



Welcome to the CellarHand newsletter for March 2020. Here's a little taste of what's going on this month...

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DOMESTIC



WANTIRNA WONDERS

Maryann Egan, sister Liz and father Reg kindly invited CellarHand and a group of trade guests up to the vineyard in February. It was, as always at this intimate and utterly genuine place, a delightful day. Established in 1963, this is of course a pioneer of the second wave of Yarra Valley growers, and Reg has pretty much seen it all. He's a great raconteur, and anything but a braggart. The forgotten co-founder of Yarra Yering (established '69) has contentedly ploughed his own furrow down here, immersed in nature and gently entertained by the vicissitudes of fashion.

Production is so small at this 10-acre single-vineyard estate that there's not exactly a museum, but the Egans kindly dug out some older bottles as we ambled about, eventually settling in to digest the wonders of the current range with some of Liz's excellent food. The good news is there are small quantities of three of the wines still available. Please put your hand up if you'd like to partake in one of the softer-spoken treasures of Australian wine.

2018 Wantirna Estate Isabella Chardonnay RRP \$87

Ripe peachy expression with butter menthol, mint, wheatgerm and spice. Juicy pear and peach, a certain citrus cut through the gloss and glide of this flavoursome little number, some flint, savoury umami character, juicy and chalky through a nice long finish. It's a proper Chardonnay, and feels pretty much ready, almost raring, to go. 94 points. Gary Walsh, The Wine Front

2018 Wantirna Estate Lily Pinot Noir RRP \$87

Deepish, bright red/purple hue, the palate dry and savoury, strong and rich and sustained. The structure is solid and firm, the tannins lingering long on the farewell, in balance with the flavour. A big-flavoured and structured pinot which has muscle and staying power. Impressive, concentrated, and here for the long-haul. 96 points. Huon Hooke, The Real Review February 2019

2017 Wantirna Estate Amelia Cabernet Sauvignon / Merlot RRP \$87

Cabernets and Merlot from the original 1963 plantings, with 5% Petit Verdot coming off the 1989 plantings. All dry grown. Yarra Valley Cabernet from 2017 strikes me as being a more dense, compact year, with fine bones and lithe structure, and I like that very much.

Glorious Cabernet perfume of violet and pencil shavings, mint, blackcurrant and boysenberry, with the theme being intense small black fruit, I guess. It's medium-bodied, dense and tightly knit, juiciness of blueberry and blackcurrant, layered in with more savoury tobacco flavour, graphite tannin, cool acidity, and a long, almost chocolaty finish. What a delight. Superb. 96 points. Gary Walsh, The Wine Front

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FULL MARKS, MARQUIS

It's been a while since we last had the pleasure of Marquis Sauvage's company here in Australia. This is the Chicago-based wine distributor who accidentally fell in love with Central Otago when scouting for an Aussie vineyard with Gary Farr getting on for 20 years ago. That hillside in Cromwell was an empty amphitheatre back then, but he loved the look of it, called on the services of Littorai biodynamic guru Ted Lemon, and planted it to Pinot Noir. In 2009 he had his first vintage, and it's turned out a string of hits every year since.

Marquis couldn't be further from the wine buff stereotype, but his love of good juice matches his death metal addiction. He's warm-natured, open and very good company – and it was nice for us to introduce him to a broad church of Sydney and Melbourne trade during his February sojourn.



2017 Burn Cottage Riesling / Grüner Veltliner RRP \$68

Such character! Lime cordial, dusty spices, peach, white flowers, thyme etc. It's juicy and just off dry, intensity of flavour almost like a Starburst, with a fine chalky texture, crushed rocks kind of thing, some preserved lemon tang and gentle bitterness, a bit savoury too, and very long. It's compelling and fun at once. Good now, probably later too, but kind of hard to resist. 95 points. Gary Walsh, 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

Invariably near the top of the tree for me, when it comes to Central Otago Pinot. These wines don't feel so forced, and have a distinct personality.

Plum, cherry, dried roses, toasted hazelnut, a wee bit of sweet spice. It's silky and supple, fills the mouth with quiet intensity, acidity sitting happily inside the wine, some sappy energy, but it's the quality of tannin, a kind of Turkish coffee spread, that sets it apart. Ripe strawberry and a floral perfume mingles with more umami flavours on a long finish. Wonderful. 95 points. Gary Walsh, The Wine Front

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GOOD, BETTER, BESTIA

It was good fun showing the previous vintage of this to **Jancis Robinson MW** and a room full of somms back in in spring. She hadn't heard of Paul Scorpo's sexy beast, so she asked for some background. It's essentially grand-cru Pinot Gris, coming from Paul's celebrated home vineyard in Merricks North but with an emphatic nod to the skin-contact wine of Paul's Italian forebears. That '17 was poured to show the versatility of Jancis's universal wine glass, and its bittersweet aromatics, fruit-pure heart and textural grip proved its point nicely. Here's the '18, along with some other tasty vintage rolls from the Scorpo stable.

2018 Scorpo 'Bestia' Pinot Grigio RRP \$43

The fruit is grown on the Scorpo family vineyard. Ripe grapes are harvested – 30% whole bunches, 70% destemmed in an open top fermenter. Five-day cold soak, indigenous ferment over two weeks. Pressed after 30 days total. Aged for 12 months in French oak barriques. Suitable for vegans.

