Shed vineyards. Good spring rains set the season up in the Macedon Ranges. Soil moisture continued through to harvest even though there was no rain in January, February and March. The growing season was settled and full foliage had to be carefully managed, with crop thinning required. The dry summer allowed fruit to be harvested on phenolic and flavour ripeness alone, a rare treat in the Macedon Ranges. Fruit was handpicked in pristine condition in late March.

Hand harvested fruit was carefully sorted and destemmed with 100% whole berries into small

open fermenters. Natural fermentation occurred with daily hand pumpovers and limited plunging to extract fine tannins and flavour. After two weeks on skins the wine was pressed then racked into new (28%) and used French hogsheads, where it rested and grew. The wine was then blended and filtered prior to bottling in February 2019. Alcohol 13.6%; pH 3.57; TA 5.8g/L. The wine is deep purple with a deep crimson hue. This elegant Macedon ranges Pinot Noir has fine spice aromas including cardamom, cinnamon, five spice and citrus blossom. Darker blood plums, mulberries and florals evolve in the glass, as do sarsaparilla complexities and flecks of mineral earth. The wine has intrigue and flair in the glass, evolving through time. On the palate fruits and spice appear immediately. It has breadth and expanse, yet shows poise from seams of ripe tannins. There are complexities galore with clove and Campari spice interacting with brooding fruits and violet nuances. The palate is long and persistent yet light on its feet, bringing you back for more. A fine example of cool climate Macedon ranges Pinot Noir. – **Al Timms, Shadowfax**



### 2017 Onannon Mornington Peninsula Pinot Noir RRP \$39

This wine is a blend of three vineyards: our original Red Hill site (23-year-old vines, MV6 and 777); a site in Shoreham (19-year-old vines, MV6); and a site in Merricks North (20-year-old vines, MV6). The fruit from all sites was handpicked and then transported back to the winery where it sat in a cool room overnight. We used all the 777 and some of the MV6 clone from our Red Hill site as the whole-bunch portion.

All the remaining fruit was destemmed and cool soaked for 4-5 days until indigenous fermentation took place. The primary fermentation took between five and eight days after which both ferments had one week post-ferment maceration. Natural malolactic conversion finished within 12 weeks, after which time the wine was racked and sulphured. We bottled the wine in late December. - **Will Byron, Onannon**

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### IMPORTS

#### ANDRE THE GIANT

2017 marks the fourth harvest since we began our association with this low-key high-achiever from the Mâconnais. There were plenty of reasons we were drawn to André Bonhomme in the first place. This is a modest, hard-working pioneer family – the first



to domaine-bottle wines in the appellation that subsequently became Viré-Clessé. There's no ego or technical meddling in the cellar; everything at this place begins and ends with the certified-organic fruit. And on that note, there's a fascinating patchwork of terroirs across their old-vine holdings. These really get to shine through, with so much to explore in textures and spectrum of fruit and minerals. And then the interplay between richness of body and that pulsing Burgundian acidity which gives us Chardonnay lovers another realm to revel in.

With so many virtues on offer, it seems somewhat ungenerous to bring the conversation back to money. But it's hard not to add to the long list of positives the fact that these wines remain a remarkably good-value route to enjoying characterful, beautifully composed old-world Chardonnay that is true to its unique place.

### 2017 André Bonhomme Mâcon-Villages Vieilles Vignes RRP \$39

The fruit is from vines with an average age of 60 years on clays and limestone. The whole bunches are airbag-pressed before the musts undergo long fermentations with natural yeasts. This wine is made exclusively in stainless tanks for freshness.

### 2017 André Bonhomme Viré-Clessé Vieilles Vignes RRP \$53

This cuvée is completely different because it's from vines that are between 70 to 95 years old on clay and limestone. All the wines are separated during winemaking before blending. So, for 12



months all the wines are in oak ranging from new (15 to 20%) to 8 years old. Then the family blends all the barrels in stainless tanks to spend a further nine months or more.

