

Welcome to the CellarHand newsletter for April 2021. Here's a little taste of what's going on this month...

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DOMESTIC



HEARTLAND'S RUDE HEALTH

Langhorne Creek is one of Australia's oldest wine regions, and also one of the best-kept secrets in our viticultural treasure trove. Its magic has long been known among astute producers who've turned to it for succulent, fresh fruit presence.

Its cool maritime climate is predominantly shaped by the onshore southerly winds blowing directly from the Southern Ocean across Lake Alexandrina. Summers tend to be long, dry and warm with reliable afternoon breezes retaining natural acidity in the ripening grapes.

The Heartland story began in the late 1990s when winemaker Ben Glaetzer got hooked on the outstanding quality of fruit being grown here. Since Heartland's first vintage in 2001, Ben has been celebrating this generous

approachability in gracefully evolving wines of high quality and excellent value.

2019 Heartland Stickleback Red RRP \$16

Each individual variety for Heartland Stickleback Red was fermented on skins for five days before

pressing. Maturation in two and three-year-old oak barrels. All ferments were kept cool to enhance the aromatics and to keep the tannins soft. Cabernet Sauvignon and Shiraz give this wine a rich, savoury character and good structure. A splash of Lagrein contributes spice and tannin. The tightness and structure of the Lagrein pulls the wine together and makes this blend a perfect match with food. – **Ben Glaetzer, Heartland**

2018 Heartland Foreign Correspondent RRP \$26

Well. It's a very good drink. You don't have to pay the big bucks. Red licorice, black cherries, drifts of aromatic dried herbs. Fresh and juicy in the best of ways. A gentle tether of tannin; just enough. Good stuff. Thumbs up. 90 points. Campbell Mattinson, The Wine Front

2016 Heartland Sposa e Sposa RRP \$22

55% Lagrein, 45% Dolcetto from Langhorne Creek, the Lagrein matured in new French hogsheads, the Dolcetto in stainless steel. Typical Ben Glaetzer, weaving seductive mouthfeel and flavours for the price of a tram ticket. 91 points. James Halliday, Halliday Wine Companion 2021

2017 Heartland Spice Trader Cabernet/Shiraz RRP \$19

The wine comprises 70% Cabernet and 30% Shiraz from vines with an average age of more than 25 years, growing on the sandy loam soils of cool-climate Langhorne Creek. The Cabernet Sauvignon and Shiraz are fermented separately with specific parcels included for their ability to offer greater complexity and character. Time in barrel permits a softening of the wine's structure. It also offers a complex expression of the fruit and helps the exotic notes of spice to be discovered.

The very dark core of this wine stretches all the way to the ruby rim. The aromas are of freshly crushed blackberries and preserved cherries accented by hints of dark chocolate and cardamom. The palate echoes this with soft forward black fruit dominating anisette, persimmon and classic fruit cake notes. A long mellow finish completes the picture. – **Ben Glaetzer, Heartland**

2016 Heartland Spice Trader Shiraz RRP \$19

A four-year-old Shiraz (five if you can hold onto any over the summer '21 barbecue season) below \$20. That's pretty good going already for this dark-berried, plum-and-spice wine that's had plenty of time to find its groove. Full bodied, rich and generous to the core. 90 points. Tony Love, James Halliday Wine Companion

2015 Heartland Spice Trader Cabernet Sauvignon RRP \$19

Like its Spice Trader Shiraz sibling, 5-6 years have allowed this wine to relax and find an appealing balance in the palate. The nose is pure Cabernet leafiness, and while this echoes softly as you drink, the forest fruits and crimson-berry feels here are the dominant force. It's bright and lifted, with varietal tannins adding structure. Crazy good value. 90 points. Tony Love, Halliday Wine Companion



2018 Heartland Shiraz RRP \$24

There's a genuine honesty to this wine. No affectations: it's all about pure shiraz in its plum-fruit expression with neatly teased spice - a touch peppery - that gives lift and energy to the fleshy palate. Older-oak maturation over 12 months has added backbone, too. The sweet varietal fruit is more than celebrated, in an everyday manner that still has a note of tannin definition and finish. Excellent value. 92 points. Tony Love, Halliday Wine Companion

2018 Heartland Cabernet Sauvignon RRP \$24

The fruit was crushed into 8-tonne open fermenters, left on skins to cold macerate for three days prior to fermentation. Fermentation occurred at or under 23°C (with a Rhône isolate yeast). This helped to extract the skin tannin while maintaining aromatics. The wine underwent its malolactic conversion in oak, and was then racked and returned to French and American oak for a 12-month maturation.

An imperial purple cloak gives ample warning of the power in the glass. The sweet fragrance of dark forest berries immediately floods the senses, offset by a diverse spice rack of secondary aromas. Clean bright fruit dominates the palate complemented by dusty tannins, with surprising depth and length of finish. - **Ben Glaetzer, Heartland**

2018 Heartland Directors' Cut Shiraz RRP \$40

The grapes for Directors' Cut Shiraz are selected from some of the best Shiraz vineyards in the region. These vineyards are chosen for the consistent intensity and texture of the fruit. The strictest pruning techniques are used. The fruit was harvested at night and then crushed to small open-top stainless-steel fermenters. After 24 hours of skin contact, fermentation kicked off with our Rhône isolate yeast. Following 10 days of cool fermentation on skins and pumped over three times daily, the wine was transferred to French and American oak hogsheads for 14 months maturation. In the 2018 vintage we limited ourselves to 40% new oak to ensure the fruit remained the focus.