The wine has a hue between burnt orange and a Mutabilis rose. Rich aromatics, spicy, heady. It shows aromas of red 'Sensation' pear, ranges and morello cherry. It has a refined palate with a grippy, wonderful texture. Briny, spicy, intense, exotic. Savoury phenolics. Flavours of mandarin and orange jubes mixed with pears. Citrus pith and exotic spices accompany the long finish. - **Paul Scorpo**

2018 Scorpo Chardonnay RRP \$51

From a 1ha, three-clone block, hand-picked, whole-bunch pressed direct to barrel (French, 20% new), not bâtonnage or stirring. Excellent winemaking (minimal interference), with a steady hand. 97 points. James Halliday, Halliday Wine Companion 2020

2019 Scorpo 'Noirien' Pinot Noir RRP \$33

The fruit is grown on the Merricks North vineyard. The Pinot Noir grapes (MV6, 115 and Abel) were picked by hand and given a three-day cold soak before natural-yeast fermentation with 1% whole clusters (Abel) included. The wine was matured in concrete tanks and old oak barrels. Suitable for vegans. - **Paul Scorpo**

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MONDEUSE & MINNOWS

Al Timms and the team at Shadowfax have been kicking massive goals in Macedon with their Chardonnay, Pinot Gris and Pinot Noir. Meanwhile the original – and we use the word pointedly – plantings on the home vineyard continue to dish up top-drinking, good-value wines.

The Minnow range – now uniformly and handsomely attired – is neatly rounded out with a white and red flanking the long popular rosé.

The red blend and 100% Roussanne white are out now, ready to lend a bit of spice and individuality to any bistro affair. These are joined by a Mondeuse Noir whose peppery, perfumed ruggedness calls its French origins charmingly to mind.

2019 Shadowfax Minnow White RRP \$25

The fruit was gently whole bunch-pressed and left to settle overnight prior to racking. Primary ferment at cooler temperatures to retain fruit aromas. Gravity fed into older French hogsheads in the underground cellar, then left on light lees to develop further complexity for 6 months prior to bottling. It shows hay, lanolin, chamomile, lemon balm and peach notes on the nose. It's medium bodied with both a creamy and waxy sense to the mouthfeel, carrying lemon and white stone fruit notes with white floral suggestions. It finishes with salted almond tones and a slight but pleasant zing and zestiness. - Ed Merrison, CellarHand



2019 Shadowfax Minnow Rosé RRP \$25

Hand-harvested Pinot Noir, Cinsault, Mourvèdre, Syrah and Grenache. Wild fermentation occurred in older French barrels. The nose shows peaches and cream, liquorice, mandarin flesh and hints of complexing nutmeg spice. A generous mouth-filling palate shows rich peaches and cream that flows on and on. The high pH gives the wine lovely mouth-coating texture and warmth. The palate is long and flowing with oodles of flavour. The fine lacy tannins frame the wine and the fine acidity keeps the palate fresh and crunchy. - Al Timms, Shadowfax

2019 Shadowfax Minnow Red RRP \$25

50% Grenache, 30% Mataro, with the balance Carignan and Mondeuse. The Grenache is fermented as whole clusters, the rest as whole berries. This has lifted aromas of blue flowers, raspberries, blackberries and red liquorice, with peppered steak and sweet spice beneath. Medium-bodied, lively and attractively fruited across the palate, with a squeaky, clean finish framed by fine-sand tannins. - Ed Merrison, CellarHand

2019 Shadowfax Mondeuse Noir RRP \$33

Pretty vibrant ruby colour, with 100% whole bunches amping up the perfume on a wine that smells of red flowers, cherries and raspberries. The palate adds sarsaparilla, sour cherry and earth. Medium-bodied rustic charm with a firm acid crunch and a rasp of tannin, finishing squeaky and mouthwatering. - Ed Merrison, CellarHand

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CHALMERS CHARMERS

Last year's label change freshened up the face of Chalmers to reflect the bright personality and vibrancy of the family, their wines and their approach to grape-growing.

The first two of these new-look wines to roll vintage are the Vermentino and Rosato, both skipping gaily onto 2019 at the same time.

2019 Chalmers Vermentino RRP \$27

100% Vermentino from the Chalmers vineyard in Heathcote on rich, red Cambrian soil, sitting 150-170m above sea level. Handpicked, whole bunch pressings and wild fermentation before the wine sits on less for 6 months. No acid adds. Vegan friendly. Clean and crisp,

this Vermentino shows lemon verbena, brine and white nectarine with an overall chalkiness leaving you wanting more. – Kim Chalmers

2019 Chalmers Rosato RRP \$27

Handpicked from the Chalmers Heathcote vineyard on soils of ironstone, colerite, green basalt and quartz, at an altitude of 210-225m. This blend of 73% Aglianico, 14% Sagrantino and 13% Nero d'Avola is whole bunch-pressed and wild fermented in stainless steel. The Aglianico is aged in old barrique and the Nero d'Avola and Sagrantino in stainless steel. Six months on lees. No acid adds. Vegan friendly. Creamy soft raspberries, rose petals and pink grapefruit are the calling card of this dry and textural Rosato. – Kim Chalmers

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BIO BUBBLY

Plenty of fizz making it into this edition of the newsletter what with some fine Champagne landing about now. But let's not forget the homegrown talent, especially when one of those is one of Tasmania's – ergo Australia's – undisputed champions. This year marks 20 years since Steve and Monique got the place in Granton, a site specifically chosen for the production of sparkling wine. They've made some absolute crackers over that time, starting with the perennial, great-value favourite that is the NV. This month we're focusing on the vintage fizz, what with the release of the 2015 Brut Rosé. As always, pretty as a picture and purring with the quality and tension of 100% biodynamic-grown Pinot Noir.



