



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

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### DOMESTIC

#### MULHOLLAND'S DRIVE



“From one of the most beautiful, biodynamic-farmed vineyards on earth,” wrote **Mike Bennie** in the introduction to his review of last year's Riesling / Grüner release from Burn Cottage. It really is a slice of heaven. Looks aren't everything when it comes to wine, of course, but there are some places that cast a spell. If you're lucky, the divine surroundings where grapes grow are matched by exquisite wines – wines that leave you with the impression that you've basked in all that beauty.

Burn Cottage is one such place.

It's striking how much the critical responses extol the sensual pleasure as much as the structural or technical virtues of these wines. “A wine of tremendous appeal and seduction,” wrote **Joe Czerwinski** of *Wine Advocate*. “Delightful. So well done,” said **Gary Walsh** of *The Wine Front*. **Cam Douglas MW** called it “a lovely example”, while *Business Insider's* **Frank Wilden** declared it

“positively lissom and an absolute pleasure to drink”. **Bob Campbell MW** of *The Real Review* branded it “totally seductive”, adding: “The texture is to die for and the wine has impressive power as evidenced by a lingering finish that won't quit.”

Campbell rated this release's predecessor no. 1 from 98 Central Otago Pinot Noir wines tasted from the

'16 vintage. He's the first to write up his thoughts on the 2017, too, which he slapped with a 97-point score in proclaiming it "a seriously good Pinot Noir".

Central Otago has a lot going for it, but it's not an easy place to grow great wines. What's more, 2017 was not a straightforward season. But this is a site blessed by nature, borne of love, conceived with intelligence and farmed with a diehard dedication to bring its many subtle charms irresistibly to life.

### 2016 Burn Cottage Riesling / Grüner Veltliner RRP \$68

*Co-fermented but picked in two waves. Fermented to dryness. Some skin contact (up to 48 hours) to build texture, sees both oak and stainless steel. From one of the most beautiful, biodynamic-farmed vineyards on earth.*

*Complex white of assertive fragrance, bright flavour, energetic acidity, fine chalky texture. Drives so well across the palate, a scorching blaze of zestiness, 'mineral character' and citrus fruit character. Steely finish seals the deal. Needs time to show its best, but blazing a brilliant trail now. 94 points. **Mike Bennie, The Wine Front***

### 2016 Burn Cottage Moonlight Race Pinot Noir RRP \$68

*Generous, stylish, spicy and expressive, with plump blackberry, clove and plum flavours wrapped around a thread of black liquorice. The texture is smooth and lush, while the tannins provide appealing traction on the finish, where a fresh green sage note comes in. 94 points. **MaryAnn Worobiec, Wine Spectator***

### 2017 Burn Cottage Vineyard Pinot Noir RRP \$92

*I never swallow samples during tasting but got pretty close with this wine. It's just so damn delicious with layer upon layer of fruit and savoury characters that defy description. A tease of fruit sweetness is balanced by gentle tannins and subtle acidity that drive a very lengthy finish. A seriously good Pinot Noir. 97 points. **Bob Campbell MW, The Real Review***



### 2017 Burn Cottage Valli Vineyard Pinot Noir RRP \$92

*A grape exchange with Grant Taylor of Valli Vineyards from his Gibbston vineyard. Seamless, silken and tantalisingly complex wine with dark cherry, berry, herb, floral, red rose and spicy oak flavours. A very impressive truly age-worthy Pinot Noir. 96 points. **Bob Campbell MW, The Real Review***

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## ISOLATION EVOLUTION

Frankland Estate's 30<sup>th</sup> birthday celebrations in 2018 gave us all a great chance to bask in the wonderful personality and versatility of Isolation Ridge, a vineyard that yields a few different styles of Riesling alongside silky, elegant Shiraz and Bordeaux varieties. These wines mature with tremendous grace and definition.

The museum program for the single-vineyard dry Riesling is another chance to celebrate this range. The current-release Isolation Ridge rizz is perhaps the best young wine made from the site (how many professional reviews open with the letters "OMG"?), and the 2009, recently reviewed by **James Halliday**, shows the poise, pleasure and profundity of this legendary Australian vineyard with a decade under its belt.



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

**MAGNUM RRP\$117**

*OMG. Incredible complexity on the nose with crushed-stone, slate and lemon character. Some nutmeg and white pepper, too. Full-bodied with a crunchy and creamy palate that highlights the bitter-lemon and mineral flavours. Very, very long. Organic wine. Drink now. Screw cap. 96 points. Nick Stock, [jamesuckling.com](http://jamesuckling.com)*

**2009 Frankland Estate Isolation Ridge Riesling RRP \$68**

**MAGNUM RRP\$135**

*The wine is still unbelievably young. Bright straw-green, beautifully poised and balanced on ballet shoes of acidity, the lemon/lemon curd flavours of the wine providing top-class hedonistic pleasure. 96 points. James Halliday, *Halliday Magazine**

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## JOE'S ROOTS

We're into the second year of our partnership with Joe and Lou Holyman, the wonderful Tamar Valley complement to the Derwent Valley wines of Stefano Lubiana.

For this pretty much one-couple show – Joe has a part-timer helping in the vineyard, but that's it – it's become a multi-faceted release, albeit with most of the wines appearing in minuscule quantities. There's a range of vintages on show, too. Long, cool 2017 will go down as one of the great harvests, Joe reckons. Slighter warmer '18, which begat this Holyman Chardonnay, gave rise to delightfully approachable wines. And then a return to a long, cool vibe, '19 is shaping up as a cracker, as four of these Stoney Rise wines attest.