The dark purple colour is a clear indication of the intensity that awaits in your glass. The nose is inundated with berry compote and a decorative topping of fresh berries. These are accented by whispers of spice. The palate offers juicy plums and chocolate dipped dried fruits. There are hints of oregano and thyme to be sort out. The finish is long and the freshness unmistakable. - **Ben Glaetzer, Heartland**

2016 Heartland Directors' Cut Cabernet Sauvignon RRP \$40

*This has cedary, blackcurrant and blueberry aromas with a nice patina of smart oak augmenting some stylish cabernet fruit. It's rich and fruit-sweet, full-bodied but elegantly cast and superbly harmonious. An excellent cabernet that shows a touch of class. 92 points. **Huon Hooke, The Real Review***

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JANCIS ON FRANKLAND ESTATE

"If this is the entry-level Riesling, what the heck are the other ones going to be like?!" That's the sound of the great **Jancis Robinson** having her socks knocked off by Frankland Estate's Riesling. "Very much Great



Southern style of Riesling, which is so distinctive and so delicious."

Jancis admitted she rarely found a vineyard that produced both a red and white that she loved equally. The Smith Cullam clan bucked that trend. "Like the entry-level Riesling, this is a star!" she said of the 2017 Estate Shiraz, which starred alongside the 2019 Riesling as twin **Wines of the Week** on jancisrobinson.com. Of the Shiraz, she wrote "Very clean and peppery with sweet fruit but real energy... So obviously Syrah (rather than Shiraz) and really fresh and refreshing without being tart."

Here in Australia we've been on the 2020 vintage of the Riesling for a while (and keep your eye out for the forthcoming single-vineyard release!), while the Shiraz has just rolled to 2018. But rest assured, you're getting that same ridiculous value and quality that

bowled Jancis over, right across this entry-level price point.

After all, this is – as Jancis reminds us – “a superb, family-run, ecologically sensitive estate in a beautiful, extremely isolated location”.

2020 Frankland Estate Riesling RRP \$30

A very crystalline Riesling on the nose with hints of white citrus flower and blossom. The soft and delicate approach builds with a combination of lime and bath salts. Delicate crystalline flavours on the palate show a dry precise Riesling with texture, spice and delicate acidity that give the wine focus and fantastic length. Consistent with the well-established Rieslings from Frankland Estate, this wine displays the balance of pristine fruit flavours and laser-like acidity, allied to generosity of fruit. - **Hunter Smith, Frankland Estate**

2018 Frankland Estate Chardonnay RRP \$30

Light yellow colour with a spicy, smoky reduction bouquet, which is quite complex and inviting. Its mid-palate is fine and restrained but loaded with grapefruit flavours, the palate refined and taut, long and crisp, with lively energy and a clean, crisp and dry follow-through. Grapefruit flavours are the main event. 92 points. Huon Hooke, The Real Review

2018 Frankland Estate Shiraz RRP \$30

Lovely Shiraz, bit of a treat. Graphite, clove, dark chocolate and ripe black cherry. Both dry and generous at once. Sweet-fruited and savoury. Nuanced. Flows effortlessly but there's tannin here too. Medium-weight in a good way. All those things. 93 points. Campbell Mattinson, The Wine Front

2018 Frankland Estate Cabernet Sauvignon. RRP \$30

Loads of charm to the bouquet, cinnamon and mixed red berries, raspberry coulis and toasty, cedary oak. It's silken and beautifully balanced – ripe fruit allowed to sing without the heavy hand of oak. Exceptional value. 94 points. Nick Butler, The Real Review

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MINNOW RAINBOW

What a thing Minnow has become! What started as Shadowfax's underdog red from southern French grape varieties has grown into a regular range of white, rosé and red with the occasional extra flitting in and out when something good crops up.

And that's just what's happened here, with a new Viognier here for a good time, not a long time. Grown by friends on the Malakoff Vineyard in Victoria's Pyrenees, it delivers a good dose of Viognier flavour with lively freshness. Also in the range is the purple-labelled, purple-fruited Carignan, a crunchy, sappy, spicy red with juicy flow.

Everyone knows the rosé, a perennial favourite. And just hitting the shelves now is the latest rendition of the Minnow red blend, aka Grenache Mataro – another superbly fresh, slurpable midweek quaffer.