2015 Stefano Lubiana Brut Rosé RRP \$55

100% biodynamic, organic-certified Pinot Noir from the estate vineyard in Granton. Traditional method

sparkling wine, which spent three years on lees and was disgorged with a low dosage of 4 to 5g/L. Being 100% Pinot Noir, this wine shows floral notes and red berry characteristics, balanced by both the mouth-watering acidity and subtle tannins. The incredible structure and length are achieved by the Traditional Method wine making, that Steve Lubiana follows for all of his sparkling wines. A wonderful food wine, and luscious salmon pink hue is perfect for all celebrations. - Steve Lubiana

2009 Stefano Lubiana Grande Vintage RRP \$67

Bold colour, and no shortage of flavour either. This is a pow pow powerful sparkling wine offering stone fruit and tangerine, aniseed, Danish pastries, brine and flor-like scents. Soft fine bubbles, yeasty complexity, juicy orange laden flavour with a light perfume, weighty and long, finishing with a chalky texture. Very good and highly individual in style. 94 points. Gary Walsh, The Wine Front

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PJ'S PINOT

"I tasted this among a range of Pinot Noirs and it stood out head and shoulders," wrote **Campbell Mattinson** about PJ Charteris's latest rendition of Central Otago. He goes on to point out – because Campbell is a fair and sensible type – that you're only as good as your opposition. "But," he continues, "the truth is that the quality here sits firmly and squarely."

It is, as the **Wine Front** scribe concludes "a most impressive wine" but sometimes this small operation run by PJ and wife Chrissi Pattison can be overlooked. When they hit the list, they're lapped up. So, this is a little reminder of the treats on offer from this affable honorary Aussie – regarded by all those in the know as one of the best palates and finest booze crafters in the antipodes.

2016 Charteris The 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

2018 Charteris Central Otago Pinot Noir RRP \$46

I tasted this among a range of Pinot Noirs and it stood out head and shoulders. You're only as good as your competition of course but the truth is that the quality here sits firmly and squarely. It's beautifully spiced and the cut of tannin is noteworthy. I always like it when structure and spice stand out before fruit, though there's nothing underpowered about the latter. It's a boysenberried pinot with smoke notes and florals. There's both a ripeness and a juiciness to the palate but there's also an emphasis on dryness. It's a most impressive wine. 95 points. Campbell Mattinson, The Wine Front



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THE FULL FRANKLAND

This month we're going to mention some of the exciting goings-on at Frankland Estate without even mentioning Riesling once. Oops. And actually, there is a Riesling in this snippet on new things, but it's the Alter Weg – the small, experimental batch that sits outside of the immaculate official line-up. The other experimental bottling we have is the estate's first Touriga Nacional, a wicked drink packaged in a Riesling bottle (oops, I did it again). And it'd be remiss not to mention the latest Cabernet Sauvignon, which the CellarHand team snuck into a blind tasting of top WA Cabernet outside our portfolio, and it smoked everything bar the control bottle of single-vineyard Nocturne. And all this lands for just \$29!

New Chardonnay's a ripper, too. Really, some excellent pouring pleasure here. All single-vineyard gear, certified organic. Very, very impressive.

2019 Frankland Estate Alter Weg Riesling RRP \$34

100% certified-organic Riesling from the Isolation Ridge vineyard was barrel-fermented and matured for 11 months. It's complex and aromatic on the nose with intense mandarin spice, orange and lime. On the palate there are hints of white peach and nectarine with delicate flavours of spice and ironstone mineral undertones. The wine is bright up front; it's deliciously generous and textural on the palate which is further complemented by an alluring saline mineral infused acidity. The resulting wine is a Riesling of rich mouthfeel with solid structure and great length that flows through the mouth. – **Hunter Smith, Frankland Estate**

2018 Frankland Estate Chardonnay RRP \$29

100% organically grown gin gin clone Chardonnay from the Isolation Ridge vineyard. Wild fermented in 500-litre puncheons. Lifted blossom florals and white stone fruit. Lovely minerality. It has lovely generosity on the front palate, well integrated oak that leads into an elegant, soft and focused palate. There is a complex textured component which plays beautifully with the acid to create a delightful and charming Chardonnay. - **Hunter Smith, Frankland Estate**

2018 Frankland Estate Touriga Nacional RRP \$34

100% Touriga Nacional, organically grown and made. Shallow-fermented in stainless steel open fermenters, before being aged for 10 months in 500-litre French oak puncheons. Unfiltered and unfinned. Vibrant cherry red in colour. Fresh lifted young berries, early season plums, dried herbs and savoury olive characters give a wine of amazing perfume. It's bold and lush on the palate. Lovely cherry and chocolate characters interact with fine gravelly tannins, salty liquorice flavours and a sweet core of fruit. This leads to a wine of balance with a bright crisp finish. - **Hunter Smith, Frankland Estate**