That's right, four. There's a tiny dash of Grüner – now a decade old as a member of the Holyman portfolio. There's a rare rerun of Chardonnay; not a staple of the Stoney Rise range, it's an opportunistic yet altruistic effort. The No Clothes Pinot is a natural beauty. Topping the offering this year is the debut of the super-rare, tricky but terrific Trousseau. The Stoney Rise Pinot Noir, meanwhile, hails from 2018 and balances style with substance magnificently. It is, in a word, a cracker.

And so to Holyman, where the Chardonnay is so scarce and coveted as to make it a virtual unicorn. This 2018 is joined by the two flagship Pinot Noir wines from '17 and '16. Again from the 1986 plantings, the estate and 'Project X' Pinots will show you precisely why Joe and Lou were so fond of this harvest in their idyllic corner of the Apple Isle.



## STONE RISE

**2019 Stoney Rise Grüner Veltliner RRP \$35**

This is our 10th vintage interpreting this Austrian grape variety. Our aim with this wine, as with all our others, is to show the varietal characters as well as the seasonal variances we get here in Tasmania. This version shows the usual characteristics of pear and almond on the nose. The palate has some pear as well as a hint of lime zest. The citrus character carries through to the finish which is equal to the zippy acidity

from this fresh wine that has been bottled at only 11% alcohol. This needs a bit of time to settle, but by the time the weather warms and prawns are on the BBQ it will be ready to go. – **Lou & Joe Holyman**

### 2019 Stoney Rise Chardonnay RRP \$35

We said we would never do it again but sometimes an opportunity comes that is too hard to turn down. This year we were offered some fruit from a 20-year-old vineyard just north of us on the West Tamar, then some from Relbia just south of us, and then a small amount from the south of the state. We couldn't help but take it. It was fermented in our new 2500-litre oak cask and stayed there on its lees for the last five months. It's a fresh style ready for summer. There's a hint of banana peel and cantaloupe on the nose. The palate is all white peach with hints of lemon and cashew. There's a viscous texture to the wine, but the hint of oak and natural acidity of Tasmanian Chardonnay balance this to give it a long, driven finish. Great with seafood rice paper rolls. – **Lou & Joe Holyman**

### 2019 Stoney Rise No Clothes Pinot Noir RRP \$35

While this is not the first time we've made this wine, it's nonetheless exciting for us. The 2019 wine is 100% grown on our newly planted (2014) vineyard. We picked three different parcels of fruit over 10 days and treated them the same before deciding that this one was the one that best suited our style. It's a little more savoury this year, in keeping with our feeling that 2019 is an even more promising vintage than 2018. This has given the wine a bit more structure, while still keeping the freshness and vim of a fresh wine that hasn't had any preservative added. A great wine served chilled with grilled salmon, with a beetroot and goat's cheese salad. – **Lou & Joe Holyman**



### 2018 Stoney Rise Pinot Noir RRP \$35

*This is a very strong release for Stoney Rise. Joe is back on top in 2018. Fresh cherry, strawberry, spice and aniseed, a bit of the old stone and graphite thing happening too. It's cool and clear in fruit, fine dry tannin, a quiet succulence, yet keeps itself nice and trim with cranberry acidity crunch. It's pretty long too, and in fact, the finish is particularly impressive, crisp and insistently tannic. Finesse combined with high drinking appeal. 94 points. Gary Walsh, The Wine Front September 2019*

### 2019 Stoney Rise Trousseau RRP \$46

This is our first real release of this obscure variety from the Jura region of France. It's a very vigorous variety and over the last five years we've found it hard to get it to produce fruit – but this year it did. One of the reasons we searched high and low around Australia to find this variety was that it has a great structure and a savoury finish that we think makes it perfect to accompany food. It does have some almost Pinot Noir-like cherry, aromas, but there's an underlying clove-like flavour that sends it to food match heaven! There's a labelling oversight from us, but we assure you there has not been any SO2 added to this wine. Drink it young or keep it for a couple of years in a cool cellar and watch it develop. – **Lou & Joe Holyman**

## HOLYMAN

### 2018 Holyman Chardonnay RRP \$57

*It's cool, very attractive, and lovely to drink. A water-coloured release with a grainy texture, highlights of citrus and zest, ginger biscuit oak in support, freshness, energy and good length, closing crisp and refreshing. Perhaps a little dismissive to say it's so easy to guzzle, as it has plenty of sizzle and style too. 95 points. Gary Walsh, The Wine Front August 2019*

### 2017 Holyman Pinot Noir RRP \$57

*A strong vintage for Tasmanian Pinot Noir. Dark cherry, earth, mint, creamy clove spice oak. Only into medium bodied with shapely emery tannin and firm clean acidity, spicy cherry flavour, not a huge amount of flavour or density, it's quite bony and lean, in fact. All structure over fruit weight, with a solid finish, tannin gripping firm and discreetly. It's an intellectual style as at now, and pleasure and ease of drinking plays second fiddle to that. I suspect it's a wine that will show well in, say, six years or so. 92+ points. Gary Walsh, The Wine Front August 2019*



### 2016 Holyman 'Project X' Pinot Noir RRP \$90

*This is doing it the hard way: a single small block is hand-picked, lignified stalks a prerequisite; this, and the fruit flavour intensity, allows 100% whole bunch fermentation and 100% new French oak. The bouquet is hyper-fragrant, and not the least dominated by oak, the fruit flavours brilliant. You are left to wonder how great the wine might have been if the alcohol had been 13%. 95 points. James Halliday, Halliday Wine Companion 2020*

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## TOP OF THE PIPS



Philippa Farr always said it was special – “a vintage where everything fell into place, goods rains, and no disease pressure, low crops that were very clean, a warm dry build up to picking, of neat, compact bunches”. Picking, too, was perfect; after all Pip had enjoyed a whole seven days to “recover” after giving birth to her second daughter.