2020 Minnow Rosé RRP \$25

Squishy strawberry, nutty, toffee apple, a bit of spice. Slippery style, soft acidity, good amount of flavour, slight blood orange tang, almost a thick peel



marmalade character, but not really sweet as such, though it is what you might call a comely rosé. A little pith and pepper on the finish, and plenty of interest throughout. 91 points. Gary Walsh, The Wine Front

2020 Minnow Viognier RRP \$25

This Viognier was carefully grown in the renowned Malakoff Vineyard in the Pyrenees. The fruit was gently whole bunch-pressed and left to settle overnight prior to racking. The primary ferment was fermented at cooler temperatures to retain fruit aromas. After primary ferment it was gravity fed into older French hogshead barrels in our underground cellar for further maturing. It was left on light lees to develop further complexity for 6 months prior to bottling in early December 2020. - **Al Timms, Shadowfax**

2019 Minnow Carignan RRP \$25

The nose shows dark blood plum, briary spice, hints of liquorice. Brooding game meats add further intrigue. Black cassis fruits flow onto a round palate. Sappy tannins build through the wine, with a distinct Carignan crunch at the back of the palate. This dark and building wine has presence on the palate that rolls on that thrives with food. - **Al Timms, Shadowfax**

2020 Minnow Grenache Mataro RRP \$25

Carefully hand harvested fruit was picked in the cool of the morning to retain vibrancy. The Mataro 26%, Carignan 14% fruit was destemmed into small open fermenters, where wild yeast performed their magic. The ferments when lightly hand plunged to extract fine tannins. The Grenache (60%) portion was fermented using Carbonic maceration or whole bunch techniques to add blue fruit aromatics. The wine was then pressed and left to rest in older French hogsheads. The wine was racked then blended and bottled in December 2018.

A fun and vibrant wine with plum and blue fruits at its core. Dried apricots add another element. The tannins are raspy and long giving the wine a savoury crunch giving lovely texture and drive. The bright and lingering palate remains fresh, lending itself to that second or third glass. - **Al Timms, Shadowfax**

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PROTERO GRIGIO E NERO

Here it is, the second release from Stephen Pannell's Adelaide Hills-based Protero project. Labelled

"Pinots", it's a dry white blend of predominantly Pinot Grigio with 15% Pinot Nero (i.e. Pinot Noir). It joins the single-vineyard 2018 Nebbiolo from Steve and Fiona Pannell's Protero vineyard in Gumeracha, which the couple purchased at the end of 2019.

The Pinots sports the same kind of minimalist label as its Nebbiolo sibling, with a motif inspired by Coptic Christian sigils – essentially a kind of good-luck charm. It's fitting – both wines are happy-go-lucky and should bring a smile to anyone's face.

2020 Protero Pinots RRP \$32

85% Pinot Grigio, harvested on 3rd March, with 15% Pinot Nero harvested on 4th March. The fruit comes from the St Clar vineyard in Maccelsfield, a sub-region in the southern Adelaide Hills mercifully spared the impact of fire and smoke. The grapes were crushed, pressed and blended as juice with minimal extraction and immediately fermented in stainless steel. A small parcel



sent to an old French oak barrique in April and blended-back in July.

The wine is pretty, fragrant and lively. Orange blossom leads the charge followed by pear drops, lilac, oleander, musk lollies and strawberry fields. The palate is plush, silky and persistent, offering an avalanche of flavours from pear lollies to sherbet and musk with a grapefruit zest finish that builds length.

2018 Protero Nebbiolo RRP \$37

Pale brick-red colour, with a smoked-meat, charcuterie, dried mushroom and vanilla bouquet; pot pourri and milk chocolate, too. The bouquet is seriously fragrant and lovely: dried flowers and dried herbs, while the palate is medium-bodied and appealingly soft and supple, with gentle tannins and early drinkability. A very charming Nebbiolo. It's arguably forward-developed, but the upside is it makes seriously delicious drinking without any waiting. 95 points. Huon Hooke, The Real Review

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ERNI & FRIENDS

“Yes! Really beautifully balanced, appetising, mature Riesling,” was **Jancis Robinson**’s emphatic response to tasting the 2018 Loosen Barry Wolta Wolta Riesling. “Just delightful. How do they do it?”

Those thoughts were expressed in an article entitled Erni & Friends, looking at the various collaborations Herr Loosen is involved with around the world. “Erni, short for Ernst, is a quintessential extrovert who travels all over the world and is much appreciated by wine lovers and wine producers everywhere,” Robinson wrote. “He’s curious and cosmopolitan with a deep understanding of non-German



wines as well as of the history of his own extraordinary Mosel wine region.”

It was that understanding of international wines – informed by a 25-year friendship with the Barry family and the consumption of a not insignificant amount of their Riesling – that led Erni to get involved in the project that yielded, from 2018, the second edition of the excellent Wolta Wolta from a special plot of the Lodge Hill vineyard in Clare Valley.

2018 Loosen Barry Wolta Wolta Riesling RRP \$120

Great evolution on the nose – really zesty, lime marmalade flavours. Yes! Really beautifully balanced, appetising, mature Riesling. Steely but not austere. Doesn't taste at all sweet though there may be a little residual sugar in here to counterbalance this very fine acidity. Composed and salivatory. Hmm, but I see from Wine-Searcher.com that the Barrys do not undervalue it and charge the equivalent of about £65 a bottle in Australia. Shame. I thought I had spotted a bargain here. Just delightful. How do they do it? 12.5%. Drink 2021 – 2028. 17.5/20 Jancis Robinson, jancisrobinson.com April 2020

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PUNT ROAD WHITES ON SONG

You have to take your hat off to Tim Shand at Punt Road. He's made it his mission to treat wine-lovers with respect by offering wines that are genuine and drinkable, while being easy to "get" and even easier to get down your throat. **Gary Walsh** of *The Wine Front* called him "the master of complexity at entry level prices," which sums it up nicely. The single-vineyard Chardonnay and Pinot Gris both come with an RRP of just \$24, and both are a celebration of their variety in a place – the Yarra Valley – that loves them well.