2018 Frankland Estate Cabernet Sauvignon RRP \$29

100% Cabernet Sauvignon, organically grown from mature vines on the Isolation Ridge vineyard. Open-pot fermented at below 26°C and aged in 500-litre French oak puncheons. Wafts of dark chocolate, cedar and dried Italian mixed herbs are complemented by lifted red currants and mulberry. The palate is

opulent yet focused. Ripe fruit abounds, balanced by mouthcoating chalky tannin, which gives the wine texture and length. Ripe mulberry flavours intertwine with cacao and tobacco leaf. - **Hunter Smith, Frankland Estate**

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BENNIE'S BORDEAUX

"Mount Mary is amazing. So dedicated to their ways. Love it." That was **Mike Bennie's** takeaway after a February visit to the Middletons in the Yarra Valley. The **Wine Front** writer had a whale of a time talking to Sam Middleton and having a look through some older wines. "Sunday morning. Blue skies, green grass, netted vines, healthy rows and under-vines, a lecture on increased sustainability, wetland building and elevation on eco-focus on the Mount Mary estate preceded the tasting – great things to hear off an already high base."

Seems a good time to mention that there's still a bit of Quintet and Triolet from '17 available but be quick; '18s not out till October.

2017 Mount Mary Triolet RRP \$100

Barrel fermented, lees work, so vibrant and fresh to sniff on, lemon, candlewax, floral notes, has quite firm texture, juiciness inside, taut and long and fine feeling with quite a lot of impact. Very refreshing, pure and yet complex. Wonderful expression. 2020-2035. 95 points. Mike Bennie, The Wine Front

2014 Mount Mary Triolet RRP \$100

A 65/25/10% blend of Sauvignon Blanc, Semillon and Muscadelle; hand-picked, destemmed, lightly crushed, different cultured yeast strains for each parcel, 100% barrel-fermented, matured for 11 months in oak on partial solids with some stirring. Without question, the best white Bordeaux blend in Australia, combining richness with finesse and length - and above all else - dazzling complexity. 97 points. James Halliday, Halliday Wine Companion 2017



2017 Mount Mary Quintet RRP \$168

This is epic. Just has that undeniable feel of pedigree. Svelte and firm, succulent and so detailed. Dark fruits, spice, earth, herbal notes. Incredible tannin. Trails long on fennel and graphite character. So epic. 2020-2040+. 97 points. Mike Bennie, The Wine Front

2014 Mount Mary Quintet RRP \$173

While there wasn't a lot of wine made in the Yarra Valley in '14 (wind and rain during flowering), some wine of very high quality was made - witness this. Mount Mary has shown over the decades that Quintet develops superbly, and this complex dark berry-flavoured Bordeaux blend will do just that. 97 points. James Halliday, Halliday Wine Companion 2017

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IMPORTS

SEVEN UP!

It's brilliant that the release of a new Jacquesson 700-series cuvée is cause for celebration, that it makes you want to break out the Champagne with all your friends, and... YOU CAN DO IT ALL WITH THIS WINE!

The base vintage here is 2014, and this is Jean-Hervé and Laurent Chiquet's harvest from Aÿ, Dizy and Hautvillers (59%), and from Avize & Oiry (41%). Winter was rainy and exceptionally mild and spring was hot and very dry. Then came a cool and very wet July and August before the year was saved by a hot, dry and sunny September. The balance of alcohol and acidity was excellent, and the health of the grapes was generally good. However, after picking, the Chiquets had to rigorously sort some parcels affected by small sources of acid rot. "As a result, the Chardonnays were superb, and the Meuniers - but above all the Pinot Noirs held their own," says Jean-Hervé. The blend is completed with the addition of some reserve wines.



Once again it looks smashing straight out of the blocks, with a bright future ahead.

NV Jacquesson Cuvée No. 742 RRP \$124

The Extra-Brut Cuvée No. 742, based on the 2014 vintage, is a gorgeous wine. In this release, the Cuvée seems especially marked by Pinot in both its flavour profile and texture. Dried pear, hazelnut, mint, chamomile and dried flowers all grace this rich, beautifully resonant Champagne from Jacquesson. Best of all, the

742 will drink well with minimal cellaring. The 700-series Champagnes are often superb; the 742 is an especially fine edition. The blend is 59% Pinot Noir (from Aÿ, Dizy and Hautvillers) and 41% Chardonnay (from Avize and Oiry). Dosage is 1.5 grams per litre. 94 points. Antonio Galloni, Vinous Media

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LOOSEN BARRY AXIS

They've spent that many good times together with the Riesling flowing, it was perhaps only a matter of time before they started inter-breeding. But jokes aside, this is a serious collaboration bringing together two tireless, fearless pioneers. These estates have been pushing boundaries and flying the Riesling flag for decades.

The friendship between Erni Loosen of the Dr. Loosen Estate in Germany and Peter Barry of Jim Barry Wines in Australia's Clare Valley began in London in 1995.