Her gorgeous Pinot Noir comes from a 20-year-old southeast-facing vineyard on a bed of rich red loam over coarse gravel. Three clones became three separate wild-yeast ferments (60% 115; 20% MV6; 20% 114), with 25% whole bunches included. All ferments spent close to three weeks on skins before going into French oak (30% new). The wine was racked twice over 17 months before going to bottle. And now - when transferred from there to glass to palate - it tastes bloody good.

### 2017 Philippa Farr Mornington Peninsula Pinot Noir RRP \$54

*The perfect vintage got underway 7 days after Pip gave birth to her second daughter. Three clonal blocks are wild-fermented with 25% whole bunches, each spending 30 days on skins and 18 months in French oak (30% new). It isn't surprising that this should be a very, very powerful and complex pinot, forest floor the platform on which spicy, savoury dark fruits and briary whole bunch characters should take control. 96 points. James Halliday, Halliday Wine Companion 2020*

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## PRETTY IN PINK

Isn't she just? Here's a sparkling wine that's as beautiful on the outside as it is in the glass. Huia's 2016 Brut Rosé has been released in collaboration with New Zealand fashion designer Kate Sylvester, whose modernist rose print adorns the label. The artwork comes from Kate's 2019 collection Frances, directly inspired by the 1920s textile designs of Frances Hodgkins.

Organic vignerons Claire and Mike Allan of Huia are whole-hearted fans of the arts. They also have a long and distinguished history making top-level traditional-method fizz, so this project makes sense from every angle. The rosé is as fresh and fragrant as the label suggests.

### 2016 Huia Brut Rosé RRP \$61

100% estate-grown Pinot Noir grapes from the certified-organic Huia vineyard in Rapaura, Marlborough. The grapes were handpicked and whole bunch-pressed. Then the juice was racked off to barrels for fermentation. A warm fast ferment was encouraged. The base wines underwent full malolactic conversion and were aged on gross lees in old French oak for 11 months. The wine was then put on tirage where yeast and sugar is added to the wine before the wine is bottled. Secondary fermentation was conducted in the bottle and the wine was aged on the yeast lees in the bottle for 20 months. The bottles were hand riddled over a five-week period before being disgorged on 8th and 9th November 2018. Alcohol 12.5%; pH 3.21; TA 6.3g/L; RS 6g/L. - **Claire & Mike Allan, Huia**



*Pretty, pale-pink rosé with deliciously fresh strawberry, raspberry and subtle yeasty flavours. A charming wine with an ethereal texture and a lengthy and delicately dry finish. Delicious rosé. 95 points. Bob Campbell MW, The Real Review*



## IN THE NICK OF TIME

It's probably the commonest question our purchasing manager has faced recently: "When's the new Farr Rising Pinot getting here?" It's a question he hasn't been able to answer – at least not in terms fit for print in this publication.

Now, at last, he can provide a clean, family-friendly response. The wine is with us. Come and get it.

And, while you're at it, you won't want to leave the '18 Chardonnay behind; it's an absolute pearler.

### 2018 Farr Rising Pinot Noir RRP \$53

The Farr Rising Pinot vineyard was planted in 2001 using a large mixture of rootstocks, but only three clones: MV6, 114 and 115. It is a very exposed and hungry north-facing slope, consisting of grey sandy loam mixed with an ironstone pebble (buckshot) at the top.

This leads into black volcanic soil over limestone at the bottom of the vineyard.

The fruit is hand harvested, and then sorted in the vineyard. It is fermented in an open-top fermenter, and an average 60 to 70% of it is destemmed. The wine is placed in 20 to 30% new Allier barrels by gravity. It

is racked by gas after malolactic conversion, then again at 18 months to be bottled. Over time, the site has shown that it can certainly stand up to its bigger by Farr brothers. The wine typically shows a soft perfumed nose, which begins to build. The palate has sweetness, followed by mineral overtones enhanced by toasty oak, and firm flavours with a long and savoury finish. This is a gem of a wine, with ageing potential of five to eight years from most vintages. - **Nick Farr**

### 2018 Farr Rising Chardonnay RRP \$51

The Farr Rising Chardonnay sits next to the Farr Rising Pinot Noir vineyard. Unlike the black soil of the latter, however, the Chardonnay's soil has a large proportion of grey loam. This vineyard is more protected than other sites because of its undulation, but fertility and growing levels remain very low. The clones used for the Chardonnay are a mixture of Dijon clones and Penfolds 58, all planted in 2001.

The fruit is hand-picked and whole-bunch pressed. All the solids are then collected and chilled before being put to barrel. The new barrel proportion of 20 to 30% can consist of Allier and Vosges French forests. A natural fermentation will occur at cool temperatures over the next two months, and once this is finished a small amount of stirring helps start malolactic conversion. After 11 months in barrel, the wine is racked, fined and lightly filtered before bottling.