2020 Punt Road Pinot Gris RRP \$24

A few hours skin contact, some old oak, and a jolly good hard pressing, to wring out some more flavour. Good Gris.

Ripe brown pear, vanilla and white flowers, something like aniseed or liquorice in the mix too. It's a little bit spicy, soft and cool feeling, quite juicy, subtle pear skin texture, and finishes well. Slight smokiness about it, though working as a positive. 90 points. Gary Walsh, The Wine Front

2020 Punt Road Chardonnay RRP \$24

Lemon curd and white peach, some nutty biscuits and creamy nougat, but also quite fresh and frisky. It has a subtle glossiness and glycerol texture, a bit of grapefruitiness and pineapple acidity, and a slight chalkiness. A pleasing amount of flavour delivered with confident restraint. Very nice. 92 points. Gary Walsh, The Wine Front

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SCORPO'S SUPER CUVÉES

2019 Scorpo Eocene Chardonnay RRP \$70

From vines planted in 2008. Clones are 95 Bernard, P50, I1V10. Wild yeast fermented. No MLF. 20% new oak from the Sirugue cooperage. Bottled unfined.

A seductive nose, yet one that holds its cards close to the chest, with restraint and elegance showcased. Fresh lemon and lime dominate the fruits, however florals are equally present with orange blossom and jasmine. There is an openness to the nose, much like a walk in a meadow with fresh flowers and cut grass. The palate supports the nose: elegance, restraint, fresh and pure. It is precise and detailed with a fine gravelly seam driving the core long and deep. The fruits are again lemon and lime with a smattering of flowers. Hints of toast and nutmeg in the background provide an added richness and complexity to a well-packaged wine. - **Paul Scorpo**

2018 Scorpo Eocene High-Density Vineyard Pinot Noir RRP \$87

Abel clone vines were close-planted in '13 at 10 000 vines/ha. Hand-picked, wild yeast-open fermented with 10% whole bunches, 20 days on skins, matured for 13 months in French oak (20% new). The fruit is deep and complex, no surprise, but the savoury



tannin support has also been well managed. Watch this space. 95 points. *James Halliday, Halliday Wine Companion*

2019 Scorpo Eocene 'Original Vineyard' Pinot Noir RRP \$87

Vines planted in 1997. 100% MV6. 10% whole cluster. Wild yeast fermented. Unfined and unfiltered. Intense raspberries upfront on the nose supported by earthy notes of mushroom and toasted almonds. Spicy nutmeg and cardamom elements add fragrance and herbal notes. The palate is disciplined, dense and dusty with raspberry again the dominant fruit, supported by cherries and plums. The acid is firm and tight whilst still displaying a finesse through a graphite texture. – **Paul Scorpo**

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ULTRA COOL PINOT POURS

We know how important – and tricky – it is for you to track down a classy, complex and complete go-to Pinot Noir. That's why we've searched high and low for you. Well that's not quite true; we searched high altitude and latitude – after all, it's coolness you're after – but essentially we didn't have to stray far from home, since Victoria and Tassie are where all the action is.

New releases from 2020 – plus the newly rolled 2019 from Onannon – make up this neat quartet from four different regions offering high quality and pinosity aplenty at modest prices.

2020 Punt Road Pinot Noir *Yarra Valley, Victoria* RRP \$32

Single-site wine from Punt Road's Napoleone Vineyard. This 2020 Punt Road Pinot Noir shows the Punt Road style in fine form. About 15% whole bunches in the ferment. It's perfumed with bright fruit, silky mouthfeel and a lick of

bitter chocolate tannin to finish. This wine has more concentration than the famed 2017 edition, which is its closest relative. – **Tim Shand, Punt Road**

2020 Stoney Rise Pinot Noir *Tamar Valley, Tasmania* RRP \$35

This 2020 wine from Joe and Lou Holyman in the Tamar Valley comprises 90% estate-grown fruit with 10% Pinot Noir grapes from the vineyards of grower friends. 15% of the blend is old-vine fruit from unirrigated, 34-year-old plantings. The wine is mature in French oak (just 5% new) and is bottled unfined and unfiltered. It's a cool, compact Pinot Noir with much more to it than meets the eye. It begins with a pretty, pale ruby hue and rose-petal, cranberry and sour cherry perfume. Red berries and cherries arrive on a buoyant, tangy palate with just enough sweetness to go with earthy spice and a Campari edge. Suede tannins and lively acidity lend structure to the vibrant, mouthwatering finish. – **Ed Merrison, CellarHand**

2020 Shadowfax Macedon Ranges Pinot Noir *Macedon Ranges, Victoria* RRP \$36

Fruit for the 2020 Macedon Ranges Pinot Noir was grown on the Little Hampton, Midhill, Big Shed, Straws Lane and Chanters Ridge vineyards in the Macedon Ranges. A late and wet spring set small crops. A cool summer and mild spring led to a very long growing season. The high-elevation sites in the Macedon Ranges led to extra cool nights, helping to retain natural acidity in the grapes, which ripened late in the season with full flavour and phenolic ripeness.