Forged out of a mutual respect for the noble variety, Riesling, this collaboration of ideas pays homage to the winemaking techniques used in their respective homes of the Mosel and Clare.

So it is that we have Walhalla, Erni's tribute to Clare made in a pure, bone-dry style from grapes grown on the grand-cru Treppchen vineyard in the village of Erden. "Few places in the wine world can match the electric energy of the acidity in Mosel wines and this wine hums with it," wrote **Nick Ryan** of **The Australian** about this one. "Heaven for the acid freaks."

And, from brothers Tom and Sam Barry, an "Aussie GG" from a very special parcel on the high-altitude (480m) Lodge Hill vineyard. The juice was wild fermented in a traditional German oak Fuder provided by Dr Loosen and raised in the fashion of the Grosses Gewächs wines of the great Mosel estate. The result? "Wolta Wolta is unlike anything produced in Clare before," declares Ryan. "It's incredibly complex and utterly compelling."

2016 Loosen Barry Walhalla Riesling Mosel Valley RRP \$55

Light straw-yellow hue, and a lifted fragrance of lime blossom and gardenia, perhaps frangipani, certainly the tropical flower lift of a cool-climate Germanic wine. It's very intense in the mouth, delicate and firm in its acidity, any sweetness that might be there being well and truly outgunned by the acid. A tense, taut, mouth-wateringly delicious wine. For a Mosel Riesling, it's at the dry end of the spectrum. 95 points.

Huon Hooke, The Real Review March 2019

2017 Loosen Barry Wolta Wolta Riesling Clare Valley RRP \$120

Very light to pale colour. The bouquet is curiously sweaty and reductive, with slaty mineral notes and the entire package is reserved and backward in development. Very fine, elusive perfumes. The palate is very slightly off-dry and deftly combines delicacy and intensity. A thoroughly delicious, beguiling, mouth-watering riesling that totally belies its Clare Valley origins. An exciting wine. A real stunner. 97 points.

Huon Hooke, The Real Review March 2019

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PARTITION MAGIC



We're now in the third year of our relationship with the super-talented husband-and-wife team at JmSélèque. And the start of a new decade seems like a good time to introduce the latest instalment of Jean-Marc and Oriane's excellent wines. The Solessence trio that underpins the range have quickly established themselves as staples among grower-conscious fizz lovers here in Australia. Their combination of freshness, character and assured balance give them the thrill factor we should all expect from Champagne. The other non-vintage wine here is the latest disgorgement of the five-terroir Chardonnay cuvée, Quintette. It's based on the superb 2015 harvest. A vintaged Soliste Chardonnay joins the Meunier this time around, and alongside those is the latest rendition of the infusion Meunier rosé. Rounding out the offer are two versions of Jean-Marc and Oriane's flagship cuvée, Partition. The first hails from 2013, while the second is the second "reading" of 2008 – the harvest that saw Jean-Marc Sélèque make his debut at the domaine.

NV JmSélèque Solessence Extra Brut (2016 base) RRP \$92

Slightly reductive and appley at first, this opens with chamomile, praline and grilled almonds. Medium-bodied and very tangy, this is a steely and compact Champagne with

integrated bubbles. Drink now. 92 points. Nick Stock, jamesuckling.com September 2019

NV JmSèlèque Solessence Nature (2013 base) RRP \$107

Dried citrus fruit, green apples, breadcrumbs, croissant, pain au chocolat, loquat and nectarines. The bubbles here are so, so fine, and the body and structure are just as sleek and well-formed. Laser-guided and precise on the finish. Drink now. 95 points. Nick Stock, jamesuckling.com

NV JmSèlèque Solessence Rosé Extra Brut (2016 base) RRP \$110

A very striking rosé with strawberry-cream and watermelon aromas, in a super fresh mode. The palate has a very deep and vinous texture with fresh wild strawberries and raspberries, delivered in a zesty and appealing style that really holds impressive depth and detail. Beautiful, berry-biscuit finish. This is made using the Solessence base blend, to which is added 10% Pinot-Meunier juice after two days of maceration and 5% red Pinot Noir. Drink or hold. 94 points. Nick Stock, jamesuckling.com

NV JmSèlèque Quintette Extra Brut (2015 base) RRP \$116

Peach dough, dried green pears, preserved lemons, bread crust and croutons. Very clear-cut on the medium-bodied palate with cutting acidity and a wonderful complement of savory stone and citrus fruit. Drink now. 94 points. Nick Stock, jamesuckling.com

2013 JmSèlèque Soliste Chardonnay Brut Nature RRP \$190

100% Chardonnay from the Dizy 1er cru parcel, Moque-Bouteille.

*The 2013 Brut Nature Soliste Chardonnay is laced with the essence of citrus peel, white pepper, flowers, mint and crushed rocks. The natural ripeness and fruit intensity of the year are present, but they feel attenuated, almost trapped by the non-dosé style. As good as the 2013 is, a touch of dosage might have allowed for a fuller expression of the vintage. Disgorged: September 2018. 91 points. Antonio Galloni, *Vinous Media**

2013 JmSèlèque Infusion Soliste Meunier Rosé Extra Brut RRP \$140

100% Meunier from the Pierry 1er Cru parcel of Les Charmiers, which was planted in 1964.