The site typically has citrus blossom, which lifts the well-integrated fruit and wet-stone aromatics of this wine. The palate shows great drive, racy acidity, moving towards fine mineral elements. Its Chardonnay with understated power, length and subtlety from a textured site with great balance. – **Nick Farr**

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## IMPORTS

### COSTE LIVING

“Nomen est omen,” as our old Roman mates were wont to say. And it’s apt for our Piedmontese pals, for the Barolo Coste di Rose – the slope of roses – opens with a Valentine’s Day bouquet and tastes just as pretty. This is a debut from the ever-enterprising Vaira family, who first leased the site in 2015 and then bought it in ’18. It sits at 310 metres, on soils dominated by pure Arenaria di Diano, a Tortonian sandstone that delivers distinctive floral aromatics and salty minerality. “This cru is one of Barolo’s best-kept secrets,” explains Giuseppe Vaira, “being located right in between Cannubi and Bussia, yet away from the beaten paths.”



This wine is one of many highlights of the latest shipment from G.D. Vajra, which also includes a new-vintage Riesling and Dolcetto, reinforcements of the massively popular ‘17 Langhe Rosso and Langhe Nebbiolo, and a new edition of the Dragon white blend from Luigi Baudana. Also from this cult estate, we have an extra parcel of the exceptional 2015 Barolo from the Baudana cru in Serralunga.

### 2018 G.D. Vajra Pètracine Langhe Riesling RRP \$76

Aldo Vaira is the pioneer of Riesling in Piedmont. Aldo got passionate about this variety during his

university studies, investigated it further, and then planted the first clones in Langa. This is how Pètracine was born, a wine whose name evokes the roots digging into the stone. It is an exercise of biodiversity, born by a massal selection from Alsace, Pfalz and Rheingau. This is a wine that requires patience, much like the great reds of our land.

The first vineyard dedicated to Riesling (1985) was the one in Fossati, located in the highest part of Barolo and facing the morning sun. The soil is a singular composition of gravel and sand. The second vineyard (2000), northeast-exposed, is situated in the region known as Bertone (Sinio), a lower hill and characterised by limestone and homogeneous soils.

The Riesling harvest takes place in the first half of September and goes on for about two to three weeks. The harvest, as well as the conveyance of the grapes in small crates, are manually carried out to preserve the whole fruit. A triple selection ensures the best quality of the grapes: first in the vineyard, observing the grapes on the vine, and later with a double sorting in the cellar. The fruit was gently pressed and the juice given a brief cold settling before fermentation that goes for about 15-20 days. The wine is aged in steel before bottling in the first half of the spring after harvest. – Giuseppe Vaira

### 2017 G.D. Vajra Langhe Rosso RRP \$35

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**



### 2018 G.D. Vajra Dolcetto d'Alba RRP \$39

Our Dolcetto d'Alba is a homage to this wonderful, often overlooked heritage variety. Historically, Dolcetto was cultivated in prime land, just above Nebbiolo vineyards. At Vajra, we remain loyal to this approach, farming our vineyards in places of true vocation. This is a pure, vibrant and fruity expression of the grape.

Dolcetto is picked in the first half of September. As vineyards are located at higher elevation, protected from thermal inversion that affects northern slopes and the

valley floors, they allow for longer hang time and full phenolic ripening. A gentle vinification usually lasts up to 15 days, with a couple of plunges per day. Wine is racked at least twice prior to malolactic conversion, which takes place in stainless-steel vats. Vajra Dolcetto d'Alba sees a minimum aging period in stainless-steel only, and is bottled in spring following the harvest. – **Giuseppe Vaira**



**2017 G.D. Vajra Langhe Nebbiolo RRP \$53**

**MAGNUMRRP \$113**

*How's the clarity? So much clarity. Red fruit, cherry, almond paste, spice. Medium-bodied, fresh and sure-footed, succulence of flavour without sweetness, gentle rasp of tannin, and that almond thing really hooks me, along with a clear and long finish. Delicate and beautiful. 93 points. Gary Walsh, The Wine Front November 2018*



**2015 G.D. Vajra Barolo Coste di Rose RRP \$149**

*A new vineyard (and wine) for Vajra, first leased in 2015, and purchased in 2018. Raspberry, rose, almonds, light and fine.*

*Medium-bodied at best, red fruited, very fresh, gentle sandy tannin grip, precise and quite delicate, finish has grip and a dry feel, but the perfume lingers. Very good, with much more to come. It's the quiet ones you have to watch. 94+ points. Gary Walsh, The Wine Front May 2019*

**2018 Luigi Baudana Dragon Bianco RRP \$43**

Dragon is a unique white blend from the Langhe. Originally produced by Luigi Baudana during the 1980s with Chardonnay and Sauvignon Blanc, it has evolved to embrace Nascetta, the most exciting white heirloom varietal of the Langhe, and a tiny amount of Riesling.