Bunches were hand picked in small batches in pristine condition. The fruit was carefully sorted and destemmed with 100% whole berries into small open fermenters. Natural fermentation occurred with

daily hand pumpovers and limited plunging to extract fine tannins and flavour. After two weeks on skins the wine was pressed and then racked into new (30%) and used French hogsheads, where it rested and grew. The wine was then blended and filtered prior to bottling in January 2020.

This elegant Macedon Ranges Pinot Noir has brooding spice aromas including cardamom, star anise, sandalwood and citrus blossom. Maraschino cherries and wild berries give lift in the glass, as do hints of tangerine. The wine has intrigue and flair, evolving over time. Blackberries and spice spill onto the palate. This generous Pinot has breadth and expanse, yet shows poise from seams of ripe grape tannins. There's complexity galore with sandalwood and Campari spice interacting with dark plum fruits. The palate is long and persistent yet light on its feet, bringing you back for more. This is a fine and powerful example of cool-climate, high altitude Macedon Ranges Pinot Noir. – **Al Timms, Shadowfax**

2019 Onannon Pinot Noir *Mornington Peninsula, Victoria* RRP \$40

Fruit from three vineyards: Balnarring, Red Hill and Shoreham. 10% whole bunches, no new oak. Unfined. In 2019 the fruit really sits in the front seat. It's darker than the previous couple of releases, blue moving into black fruits with some cardamom/star anise spice notes from the bunches. On the palate the fruit really attacks, again led primarily by darker fruits that at the moment seem to swallow the bunch spices. The wine finishes with sour cherry echoes and fine tannins. – **Will Byron, Onannon**

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BALNAVES CHARDONNAY ROLL

“The Chardonnay is consistently among the region's best,” wrote **James Halliday** of the sole white wine in the portfolio of Coonawarra leading light, the Balnaves family. This variety has always been treated here with the all the respect such a regal grape deserves – picked ripe but fresh, then handled with dexterity all the way into the bottle, where the winemaking serves to highlight the extremely high quality of the fruit.

2020 is no exception. “I like its style,” commented **The Wine Front's Mike Bennie**. “I like the generosity but vitality. It looks the goods in its vibe.”

This is a wine whose entire journey was overseen by Jacinta Jenkins, erstwhile apprentice to the great Pete Bissell. With these exceptional Terra Rossa vineyards in the care of Pete Balnaves, and with Jacinta capitalising on Mr Bissell's 30 years of experience, the Balnaves estate is in exceptional shape.



2020 Balnaves Chardonnay RRP \$32

Soft, creamy style, some green melon, grapefruit tang, zestiness and a sense of old school, good school to it. Really nicely put together, lots of flavour, you can see that the trajectory will head into a butter, honeyed style, but right now is pretty raw in a way, but in good shape, just not quite at the tightest apex of a young wine (bottled just a few weeks ago, tasted today). I like its style. I like the generosity but vitality. It looks the goods in its vibe. 92 points. Mike Bennie, The Wine Front

2016 Balnaves Cabernet Sauvignon RRP \$43

The more concentrated wine of the three Bordeaux-inspired wines outside of the Tally Reserve. Black

olive, bay leaf, graphite and cassis swirl about, bolstered by a sheen of sexy oak, following an extended 18 months in French gear (50% new). This is a crowd-pleaser already, with ample fruit and coffee grind tannins tapering to a long finish. This said, it will age prodigiously. 96 points. Ned Goodwin MW, James Halliday Wine Companion 2020

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IMPORTS

LOOSEN THOSE PURSE STRINGS

In an area as magnificently marginal as the Mosel, growing great wine is never plain sailing. Once again 2019 threw some curveballs, not least the August heatwave. "But as always," says Erni Loosen, "Riesling proved its resilience by producing a range of highly aromatic and finely balanced wines in 2019. It is a fully ripe vintage, with vibrant aromatics and a pronounced acidity that gives brilliant structural precision to the wines."

Stephan Reinhardt of Wine Advocate expressed his admiration for the range in a typically thorough harvest report. "The higher 2018 and 2019 predicate wines are not only exceptional but also digestible, fruity wines from overripe but also green berries that have never been better here," wrote Reinhardt. "The dry Rieslings, on the other hand, are more oriented toward the Wachauer Smaragds, as they were produced at the end of the 1980s, when rarely more than 12.5% alcohol was on the label. Loosen describes the acids of the 2019s as "crisp" (they range between 7.5 and 8 grams per litre), and in fact they give an inimitable breed and precision to the GGs." And so it is we go from dry to the lusciously luxuriant Auslese Goldkapsel from Erden's red-slate Prälät site and find irresistible quality across the board from this paragon of great-value Riesling excellence.