Attractive, fresh, ripe-strawberry and wild-raspberry aromas with a lightly spiced pastry background. Really vibrant. There's a super fine, chalky edge that is swathed in vinous, fleshy red-fruit flavour. Here Meunier is elevated to a more lively, vertical style. Drink now or hold. 94 points. 94 points. Nick Stock, jamesuckling.com

2014 JmSèlèque Soliste Meunier Extra Brut RRP \$190

100% Meunier from the very special Pierry 1er cru parcel Les Gouttes d'Or, which was planted in 1951.

Preserved lemons, guava peel, green mangoes, green papaya, almonds, shortbread, muffin and biscuits. Medium-to full-bodied but very layered with tightly poised acidity that takes the bright citrus and stone fruit by storm. Quite long and mineral on the finish. Drink now. 94 points. Nick Stock, jamesuckling.com

2013 JmSèlèque Partition Extra Brut RRP \$190

72% Chardonnay, 14 % Meunier and 14% Pinot Noir.

Dried bread crust, lemon meringue, apple strudel, guava peel and cinnamon. On the edgier side of affairs, this is a very mineral style of Champagne with forthright acidity and lots of tart pears and apples. Drink now. 93 points. Nick Stock, jamesuckling.com

2012 JmSélèque Partition Extra Brut RRP \$157

72 % Chardonnay, 14 % Meunier, 14 % Pinot Noir. The Partition is always a blend of the same seven parcels, composed as a symphony of seven musical notes: La Justice, Vertus Premier Cru Chardonnay, planted in 1950; Moque-Bouteille, Dizy Premier Cru Chardonnay, planted in 1985; Les Basses-Ronces, Mardeuil Chardonnay, planted in 1982; Les Frileux- Epernay Chardonnay, planted in 1959; Les Tartières / Les Porgeons, Pierry Premier Cru Chardonnay, planted in 1985; Les Gayères Pierry Premier Cru Pinot Noir, planted in 1975; and Les Gouttes d'Or, Pierry Premier Cru Meunier; planted in 1951 and 1953. Ploughing of soils, strict pruning and control of yields, favouring natural balance and biodiversity. Individual vinification of each plot. 100% of the wine with alcoholic fermentation in oak barrels without malolactic conversion. Natural cold stabilisation, no fining and no filtration. Bottling in spring with a cork; ageing on the lees for at least 48 months. Dosage 2 g/L.

2008 JmSélèque Partition Extra Brut – 2ème Lecture RRP \$190

To present this wine, I must go back to my beginnings as a winemaker. Indeed 2008 was my first vintage at the domaine. At that time, my wish was to create a cuvée of great aging potential that future generations could taste much later. To do so, I had selected the 7 most beautiful parcels of the vineyard, tasted each of the barrels of these plots and composed a harmonious, precise and elegant blend. In my opinion, these are the essential characteristics of a great wine. – **Jean-Marc Sélèque**

72% Chardonnay, 14 % Meunier and 14% Pinot Noir. The parcels harvested for this blend are: Vertus 1er Cru La Justice planted in 1950; Dizy 1er Cru Moque-Bouteille planted in 1985; Epernay Les Frileux planted in 1959; Mardeuil Les Basses Ronces planted in 1982; Pierry 1er Cru Les Tartières/Les Porgeons planted in 1990 et 1985; and Pierry 1er Cru Les Gouttes d'Or planted in 1951; and Pierry 1er Cru Les Gayères planted in 1975. The soils are a mix of silty clay and flinty clay on a chalky subsoil. The musts were vinified entirely in oak barrels and bottles without fining or filtration. The wine was aged on lees on crown seal for 10 years before disgorgement with a dosage of 1.5g/L.

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MEURSAULT MYSTERY CRACKED

We'd been captivated by these wines for years, enthralled by the enigma of this reclusive virtuoso of Meursault. So, it's an enormous pleasure to officially welcome Domaine Boisson Frère et Soeur to the CellarHand portfolio!

Bernard Boisson and son-and-daughter duo Pierre and Anne, grow and raise the wines. The first domaine bottlings emerged in 2000 after a long grape-growing history in the village, with the fruits of their labour previously going to négociants. These days their Bourgogne Blanc vies for the title of Burgundy's best, while the likes of Grand Charrons and Chevalières are stop-you-in-your-tracks good. Red wines are around 25% of production, and la famille Boisson avoids the common Côtes de Beaune sin of treating them as an awkward inconvenience; in fact, they're the pure, fragrant, eminently drinkable wines the family aims for.