### 2017 André Bonhomme Viré-Clessé Les Prêtres de Quintaine RRP \$81

Bonhomme's Prêtres de Quintaine is a cuvée produced in tiny quantities (about 2,000 bottles). This powerful blend is very refined coming from very old vines of close to 100 years of age situated on the Quintaine lieu-dit, which sits at point where the communes of Viré and Clessé



meet. Quintaine is a climat in the heart of the appellation which is unique on account of its soils (limestone from the Middle Jurassic Bathonian period and marl from the Upper Jurassic Oxfordian period) and also from its east/south east exposure. The name of the cuvée in fact comes from the fact the parcel is planted on the slope facing the Quintaine chapel. The wine is fermented and aged for 24 months in oak casks. The result is a distinguished, minerally wine with beautiful layers which will take some years to fully fan out.

### 2017 André Bonhomme Viré-Clessé Le Coteau de l'Épinet RRP \$91

L'Épinet is a unique and exceptional climat located at the extreme north of Viré-Clessé, opposite Bonhomme's Quintaine parcel. Planted in 1923, the old roots have been able to express themselves in a microcuvée of around 800 bottles since 2010. The soil here consist of reddish clay with stony outcrops which bring finesse, beautiful ripeness and great length in the mouth. These characters get to shine thanks to a slow, natural, long vinification over 24 months in oak casks. The wines from this climat have a more marked minerality and depth than Quintaine, allied sometimes to a certain austerity in their youth.

### 2017 André Bonhomme Viré-Clessé Les Hauts des Ménards RRP \$91

Bonhomme's Viré-Clessé Les Hauts des Ménards comes from an old parcel planted 85 years ago. The shallow clay-limestone of this fairly steep slope has a large proportion of red clay. Fermentation and maturation take place in oak casks over 24 months before bottling. The wine is naturally rich with a beautiful structure balanced by a refreshing minerality which also contributes to its satisfying length.

### 2007 André Bonhomme Succès d'Automne 500ml RRP \$90

The proximity of the Viré Clessé appellation to the Saône river allows the ancestral production of grapes affected by "noble rot" or botrytis. This fungus lives symbiotically on the berry when climatic conditions of the season are optimal. The Saône region has fairly high humidity thanks to daily morning fogs and slightly higher temperatures. Botrytis feeds on water and various nutrients in the berries resulting in a decrease in its volume and therefore a concentration of naturally occurring sugars and acids. These grapes are harvested into crates in mid-November. Vinification with indigenous yeasts lasts 24 months in oak barrels.

### 2017 André Bonhomme Noblesse du Temps 375ml RRP \$163

This rare wine is made from Chardonnay grapes that were manually dried and pressed in February 2012. The concentration generated by the natural dehydration of the berries is nothing but the work of time, which will go on to enhance this wine for many years. Due to the low production volume and the low yield (about 200 litres per hectare), the culture was developed for two years in glass jars.

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## CHABLIS RELIEF

What a blessed relief! After a string of years where Chablis was on the receiving end of a merciless Mother Nature, whose hail and frost decimated crops time and again, 2018 brought a welcome change. It's a credit to estates like this that they keep smiling through those lean years, and keep banging out brilliant wines thanks to the Herculean efforts of their vineyard workers. Guillaume Michel has seven full-timers out in the field to ensure that his 22 hectares yield the best they can whatever the weather. And no-one would begrudge them the respite that came with the '18 harvest.



Mild February temperatures gave the first inkling of things to come, with the buds swelling around 7th March before budburst in early parcels came on 25th March, two weeks ahead of schedule. Candles came out a couple of times in April and the first two nights of May also threatened the dreaded frost. Thankfully none materialised. Flowering began on 25th May and was a sign of the early harvest to come. Green harvesting soon followed during the month of June, and by 21st June all the trellising work was finished. Summer brought plenty of warm sunshine, which continued throughout July, August and September. The dry weather kept disease pressure at bay, and but for a couple of hailstorms hitting Butteaux the vines were left in peace.

The drawn-out dry period meant fruit development slowed in late July. *Véraison* gradually developed around 25th July. In fact it was heat that sporadically slowed growth.

Eventually the first grapes were picked on 5th September in ideal weather conditions, and went on until 12th September. "The 2018 vintage is one of high quality, and high volume," Guillaume cheerfully reported.