2019 Dr L Dry Riesling RRP \$25

Pristine, fragrant white peach and chalky mineral tones collide in this dry, fresh-fruited Riesling. Steely on the finish, it's a remarkable value for a sophisticated yet easy-drinking wine that's likely to please many. Best enjoyed young. 90 points. Anna Lee C. Iijima, Wine Enthusiast

2019 Dr Loosen Wehlener Sonnenuhr Grosses Gewächs RRP \$85

From vines planted in 1911 or earlier in the Laichen lieu-dit, Loosen's 2019 Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling GG Alte Reben is sylphlike, highly delicate and fine in its multilayered, fruity, floral and crunchy/flinty bouquet that reveals very fine slate aromas and even salty notes. Absolutely fabulous! Silky textured, lush and generous yet highly finessed, this is an intense yet subtle, pure and minerally fresh Riesling from one of the Mosel's finest vineyard. The finish is long, fresh, piquant and sustainably structured as well as salty. Irresistible. Tasted at the domain in September 2020. 96 points. Stephan Reinhardt, Wine Advocate

2019 Dr Loosen Erdener Treppchen Grosses Gewächs Riesling RRP \$93

The 2019 Erdener Treppchen Riesling GG Alte Reben comes from two very old plots adjacent the Prälät (the upper part of the former original Treppchen and the lower Herzlay) that have never been replanted



since long before World War I. It shows a clear, intense yet subtle and deep, highly complex but also refined bouquet of very fine red slate and herbal aromas as well as perfectly clear and elegant Riesling fruits. Silky textured, highly finessed and perfectly balanced on the palate, this is a very intense and juicy, enormously long and concentrated yet finessed and mouthwatering Treppechen with the crystalline grip of broken slate and the intensity and complexity of biblical vines in a great terroir. The 2019 Treppechen is arguably the finest dry wine I have ever tasted from Ernie Loosen. Highly recommended. Tasted at the domain in September 2020. 97 points. **Stephan Reinhardt, Wine Advocate**

2019 Dr Loosen Ürziger Würzgarten Grosses Gewächs Riesling RRP \$93

From volcanic soils, the 2019 Ürziger Würzgarten

*Riesling GG Alte Reben is beautifully clear, fresh and subtle on the precise and highly finessed bouquet of slate, iodine and herbal scents. The warm and elegant Riesling fruit intertwined with very fine herbal notes represents the very best of this exceptional grand cru in its original, much smaller size. Almost entirely sourced from the Urglück, this is a lush and intense, enormously powerful yet restrained and slatey Würzgarten GG with crystalline acidity that leads to a long, intense and still slightly astringent finish with refreshing lemon features. This wine is still developing and has the potential to become another giant of the vintage. Tasted at the domain in September 2020. 96+ points. **Stephan Reinhardt, Wine Advocate***

2019 Dr Loosen Wehlener Sonnenuhr Kabinett RRP \$44

*Elegant and playful with plenty of white fruit, then stunning freshness at the very crisp, lemony finish. Drink or hold. 92 points. **Stuart Pigott, jameessuckling.com***

2019 Dr Loosen Ürziger Würzgarten Auslese 375ml RRP \$64

*A really beautiful, concentrated Auslese that combines a lot of citrus character with complex, spicy notes. The long finish is super fresh and very mineral. Drink or hold. 95 points. **Stuart Pigott, jameessuckling.com***

*The 2019 Ürziger Würzgarten Riesling Auslese is clear and bright on the still-closed nose yet less complex compared to the Sonnenuhr (probably due to the recent bottling). The wine is clear and fresh, shows caramelized apple flavours, finely classy acidity and a crystalline, elegant finish yet seems to be somehow reduced in its expression. Tasted at the domain in September 2020. 92+ points. **Stephan Reinhardt, Wine Advocate***



2019 Dr Loosen Erdener Prälat Auslese Goldkapsel 375ml RRP \$96

Forget dessert and substitute it for this much more delicious and healthy option! The wonderfully

fragrant mango, papaya and mangosteen nose pulls you deep into this concentrated but super elegant Auslese with a very long, powerful finish. The sweetness is already beautifully integrated. Drink or hold. 98 points. Stuart Pigott, jammersuckling.com March 2021

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EVA READY

We love the way **Stephan Reinhardt** of **Wine Advocate** evokes Eva Clüsserath's style. It captures the essence of the wines and, like the liquid itself, sets the mouth watering. Who could resist diving into this: "The wines show remarkable elegance and purity and are neither weighty nor too powerful but smooth, open-hearted and true reflections of the particular terroir."

On the heels of a cool, wet March, summery temperatures in April

led to early budbreak along the Mosel. Eva's vines reacted with vigorous growth, which called for intense canopy management. A stable high-pressure system then settled in over Trittenheim and surrounds, ensuring warm temperatures and a striking lack of rainfall throughout the entire summer.

This led to rapid ripening from August onwards and harvest began early, on 24th September. Conditions remained warm and dry as the grapes were brought in, with the deep-rooted vines handling the lack of precipitation no problem.

"Our fully healthy, golden yellow Riesling grapes seemed like something out of a fairy tale," said Eva. "The vintage delivered juicy wines with fantastic fruit and a marked creaminess."