2016 Anne Boisson Aligoté RRP \$91

Single-vineyard wine, with two-thirds of the vines aged between 50 and 70 years old. Apple, pear, pastry and cream on a nose that evokes good Blanc de Blancs. It's fresh and vital with a silky feel in the mouth. Crunchy fruit with good intensity, a touch of honey and nice grip. Saline finish. Very moreish, energetic white. – **Ed Merrison, CellarHand**



2017 Pierre Boisson Bourgogne Blanc RRP \$107

White-fleshed fruit, citrus and salted almonds on the nose. Classy feel with texture and stony purity. Charged with energy, this has lovely tension and good grip, finishing with lively fruit, honey and a salty tang. – **Ed Merrison, CellarHand**

2017 Pierre Boisson Hautes Côtes de Beaune Rouge RRP \$99

The fruit comes from two communes close to Meursault: Orches and Baubigny. Red berries, with crunch and sappiness, plus a floral suggestion, too. Pretty good concentration to the compact palate, which shows more red fruit framed with firm

tannin and bright acidity. Relatively charming finish with fruit carried through by buoyant acidity. – **Ed Merrison, CellarHand**

2017 Pierre Boisson Monthélie Rouge RRP \$149

Fruit from three different parcels. Smoke, sap and good oak add complexity to a nose of ripe strawberry and cherry. Relatively soft-hearted and full in the mouth, with forest berries and polished tannins. Nicely integrated with a dash of spice running through the tannins, and good flow to the finale, which leaves a sense of charm and rusticity, in the best sense. – **Ed Merrison, CellarHand**

2017 Pierre Boisson Auxey-Duresses Rouge 1er Cru RRP \$182

Fairly precise on the nose, with a gravelly note beneath forest fruit and roses. Only medium bodied in a way reminiscent of the most delicate Chambolle-Musigny but with a pleasant sense of roundness on a very pretty palate, which shows excellent integration of nutty oak, fruit and those earthy notes. Very tidy and fresh, with a long, chiselled red-fruit finish. A charming Beaune red if ever there was one. – **Ed Merrison, CellarHand**

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HEY HEY IT'S VERZENAY

The bumper bubbles bulletin keeps bustling along, this time with the help of the magnificent grand cru of Verzenay and the Labruyère family. Some will remember the family name from its Moulin-à-Vent wines in Beaujolais, others may recall that these are the folks who own Jacques Prieur in Burgundy.

Those are both ancient pursuits from this perfectionist crew. Champagne is a newer initiative, with this set of wines being only the second release. They know what precisely what they're doing, though. As with the Beaujolais, these are wines made with Burgundian sensibility. Grand cru fruit is harvested, gently pressed with only the cuvée kept, with each parcel kept separate. All wines go through malolactic conversion and, once blended and bottled, spend three to five years on lees. The result is perfectly ripe, balanced terroir-driven wines of power and finesse.

NV Champagne Labruyère Prologue RRP \$108

70% Pinot Noir and 30% Chardonnay from Verzenay, Grand Cru. Based on the 2013 harvest, with 10% reserve wines from 2012. Tirage 2014 and aged on the lees for a period two times greater than appellation requirements. Disgorgement: 2018-2019 (see back label). Dosage: 1.6g/L.

The wine offers intriguing complexity, with aromas of dried fruits, enhanced by subtle toasty aromas and roasted hazelnut. Rich and harmonious on the palate. Beautiful structure of Pinot Noir is exquisitely intertwined with tension and energy of Chardonnay. Delicate and persistent on the finish. – **Nadine Gublin, Champagne Labruyère**

NV Champagne Labruyère Rosé Anthologie RRP \$140

30% Chardonnay and 70% Pinot Noir including blending with 10% of red wine from Bouzy and the balance from Verzenay Grand Cru. Based on the 2014 harvest with 30% reserve wine, mostly from 2013. Tirage 2015 and aged on the lees for a period two times greater than appellation requirements. Disgorgement: 2018-2019 (see back label). Dosage: 4g/L.



Notes of fresh red fruits and cherrystone with elegant touch of exotic fruits. Crunchy and delicate and, at the same time, round and vinous on the palate with flavours of cherry and redcurrant. Long and generous on the finish. – **Nadine Gublin, Champagne Labruyère**

NV Champagne Labruyère Blanc de Blancs Page Blanche RRP \$163

100% Chardonnay from two parcels on the Verzenay Grand Cru, all from the 2013 harvest. Tirage 2014 and aged on the lees for a period two times greater than appellation requirements. Disgorgement: 2018-2019 (see back label). Dosage: 2.4g/L.

Nose of a great purity with notes of brioche, spices and white flowers. The attack is sharp and frank with very elegant bubbles. Great freshness is expressed

through an incredible minerality. Montagne de Reims terroir gives its Chardonnays a unique character marked with citrus and toasty notes.

NV Champagne Labruyère Blanc de Noirs Paradoxe RRP \$190

Blanc de Noirs from 100% Pinot Noir grown on various parcels on the mid-slope on the Verzenay grand cru. The base harvest is 2014. 20% of the blend is reserve wines, mostly from 2013. The wine was tiraged in 2015 and aged on lees for a period two times superior to appellation requirements. Disgorged 2018 and 2019 (see back label). Dosage 1.6g/L.

The wine is gold with dazzling pink and copper reflections. The powerful and complex nose is marked by notes of cherry, red berries and plum. With a little air, notes of acacia, liquorice and toast emerge. The palate is elegant and structured. The Verzenay terroir with its deep soil expresses all its power in this Pinot Noir. The 2014 harvest is perfectly evoked with great tension featuring red fruits, cherry, liquorice and mint. Very persistent, warm on the finish with a beautiful touch of salinity.