At this stage it's just the '18 Petit Chablis and Chablis that have arrived as the vanguard for this vintage, with some gems kicking 'round from the premiers and grands crus from '15 and '16.

### **2018 Louis Michel Petit Chablis RRP \$46 *screw cap***

Portlandian soils on the right bank plateaux. Very stony topsoil, rich in organic matter. Fine limestone earth. Vines with an average age of 15 years.

### **2018 Louis Michel Chablis RRP \$53 *screw cap***

These vines are situated in the heart of the historic vineyard. The various soils date back to the Kimmeridgian period, with relatively deep clay loam, containing marl and marine fossils. Quite rich in limestone. The vines have an average age of more than 35 years.

**2016 Louis Michel Chablis 1er Cru Forêts RRP \$80**

*Big limestone influence, driving more savoury gunflint and a slightly spicy, white peppery edge. Honey-drizzled peaches, too. The palate's very svelte, long and silky. Succulent, elegant and energetic. Drink now or hold. 93 points. Nick Stock, [jamessuckling.com](http://jamessuckling.com) September 2018*

**2016 Louis Michel Chablis 1er Cru Vaillons RRP \$71**

*One of the earliest plots to be harvested each year. This has attractive apricots and some hints of lemon butter. Smooth, fleshy and silky. A very elegant, smooth and drinkable style. A twist of herbs at the finish. Very drinkable now. 92 points. Nick Stock, [jamessuckling.com](http://jamessuckling.com) September 2018*

**2016 Louis Michel Chablis 1er Cru Montée de Tonnerre RRP \$89 screw cap**

*This is a wine of power, energy and breadth, made from 3ha of vines in this fine right bank site just south of the grands crus. Like Michel's village Chablis it's still an infant, but you can sense its density and power quietly building like water behind a dam. Elemental, brooding notes reminiscent of plant sap and ground stone lurk in that resonant, aromatic inarticulacy, yet its mute force succeeds in seeming concentrated, close-grained and sheer in the mouth. 95 points. Andrew Jefford, *Decanter Magazine* June 2018*

**2016 Louis Michel Chablis Grand Cru Vaudésir RRP \$155**

*100% on the north-facing side. A fresher wine from this warm Grand Cru site. Very attractive gently reductive nectarines and mangoes. Sweetly perfumed and full of energy. Mouthwatering. The palate has a very powerful, very composed and concentrated core of exotic fruits. Succulent. A joyride! Drink now. 93 points. Nick Stock, [jamessuckling.com](http://jamessuckling.com) September 2018*

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**HYDE & CHIC**



It's been a while between drinks with Hyde de Villaine, so we may have a bit of recapping to do. The divine Chardonnay has always been the centre of our attention from this vineyard, but we're really pleased to have got our hands on the Pinot Noir for the first time.

Anyway, going back a bit, HdV is a family venture between Hyde Vineyards of Napa Valley and Aubert and Pamela de Villaine of Burgundy, France. Aubert de Villaine, married to the Hydies' cousin Pamela F. de Villaine, is one of Burgundy's most recognized individuals.

Born and raised in the rich traditions of France's greatest winemaking techniques, Aubert brings to the partnership the foundation upon which the venture bases its theories and practices. Larry Hyde came to the Napa Valley more than 40 years ago with a great love of wine and the soil. In 1979, Larry left his job as an apprentice at some of Napa's finest wineries to purchase and transform the Carneros soils into what is now known as Hyde Vineyards. Over the intervening period, Hyde Vineyards has become renowned for the unique expression of its Carneros terroir.



Winemaker Stéphane Vivier joined HdV in 2002, bringing with him skills in vineyard management and winemaking from around the world. Born and raised in France, Stéphane's skills were cultivated in the vineyards and cellars of Pommard, Meursault and Chassagne-Montrachet and then expanded through his work in New Zealand and Sonoma Coast.

HdV is bottled under the coat of arms of the historic de la Guerra family from which Pamela de Villaine and the Hydes descend. The de la Guerra Family is one of the oldest winemaking families in California and traces its winemaking history back to a gold medal received at the 1876 Philadelphia Centennial Fair. This coat of arms symbolises the sense of tradition, family and winemaking history that this venture embodies. The wines of 2015 and 2016 are a particularly exhilarating drop-off point for anyone taking the plunge into these graceful, elegant expressions of place.