2018 Ansgar Clüsserath Vom Schiefer Riesling Trocken RRP \$40

A pungent, zesty impression of lemon and lime is allied to one of crushed stone, almost dusty on the nose and then expressed as suffusion on a flatteringly silken, alcoholically buoyant (at 11.6%) but palpably extract-rich palate. Suggestions of almond and hazelnut lend richness; bright citric juiciness serves for animation; while a dose of mineral salts triggers salivary action on a refreshing- and invigoratingly sustained finish. The extra textural allure here is probably attributable to the wine's having been bottled later than usual – at the end of July 2019 – and rested on its lees until just before that. 90 points. David Schildknecht, Vinous Media

2016 Ansgar Clüsserath Trittenheimer Apotheke Riesling Trocken RRP \$91

Potent perfume of fresh flowers, ripe apple, fresh mixed citrus. The palate delivers a lot of flavour but also crisp, tart citrusy tang, green apple, mineral water-esque characters and quite a good deal of power. Complex, energetic, intriguing expression here, with great texture in tow. Super. 95 points. Mike Bennie, The Wine Front

2014 Ansgar Clüsserath Piesporter Goldtröpfchen Riesling Feinherb RRP \$54

The 2014 Piesporter Goldtröpfchen Riesling Feinherb opens with a dusty/slatey bouquet intermixed with super clear and ripe Riesling, orange and red cassis flavours. Round, elegant and intense, with a nice

*creaminess and delicate tannins on the palate, this full-bodied, virtually dry and complex Goldtröpfchen brings out the zesty/fruity character of the fresh red currant that which are so typical for the Goldtröpfchen cru. This is an impressively intense and elegant Riesling with a very good structure and perfectly balanced fruit. A stunning and age-worthy wine! 92 points. **Stephan Reinhardt, Wine Advocate***

2018 Ansgar Clüsserath Trittenheimer Riesling Kabinett RRP \$43

*The 2018 Trittenheimer Riesling Kabinett is super pure, fresh and slatey on the bright, fresh and crunchy nose. Bottled with 8.5% alcohol, this is a charmingly round and fruity Kabinett. It doesn't have the mineral-piquant thrill of the outstanding 2017, but it serves all those who like their Riesling more graceful and less challenging. Or let me put it this way: You don't need to be a Viking to love this wine. Tasted from AP 0219 in May 2020. 92 points. **Stephan Reinhardt, Wine Advocate***



2018 Ansgar Clüsserath Trittenheimer Apotheke Spätlese RRP \$59

*The 2018 Trittenheimer Apotheke Riesling Spätlese is deep and flinty on the precise, attractively reductive, floral and salty nose. Intense and juicy on the palate, this is a lean and precise but dense and elegant Spätlese with a stimulating grip, minty aroma and salty-piquant finish. The acidity is fine but precise as a laser sword. After the delicious 2017, the 2018 is another great, highly digestible Spätlese from Eva Clüsserath. 8.5% alcohol. Tasted from AP 04 19 in May 2020. 94 points. **Stephan Reinhardt, Wine Advocate***



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WITTMANN'S FILLIP

“Without a doubt, Wittmann's 2019s [...] are great wines, even greater than the 2018s, possibly even the finest of the last 20 years,” reports **Wine Advocate's Stephan Reinhardt** of this latest set of wines.

Such an outcome, according to Philipp Wittmann, borders on a miracle because the 2019 vintage was quite a turbulent affair. It was only when harvesting the “perfectly ripe and healthy grapes”, he told Reinhardt, that it became clear 2019 was destined for greatness.

By now a certain amount of press hype has made 2019's brilliance seem a

foregone conclusion. As we're often at pains to point out – and Philipp's comment on turbulence bears it out – the über-conscientious growers in Germany's top flight don't need benign vintages in order to

realise miraculous wines. Where generations-old wisdom meets contemporary broadmindedness, and vine-whispering sensitivity blends with do-or-die toil in the field, spectacular wines flow forth. Organically certified since 1990 and biodynamic since 2004, Philipp's parcels of his beloved Rheinhessen are a haven where nature thrives. Limestone rules around his home in Westhofen, whose rocks are the sensory X-factor and texture-lending lifeblood. The Wittmann family owns significant parcels in four grand-cru sites here, with a further GG-in-waiting in neighbouring Gundersheim. "Everything in the Grossen Lagen is treated as GG, regardless of its destination," says Philipp – explaining why everything from the estate wines up tastes so impeccably distinctive. "I should never start to think about the cost of what I do in the vineyard. I always think about what the vines need to do it well." You have to love perfectionists like this – those who bounce around, energised by their craft and smiling at the joy it affords. While the Rheinhessen is a lovely place to ripen beautiful Riesling berries, there's plenty of work to be done. And Philipp has done it again, with a pure and scintillating expression of perfectly manicured vines on gentle German slopes.

2019 Wittmann 100 Hügel Pinot Blanc RRP \$30

The fertile hills ("Hügel" in German) of Rheinhessen are the home of Philipp Wittmann. This characteristic Pinot Blanc (Weisser Burgunder) walks an impressive tightrope of freshness and elegance. It has playful aromas of ripe fruit, herbs and mandarin. The palate delivers a beautiful creamy texture accented with subtle hints of roasted nut. It pairs deliciously with a range of Mediterranean dishes or simply a comfortable deck chair and a relaxing view.