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PITTI PARTY

Every season we rubbish the idea of seasonal drinking – I mean, if you want to drink it, don't let a calendar talk you out of it. But there's no doubt that a subliminal hankering kicks in as the leaves start to change colour. We're not into the hunker-down-by-the-fire-with-a-brooding-red territory here. We're into deep sunsets, cool nights and nostalgia. And Austrian reds.

There can be a faintly melancholy vibe to autumn, and you don't want to succumb to the idea that these are the last drops of tender warmth being squeezed from the year. No! Glass half full, carpe diem and all that. Stay fresh, trust the energy. And yes, Pittnauer is the producer to keep you in that zone.

2018 Pittnauer Pitti Rosé RRP \$26

Strawberry and redcurrant, a slight smokiness, and green herb. Fresh style, all about acid drive, crunch and juicy blood orange tang. Chalkiness on a tart and lively finish. More a white wine style of Rosé, but good energy here. 91 points. Gary Walsh, The Wine Front

2018 Pittnauer Pitti Red RRP \$27

Sour cherry, bramble fruit and elderberry, flash of violet hint of meat, rosemary and graphite to garnish. Aromatically quite a brooding edition of this wine. The palate is plush and fresh, medium bodied with an easy flow from fresh acidity. Light and shade through the palate, too, with flavours skipping through nicely on a finish where cream and liquorice notes chime in with the berries. Kind of complex, then, but the pleasure is pure and simple. –

Ed Merrison, CellarHand

2017 Pittnauer Blaufränkisch RRP \$32

The nose gives little away but the palate comes in with a juicy easy aromatic freshness that sweeps plum, plum skin, crushed blackberry and a little tar in its lively wake. This is sinuous, light but full of life and fruit. Drink soon. 91 points. Anne Krebiehl MW, Wine Enthusiast



2015 Pittnauer Pittnauski RRP \$49

A wine that glides over the palate, just medium weight, succulent with firm but lacy tannins, good acidity, loaded with cherry flavours and dried herb character. Feels understated in the best possible way, one to whisk around in a big glass and settle in and watch open. Such a good vibe here. 93 points. Mike Bennie, The Wine Front

2016 Pittnauer Pannobile RRP \$64

Certified biodynamic 50:50 blend of Blaufränkisch and Zweigelt from the Ungerberg, Rosenberg, Altenberg and Setz vineyards. This Pannobile is evidence that 2016 was a brilliant year for blithe, subtle and invigorating wines. The flavours are precise: red-berried and gently highlighted by herbal insinuations. The mouthfeel is cool and delicate, shaped by a fresh and vital acidity and firm tannins. The body unifies elegance and energy and gives way to a focused and multi-layered finish. - Gerhard Pittnauer

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THE STATE OF OREGON

Fair to say that CellarHand has its fair share of Pinot Noir in the portfolio. There's a lovely spread from Australia, of course, and New Zealand. Couple of places in France pretty famous for it, too. Plus there's Germany's best in the guise of Bernhard Huber, and Switzerland's best in Gantenbein.

It's an embarrassment of riches, but of course each one of them justifies its place. And Pinot, of course, is all about place. Ernst Loosen's estate in the Willamette Valley is a delightful complement, with a distinct Oregon accent. There's a year-on-year upward creep in quality among what are already very fine, layered and expressive wines.

2016 J. Christopher Willamette Pinot Noir RRP \$82

J. Christopher's flagship wine is a classic Pinot Noir from the Willamette Valley, blended from excellent vineyards from several AVAs including the Dundee Hills, Chehalem Mountains and Eola-Amity Hills. It's always a pretty wine that paints a faithful portrait of its place and vintage. It has bright, pure red fruit aromatics and a juicy mid-palate grip. It's delicately fruity with a fine texture and refreshing acid structure. – J. Christopher Estate



2016 J. Christopher Pinot Noir Sandra Adele RRP \$148

Shimmering red. A highly perfumed bouquet evokes ripe red/blue fruits, exotic spices, and suave floral and vanilla nuances that gain strength with aeration. Sweet, seamless and energetic on the palate, displaying a refined blend of richness and energy to its vibrant, mineral-laced boysenberry, cherry-cola and rose pastille flavours. Shows impressive power on the gently tannic finish, which lingers with excellent, floral-driven tenacity. 94 points. Josh Raynolds, Vinous Media

2015 J. Christopher Pinot Noir Sandra Adele RRP \$148

Dark bright-rimmed red. A complex, highly perfumed bouquet displays spice-tinged raspberry liqueur, cherry cola, underbrush and floral pastille scents, along with a deeper cola nuance and a touch of smoky minerality. Concentrated and seamless in texture, showing superb delineation and energy to the red berry preserve, cherry pie and spiced cake flavours. Finishes extremely long and broad, featuring smooth, slow-building tannins and lingering rose pastille and Chambord notes. 93 points. Josh Raynolds, Vinous Media

2015 J. Christopher Pinot Noir Nuages RRP \$102

Deep vivid red. Ripe red berries, cherry pit, violet and woodsmoke on the pungent nose; mineral and white pepper flourishes add lift and urgency. Silky, sweet and nicely concentrated, offering black raspberry and cherry cola flavours and a touch of succulent herbs. Delivers a solid punch but comes off energetic, even lithe, displaying smooth tannins and a resonating floral note on the persistent finish. 91 points. Josh Raynolds, Vinous Media

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