### 2016 HdV Chardonnay RRP \$195

*The 2016 Chardonnay Hyde Vineyard is a very pretty wine. Gentle apricot, tangerine, spice, dried flowers and mint are all woven together. Although quite subtle, the 2016 has plenty of structure, it is just expressed in an understated manner. There is so much to admire in this pristine Chardonnay from Hyde De Villaine. Silky and polished, the 2016 will drink well upon release. 92 points. Antonio Galloni, Vinous Media December 2018*

### 2015 HdV Chardonnay RRP \$195

*The 2015 Chardonnay Hyde Vineyard is bright, pure and focused, especially within the context of the year. Winemaker Stephane Vivier did a terrific job in capturing a compelling interplay of freshness and textural richness. Lemon peel, white flowers, white orchard fruit and mint give the wine its lifted personality, but there is plenty of palate weight and depth. This is a classy, super-polished Chardonnay from Hyde de Villaine. 95 points. Antonio Galloni, Vinous Media December 2018*

### 2016 HdV Ygnacia Pinot Noir RRP \$320

*The 2016 Pinot Noir Ygnacia Hyde Vineyard is a more than worthy follow up to the stunning 2015. Lavender, rose petal, orange peel and mint lift from the glass in a silky, weightless Pinot Noir loaded with personality and sheer class. The 2016 possesses striking inner sweetness and exceptional balance from start to finish. These vines were planted only in 2010 with seven massale selections taken from a variety of sources and yet some of the wines so far have been truly remarkable. Gracious and understated, the 2016 is stunningly beautiful. 94+ points. Antonio Galloni, Vinous Media December 2018*

### 2009 HdV Californio Syrah RRP \$113

*A more overt wine, the 2009 Syrah Californio Hyde Vineyard is pure silk on the palate. Stylistically, the 2009 lies between the 2007 and 2008. Deep, resonant layers of dark red fruit, cinnamon, white pepper and freshly cut flowers meld together beautifully in the glass. An explosion of fruit reappears to frame the finish. 94 points. Antonio Galloni, Vinous Media December 2012*

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## ANJOU POUR DE BON

The wines of Frédéric and Nathalie Mabileau were a new discovery of ours during a visit to Europe in autumn 2019. Since then, we've flown through a vintage of their Chenin Blanc and Pineau d'Aunis, found many new fans of the Cab Franc and welcomed Nathalie and son Rémy to Australia for the CellarHand 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary tastings. The Racines rendition of Bourgueil is an entrancing expression of Cabernet Franc – from 46-year-old vines on small clay and gravel plot, and something you shouldn't miss – while the estate's signature Rouillères Cab Franc (from its home appellation of

Saint-Nicolas-de-Bourgueil) is purity personified. These are joined by a new vintage of the Rouillères Chenin.

### 2018 Frédéric Mabileau Rouillères Chenin Blanc RRP \$46

Chenin Blanc from a 0.53-hectare plot of sand and gravel over a layer of white clay. The 10-year-old, single guyot-trellised vines are harvested by hand, with a yield of 25hl/ha. The bunches are slowly pressed and the must fermented in stainless steel with indigenous yeasts at low temperatures. This sees no oak, lees stirring or fining, for a wine of energy, tension and purity.

### 2016 Frédéric Mabileau Rouillères Cabernet Franc RRP \$46

*Vivid bright purple colour. Cherry, raspberry, subtle leaf and herb perfume, clay, pencils, but almost a liquorice richness. It's light to medium-bodied, impressive depth of flavour, tight graphite tannin, crisp cranberry acidity, satisfying length. Wonderful energy and high drinking appeal. I was tasting, but then decided to drink a glass of this. 93 points. Gary Walsh, The Wine Front*

### 2015 Frédéric Mabileau Racines Cabernet Franc RRP \$59

*Fragrant black fruit aromas, initially very seductive. Palate complete and harmonious, fresh, with dried currant and juniper berry, green peppercorn, crushed rocks and mint. Delicious, quite classic, shows substance and potential as well. 92 points. Decanter Magazine June 2018*

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## THE GRÜNER TRANSFER

The first couple of Grüner Veltliner rolls onto vintage '18 have arisen. There's nothing to be alarmed about – these first two from the Wachau and Weinviertel are business as usual in a dry, refreshing and totally moreish way – and that in itself is thoroughly good news.