2018 was marked by abundant flowering, gradual ripening and one of the latest harvests of the decade. Precipitations were exceptional during the entire year, as was the dedication of our vineyard team. Such determined work and meticulous sorting gifted us with healthy grapes, with delicate perfumes and juice that was already pink upon crushing. This harvest was particularly favourable for the best-exposed vineyards, those at high elevation, and the late ripening varieties - but it's caused us great surprises, too, with whites and Dolcetto. All the wines are fragrant and deliciously aromatic, with elegant tannins. 2018 reminds us of 2016 and perhaps even more 2004, and promises to become a classic, elegant vintage. Grapes are picked at optimal ripening. The fruit is carefully sorted and undergoes gentle pressing as whole bunches. Fermentation lasts up to 12 days in vertical vats at low temperatures. Usually, no malolactic conversion occurs in Dragon.

Dragon 2018 opens to fresh fruit aromas such as kiwi, lime and pear. Hints of minerality like flint and sea stones complete the elegant bouquet. The palate shows citrus and white orchard-fruit flavours, macerated elderflower and candied orange peel that shine through the fresh and vibrant acidity.

Drinkable and accessible, it perfectly reflects the elegance and energy of the 2018 vintage. - **Giuseppe Vaira**

**2015 Luigi Baudana Barolo Baudana RRP \$163**

*Earth, spice, blood, a bit reductive as at now, plus red berries. Full-bodied, powerful, but juicy with sweetness of red fruit, grip and open-weave tannin, fresh, tannic and long. Brooding. Really needs a good bit of time, but what a beautiful wine. 95+ points. Gary Walsh, The Wine Front May 2019*

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**QUE ZORAH, ZORAH**

It was a true wild card of the CellarHand 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations back in February, the visit to these shores of Zorik Gharibian and Yeraz Tomassian of Zorah. Their wines were a massive hit, and so were they. Cultured and interesting, enthusiastic and warm, they lit up the room while shining a light on a



unique and far-flung corner of the wine world. We're pleased to have a full range landing from this incredible Armenian enterprise. The white is Voski, a fresh, mineral blend of indigenous varieties Voskèat and Garandmak. The reds are both from the king of Armenian grapes, Areni Noir. Karasí, named for the traditional clay amphorae in which it's raised, comes for the first time with a magnum option. And then there's Yeraz, the top red cuvée which borrows its name from Zorik's wife and is made from ancient bush vines at 1600 metres.

**2017 Zorah Voski Voskèat Garandmak RRP \$64**

A blend of ancient indigenous varieties Voskèat and

Garandmak. Archaeological evidence suggests that both have been present in Armenia for millennia. Voskèat translates as "Golden seed" and is considered queen of Armenia's grapes. It's a delicate, golden grape with small, compact, relatively thin-skinned berries and cross-shaped bunches. Garandmak ("fat tail") is one of the most popular grapes. It's a hardier variety, greenish-yellow in colour, with larger, thicker-skinned berries and compact bunches.

Both varieties are present through Armenia but the exceptional terroir of Vayots Dzor - with its high-altitude, low-vigour, phylloxera-free, rocky, sandy soils coupled with elevated daytime temperatures contrasting with the cool nights - yields distinctively balanced fruit. The grapes for Voski are sourced from old vineyards at altitudes of 1400m from vines on original, ungrafted roots.

Natural-yeast fermentation in large, temperature-controlled concrete vats which are left rough deliberately to favour micro-oxygenation. Aging in concrete vats for 11 months with a further six months in bottle.

**2017 Zorah Karasí Areni Noir RRP \$64**

**MAGNUM RRP \$140**

Areni Noir is the greatest Armenian grape and possibly one of the oldest varieties in the world. It has been present in Armenia for millennia. Always on its own roots, it is 100% indigenous to this land with a unique DNA profile. Elegant and fresh, thick-skinned and extremely resistant to disease, through the ages Areni has adapted perfectly to the high altitudes and extreme temperatures variations of Vayots Dzor.

The vineyards are at altitudes of 1400m. It's a phylloxera-free terroir with low-vigour, sub-alkaline sandy soil, rich in limestone and large stones. The cuttings of the vines come from ancient abandoned vineyards of a nearby 13th century monastery. The unique confluence of the environment - high altitudes, low-vigour soil, huge day/night temperature swings of 20°C and late October harvest - all contribute to the creation of a wine of tremendous character.



Stainless steel tanks have given way to temperature-controlled rough concrete vats in which the wines are fermented exclusively with indigenous yeast. The micro-oxygenation in the concrete is similar to that of the traditional clay amphorae 'karas' in which the wine is then aged for around twelve months. The 'karas' used are of varying sizes. Some are buried in the ground while others are above ground, each giving their own unique nuances to the wine they contain. After very light filtration the wine is aged for a further six months in bottle.

### 2014 Zorah Yeraz Areni Noir RRP \$272

Fruit from various parcels of semi-abandoned bush vines hundred at altitudes of 1600 metres (5250 feet) above sea level. Natural yeast fermentation in rough concrete tanks. Yeraz is then aged for long periods in local amphorae of varying sizes, some of which are dug deep in the ground and sealed with wax to retain the intense flavours and purity. In addition to the amphorae large untoasted casks are also used to soften tannins. After a very light filtration the wine passes a further year in bottle.