### 2018 Domäne Wachau Terrassen Federspiel Grüner Veltliner RRP \$28

*Notes of both green and yellow pears shine on the nose. The palate has a pronounced saltiness and bright lemon*



*highlights, supported by a savoury backbone. 90 points. Anne Krebiehl MW, Wine Enthusiast July 2019*

### 2018 Groiss Grüner Veltliner RRP \$29

100% Grüner Veltliner from calcareous loess and ferruginous soils. Selectively hand harvested at the end of October by hand in several steps. Six hours' maceration on the skins. Gently pressed without stems and fermented with a combination of vineyard and neutral yeasts. Aged on the full lees in stainless steel tank till bottling in February 2019. Alcohol 12.5%, RS 2.2g/L; acidity 5.8g/L.

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### PETT, NATCH

Just a brief snippet for those who may've inadvertently misplaced their thoughts of Riesling on the backburner this winter, only to discover that you can't live without it. Gunderloch cropped up in a big way in the latest edition of **Wine Spectator** with a raft of reviews emphasising the



freshness, elegance and Rheinhessen personality that ooze from the wines of brilliant young Johannes Hasselbach. A real bonus here is the way this range runs the gamut of Riesling styles at various (and very attractive) price points. Something truly for everyone – and yes, that Pettenthal is smoking. Natch.

### 2017 Gunderloch Red Stone Riesling RRP \$32

*Zesty and elegant, emphasizing the texture and minerally elements, but still showing citrus and orchard fruit flavours. The firm core of acidity keeps everything intact, as this finishes with blood orange and white pepper*

*notes. 89 points. Aleks Zecevic, Wine Spectator June 2019*

### 2017 Gunderloch Riesling Pettenthal Grosses Gewächs RRP \$107

*Very minerally and powerful, with an impressive backbone of acidity standing behind flavours of dried apple, lime zest and star fruit. The finish lingers with dried herbal notes and rich, spicy accents. Complex and expressive, but needs some time to reveal itself. Best from 2022 through 2030. 92 points. Aleks Zecevic, Wine Spectator June 2019*

### 2017 Gunderloch Riesling Rothenberg Grosses Gewächs RRP \$117

*Silky in texture, with good concentration of flavours, featuring snappy green apple, pear and lemon oil flavours and accents of lemongrass and thyme, providing an elegant mouthfeel. The intensely mouthwatering finish is filled with savory mineral accents. Give this several years to come together completely. Best from 2022 through 2031. 93 points. Aleks Zecevic, Wine Spectator June 2019*



**2017 Gunderloch Jean-Baptiste Riesling RRP \$35**

*Enticing mineral, pear and citrus aromas and flavours mark this bright and vibrant kabinett. A perfect representative of the category, without much sweetness, but elegant and thirst-quenching. Drink now through 2025. 90 points. Aleks Zecevic, Wine Spectator June 2019*

**2017 Gunderloch Riesling Rothenberg Spätlese RRP \$74**

*Silky in texture, with a little bit of crunchiness, this is well-balanced and vibrant overall, exhibiting passion fruit, vanilla, verbena and mineral aromas and flavours, which unfold in waves over the delicate structure. Fine length. Best from 2021 through 2035. 93 points. Aleks Zecevic, Wine Spectator June 2019*

**2016 Gunderloch Rothenberg Riesling Auslese 375ml RRP \$70**

*An interesting auslese, with aromas of hops and geranium oil, while the palate shows notes of candied ginger, honey and ruby grapefruit, with hints of cream and cinnamon. Shows density, yet the acidity keeps this lively and full of energy. Delicious now, but the best is yet to come. Best from 2020 through 2036. 92 points. Aleks Zecevic, Wine Spectator May 2018*

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