*Compared with the 2015, more sweet spice on the nose blended in with the red fruit. A touch herbal. A little meaty on the palate. Drier and leaner than the 2015, quite tied up but becomes more exotic as it opens. A little darker and more savoury and almost a hint of char even with no barrel influence and the use of an untoasted 3,000-litre cask for ageing. 17.5/20 Julia Harding MW, jancisrobinson.com*

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### SING WHEN YOU'RE WINNINGEN

In some ways this wine may be seen as a calling card for the CellarHand portfolio. It's a firm favourite of our founder, Patrick Walsh, from a producer that has been in the book since day dot. It's beloved by us because it brings together a few things that we're all about. Riesling, for a start, but the joy of discovering something unique – in this case both a place and a style. It is not a conformist wine; it's a rebel with soul. And a cause; there's no aimless anarchy to this – it's the fruit of bold vision and back-breaking work. It's inimitable; a work of art. And, when all said and done, it's tantalising and endlessly refreshing in equal doses.

### 2016 Heymann- Löwenstein Riesling Schieferterrassen RRP \$58

The Schieferterrassen is a cuvée of premier cru vineyards in Heymann-Löwenstein's home village of Winingen, supplemented by a small proportion from the grands crus. These vineyards all have the strong character and identity of the Terrassenmosel. The composition of the wine is the same every year: parcels in "Erste Lagen" Hamm and Brückstück, combined with declassified grand-cru fruit. The vineyards are all terraced, steep and slate-driven, all farmed purely by hand with exceptionally low yields. Then you have the individual site's contribution, such as Hamm's floral characters but also earthy, slaty touch.

What follows after the sorting table is similar every year. The main point is that the fruit has to be perfect. If this is guaranteed, then there's not much that can go wrong later on. The quality of each plot is designated by the old classification map. All plots from the same terroir get pressed together, until we're able to fill up a barrel.

So the fruit gets crushed and macerates for about 12 hours in the cooling room. Then we do quite long

press cycles – about nine hours with very gentle pressures, always taking it up very gradually. So you can say that the grapes macerate even longer in the press. The juice can free run downstairs, no pumping needed, which is also quite an oxidative way of treating the juice. After a rough filtration we settle the musts once again. We taste regularly to check on phenolic reactions. After a certain amount of time, because of the contact with air, the harsh phenolics polymerise and settle. By racking off we can separate this nicely and get rid of undesirable phenolics. After racking the musts go into big (2600L+) “Doppelstück Fässer” and stainless steel (about 30-50%). The wines ferment with their own yeasts, usually over four to five months. We’re not able to control the temperatures in the barrels, but fermentation doesn’t usually go crazy anyway with these natural yeasts.

Towards the end of fermentation we taste to start understanding the vintage. As soon as we see the wines are in good balance we stop the fermentation. We don’t look at the numbers for it, because it doesn’t really matter, and the numbers don’t tell us the truth anyway. It’s the palate that matters.

The barrels stay separate as raw material until around May. We taste them all regularly but this is the time when we start doing the cuvées for each wine. This is also the moment when we decide what is good enough for the grand cru and what is not. Those decisions may take a few months because the wines are very young to evaluate. They don’t necessarily already show their true character. In total the wines stay in barrel for 12 months before being bottled unfinned. – Heymann-Löwenstein



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### AYE, CLAUDIA

Every time **Antonio Galloni** of **Vinous Media** comes to write up his reviews on the wines of Cigliuti, he comes up with a minutely reworded variation on the same refrain. This time round it’s: “Cigliuti is arguably the most under-the-radar estate in Barbaresco when it comes to looking at the wines and comparing quality with visibility in the market.”

Gradually this jewel has been unearthed in Australia – to a degree. There’s still space to fully recognise the appeal of this set of wines from a traditional quiet achiever, and one that’s earned the highest respect in Piedmont for its faithfulness to first-rate farming and the highest standards. It was none other than Bartolo Mascarello of Barolo who personally supported Renato Cigliuti’s efforts to lift the best of Barbaresco from obscurity back in the ‘70s.

Now it’s Renato’s daughters Claudia and Silvia leading the charge here. We couldn’t commend their work more highly.

### 2016 Cigliuti Barbera Serraboella RRP \$53

*The 2016 Barbera d’Alba Vigna Serraboella, just bottled, is fabulous. Dark, textured and yet also light on its feet and vibrant, the 2016 is a rockstar wine. Hints of lavender, menthol, plum, licorice and espresso*

*round out this super-expressive, silky Barbera from Cigliuti. The 2016 spent 18 months in oak, equal parts cask and used 500-liter tonneaux. Don't miss it. 91 points. Antonio Galloni, Vinous Media*

#### **2017 Cigliuti Barbera Campass RRP \$58**

100% Barbera from 29-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.

#### **2015 Cigliuti Barbera Campass RRP \$58**

*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*

#### **2018 Cigliuti Langhe Nebbiolo RRP \$64**

100% Nebbiolo from 19-year old vines growing on the Bricco di Neive cru Barbaresco site. The vineyard has a southwestern aspect and sits on calcareous, sandy soils at 350m above sea level. The must is fermented in steel vats at controlled temperatures and aged for five months in steel and another five months in Slavonian oak barrels.



#### **2016 Cigliuti Barbaresco Vie Erte RRP \$107**

*Cigliuti's 2016 Barbaresco Vie Erte is usually a bit more harmonious at this stage than it is today, but that is likely a good sign for its potential development. Even so, it is easy to see that the 2016 has quite a bit of resonance and power. There is a lot to look forward to here. I can't wait to taste the 2016 from bottle. 91-94 points. Antonio Galloni, Vinous Media*

#### **2015 Cigliuti Barbaresco Vie Erte RRP \$107**

*The 2015 Barbaresco Vie Erte is just as impressive as it was from barrel. As always, Vie Erte is marked by veins of incisive tannins that give the wine its shape and overall feel, even if the warm year has filled out the wine's frame very nicely. Bright, floral aromatics give lift to the dark red berry and plum fruit flavors. Hints of cedar, tobacco, mint and white pepper add myriad shades of nuance. All the elements have really come together nicely over the last year. The 2015 is a gorgeous Vie Erte, and one of the more classic-feeling wines of the year. 93 points. Antonio Galloni, Vinous Media*

#### **2016 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 27 and 57 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 2016 Barbaresco Serraboella is quite a bit more put together than the Vie Erte. A powerful, deep wine, the 2016 exudes concentration and textural richness from start to finish. The 2016 is naturally an infant, but it, too, is shaping up to be superb. Firm grippy tannins extend the finish effortlessly. 92-95 points. Antonio Galloni, Vinous Media*



**2015 Cigliuti Barbaresco Serraboella RRP \$140**

*Just bottled a few weeks before this tasting, the 2015 Barbaresco Serraboella is an infant. Deep, powerful and resonant in the glass, the 2015 should be fabulous once it recovers from its recent bottling. Dark cherry, plum, menthol, licorice and spice notes abound, but the tannins remain imposing. Readers will have to be patient, but that should not be an issue here. This is far from an easygoing 2015. 94 points. Antonio Galloni, Vinous Media*

**2014 Cigliuti Barbaresco Serraboella RRP \$140**

*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*

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**CRÈME DE LA KREMS**

Fritz Miesbauer doesn't mind a bit of history. The two estates he heads up are owned by, respectively, a monastery that's been making wine since 1094 and a city with a that's been in the wine game for 550+ years. At the same time, he's been happy to propel traditions into the future. He oversaw the initial quality revolution of the Freie Weingärtner Wachau that paved the way for its transformation into Domäne Wachau.

Now in Krems, he has fantastic vineyards at his fingertips and once again he's raising the bar year on year. The Messwein and Lössterrassen have proven themselves indispensable entry-level wines, and we're

excited to be adding a new pair of options. On the one hand, we have the village Grüner from Furth and on the other a fabulously expressive single-vineyard wine from the Wachtberg site.



**2018 Stift Göttweig Grüner Veltliner Messwein RRP \$26**

*Subtle notes of green pear have an appetizing, creamy edge on the nose. The palate is marked by a wonderful lemon zestiness and a light juicy and fruity, but dry body – very moreish indeed. 89 points. Anne Krebiehl MW, Wine Enthusiast*



### 2018 Stift Göttweig Grüner Veltliner Furth RRP \$36

The village of Furth bei Göttweig (established 1138) is the gateway to the UNESCO world cultural heritage Wachau region. Branches of the Dunkelsteiner Forest impart much natural beauty to the surrounding landscape. The village of Furth is favoured by a variety of microclimatic conditions. These allow the vegetation to breathe, bringing the delicately spicy and cool air of the Dunkelsteiner Forest together with warm Pannonian air masses and the natural humidity of the Danube region.

These features are complemented by a wide

array of geological variants, ranging from gravelly and sandy soil to loess and loam, all the way to weathered primeval rock and thus – in interplay with the different grape varieties – yield an enormous stylistic diversity of wines. This is an ideal setting for Grüner Veltliner and Riesling. Stift Göttweig produces mid-weight wines from the village appellation “Furth”, vinified in stainless steel tank. Alcohol 12.5%; residual sugar 3.7g/L; acidity 5.5g/L.

A juicy impression on the nose, yellow apple with delicate nuances of tobacco; great finesse and structure on the palate, green apples supported by mineral notes, densely structured with good potential for maturing.

### 2018 Stadt Krems Grüner Veltliner Lössterrassen RRP \$23

With more than 550 years of history, Weingut Stadt Krems is one of the oldest wine-producers in Austria, even in the whole of Europe. Since July 2003 it has been managed by a young, innovative team led by Fritz Miesbauer. This typical Veltliner is tangy and light. This is because of the good loess soil and the very good climate. In the first weeks of October the grapes were handpicked with strict selection. After they were destemmed and pressed carefully, the must was fermented under controlled temperature in a stainless steel tank.

It has fresh, fruity aromas of rosy apple, pineapple and grapefruits that stream through a fresh shapely, taut palate with a dash of white pepper spice chiming in towards the finish.

### 2017 Stadt Krems Grüner Veltliner Wachtberg RRP \$76

Because of this site's impressive elevation, lookouts were posted here in the past to warn the city of approaching enemies. The Wartberg (from Middle-High German "warten", to watch out) was documented for the first time in 1137. The name evolved to Wachtberg centuries later. It's a southeast-facing slope at an altitude of 260-400m. Its elevation, cool air currents from the north and very old vines – deeply rooted into the rocky gneiss – impart complexity to the wines.

*Beautifully aromatic notes of ripe Russet pear peel beckon on the nose. On the palate, this lovely fruit is joined by zesty pithiness with just an edge of pleasant bitterness that lends real grip amid the flowing, exuberant juiciness. It is the aromatic pear that owns the long finish. 93 points. Anne Krebiehl MW, Wine Enthusiast*

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### ROCK STARDERI

“The 2016s, wines from a potentially historic vintage, may very well put Barbaresco on the map big time.” That’s what **Antonio Galloni** of **Vinous Media** thinks of this harvest in this part of the world where La

Spinetta farms four notable crus. One of those, Bordini (a south-facing site with 35-year-old vines) is here already, along with what many refer to as a baby Barbaresco on account of its provenance in the Staderi cru. We're referring, of course, to the La Spinetta Langhe Nebbiolo – something of a perennial favourite among our Italian offering. And super '16 has delivered an especially memorable rendition.



**2016 La Spinetta Langhe Nebbiolo RRP \$53**

100% Nebbiolo from the Staderi cru in Neive.

The vines grow at 270m altitude on calcareous soils with a southern exposure, and are between 22 and 27 years old. The vineyard is managed sustainably, with no use of herbicides or pesticides. It undergoes alcoholic fermentation for 7-8 days in temperature controlled roto-fermenters followed by malolactic fermentation in oak. It spends 12 months in medium toast, used French oak barrels and is later transferred to stainless steel vats for two months. After bottling, it is aged for another 12 months in glass. It is not fined or filtered. It has aromas of dried rose petals and plum and blueberry fruit. It's full-bodied, rich and chewy with dusty tannins and a juicy yet elegant finish.

**2016 La Spinetta Barbaresco Bordini RRP \$117**

*This Barbaresco is of a thicker and darker concentration than the others within this set of new releases, with ripe cherry fruit and dark berries that lift immediately from the glass. But the 2016 Barbaresco Vigneto Bordini is thinner and less consequential in the mouth than I had expected from the appearance. This is a very linear and streamlined approach that could accompany a tenderloin carpaccio with arugula, shaved Parmesan and extra virgin olive oil. Some 11,500 bottles were produced. 92 points. **Monica Larner, Wine Advocate June 2019***

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**BA HONOURS**

What a bargain this Beerenauslese is! An aromatic, complex and racy dessert wine from the steep banks flanking the Danube around Domäne Wachau. This sticky rounds out a nicely varied offering from Roman Horvath MW and the team, starting with the ever-reliable Terrassen GV and Riesling and through two super single-vineyard Federspiel expressions.

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

*Green apple, a little white pepper and herb, sour mango. Juicy, big burst of green apple and spice, fine powdery texture, light acid crunch with a yeasty*

*weightiness, good finish. Wholly satisfying and classic expression of Grüner. I'm having a nice little glass of it now. 92 points. **Gary Walsh, The Wine Front***



**2018 Domäne Wachau Riesling Terrassen Federspiel RRP \$31**

*Aromatic, offering elderflower and pine notes, with hints of orange blossom honey, spearmint and apricot on the palate. This is elegant and focused, featuring a long, mineral-infused finish. Drink now through 2027. 90 points. Aleks Zecevic, Wine Spectator*

**2018 Domäne Wachau Grüner Veltliner Kaiserberg Federspiel RRP \$35**

“Kaiserberg”(the “emperor’s hill”) is said to be named for emperor Charlemagne, who used it as a campground as he went about banishing the Avars from the Wachau around 800AD. The vineyard is situated west of Dürnstein. Wines from Kaiserberg are renowned for their superb overall balance and their classical mineral character.

The grapes for Grüner Veltliner Federspiel Kaiserberg were carefully hand-picked between the beginning and the end of September. The average yield was 6,500kg per hectare. Our modern grape reception system enables us to select only 100% healthy grape material. Short maceration, gentle pressing, overnight sedimentation and temperature-controlled fermentation in stainless steel define the vinification process. Before bottling, the wine matured on its fine lees for several weeks.

Along with its lively yellow colour and green glow, there is a succession of intense aromas including white flowers, subtle hints of stone fruit and smoky sweet spices as well as elegant tropical fruits. In the mouth it is a well-balanced, fresh wine with lively acidity, flavourful fruit and well-structured salty character causing it to linger on the palate. – Roman Horvath

**MW, Domäne Wachau**



**2017 Domäne Wachau Riesling Bruck Federspiel RRP \$35**

*Smoky, flinty, lime and grapefruit, with a little white peach and honey. It's intense and flavoursome, fresh and lightly chalky, preserved lemon in the mix, with a satisfying mouth-watering finish. Bold, but beautiful. 93 points. Gary Walsh, The Wine Front*

**2018 Domäne Wachau Beerenauslese 375m RRP \$49**

Terrassen Beerenauslese is a blend of predominantly Riesling with Pinot Blanc, Rivaner and Gelber Muskateller. The Riesling contributes delicate elegance, nobility and fruity character. Rivaner adds freshness and finesse, Pinot Blanc adds complexity and structure whereas Gelber Muskateller provides a distinctive aroma.

Prime sites have been specifically cultivated for sweet wines. Botrytised Riesling grapes have a high concentration of sugar that creates viscosity. Additionally, top-quality sweet wines also require a small portion of healthy, non-botrytised grapes to retain fine fruit character and precision. The grapes were carefully hand-picked between mid-October and mid-November with an average yield of just 1,500kg per hectare. Temperature-controlled fermentation and vinification in stainless steel tanks ensure elegance and structure.

These wines are straw yellow with golden reflections. Open and pronounced, the nose is a complex bouquet of intense fruit flavours, forest honey, exotic fruits, mango, passionfruit, subtle hints of citrus, wild herbs. The palate is sweet and harmonious with refreshing acidity. This is a very expressive sweet wine with a long finish. – Roman Horvath MW, Domäne Wachau

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