2019 Wittmann Estate Riesling RRP \$43

What a beauty for this category! Wonderful, mirabelle nose, then a concentrated and beautifully proportioned palate with lively, citrusy acidity keeping everything bright. Super finish! From biodynamically grown grapes with Respekt certification. Drink or hold. Screw cap. 93 points. Stuart Pigott, jamessuckling.com August 2020

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SING WHEN YOUR WINNINGEN

"Erstaunlich gut!" said **Vinum** editor-in-chief **Joel B. Payne** of the newly released 2018 Heymann-Löwenstein Schieferterrassen Riesling. Which I think means he liked it. Well, he definitely did, since he and his panel of judges awarded it the title of **Estate Wine of the Year**. As the estate Riesling is the "calling card" of an estate, Payne went on, "This honour says a lot about the other, even higher quality Rieslings of the house. Here the consumer can buy blind."

We always wholeheartedly recommend investigating Schieferterrassen because it really is a window onto the heart and soul of Heymann-Löwenstein, sourced from premier-cru sites on its dizzyingly steep slate slopes. It therefore hums with the texture and energy of the grand-cru wines, each of which has an extra level of terroir personality.

In short, it's an epic range – and we urge you to dig deep into these 2018s!

2018 Heymann-Löwenstein Riesling Schieferterrassen \$64

The 2018 Riesling Schieferterrassen comes exclusively from the Winningen single vineyards Brückstück and



*Hamm. The wine displays a yeasty bouquet with a delicate, crystalline slate aroma and intense yet elegant and refined fruit. Fresh and pure on the palate, this is a linear, refined and clear dry Riesling with fine tannin grip and a very good, intense and stimulatingly salty finish. The wine is light to medium-bodied but has remarkable intensity. This is a stunning wine for such a warm and dry vintage. "The must weights weren't that high and the acidity not that low," says Sarah Löwenstein. Tasted at the domain in September 2020. 92 points. **Stephan Reinhardt, Wine Advocate***

2018 Heymann-Löwenstein Kirchberg Riesling Grosses Gewächs RRP \$89

*Very peachy and concentrated on the nose with apple strudel and mango dessert. Mouth-filling and seemingly almost off-dry, but the ripe fruit is carried succinctly by mouthwatering acidity. Drink now. 93 points. **Nick Stock, jameessuckling.com***

2018 Heymann-Löwenstein Röttgen Riesling Grosses Gewächs RRP \$116

*Stunning concentration and power to the nose, which is saturated in lemon curd, oyster shell, dried apple rind, lime cordial and dried cloves. Very long on the full-bodied palate with resounding intensity, but focussed, knife-edged acidity that keeps this mineral and taut throughout. Drink now or hold. 97 points. **Nick Stock, jameessuckling.com***

2018 Heymann-Löwenstein Uhlen Blaufüsser Lay Riesling Grosses Gewächs RRP \$125

*Another very floral and fragrant bouquet here of dried honeysuckle, apricot dessert and candied papaya. Rich and supple, but vertical and pure, this is a full-bodied Riesling with lots of density and a pastry-like texture. Drink now. 95 points. **Nick Stock, jameessuckling.com***



**2018 Heymann-Löwenstein Uhlen Roth Lay Riesling Grosses Gewächs RRP \$150
MAGNUM RRP \$306**

*Smoky and mysterious in the nose, this is the still point in the centre of the storm. Wonderful harmony on the substantial yet graceful palate, then an exciting touch of "bitterness" climbs out of the depths at the very long, austerely mineral finish. A hint of butterscotch develops. Bottled after almost two years in cask on the lees. Drink or hold. 95 points. **Nick Stock, jameessuckling.com***

**2017 Heymann-Löwenstein Uhlen Roth Lay Riesling Grosses Gewächs RRP \$150
MAGNUM RRP \$306**

*Tasted as a sample ready to be bottled, the 2017 Uhlen R Terroir Roth Lay VDP Grosse Lage is fascinatingly wild and intense on the opening, with notes of iron, herbs and crushed stones. On the palate, this is a silky, crystalline, precise, intense and concentrated Roth Lay with a long, tight, intense, complex and very persistent dry finish. Highly promising. A mouth-filling yet precise and salty Roth Lay with warm, lush fruit and a coolish crystalline and flinty soul. This was filtered in early March and was set to be bottled at the end of March, about a week after my tasting on 20 March 2019. 95-97 points. **Stephan Reinhardt, Wine Advocate***

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A. CHRISTMANN CAROL

How exciting to have these 2019s arrive with Steffen and Sophie Christmann surfing the crest of a wave. The father-and-daughter team from Gimmeldingen in the Pfalz had their '19 Idig GG named best dry Riesling of the Year on the way to landing the Winemaker of the Year title.

Judges at Germany's **Vinum** wine guide praised the Christmanns' entrepreneurial vision and

craftsmanship in handing them the award. “Despite our hundreds of years old tradition in winemaking as a family estate, we consider it our duty to question ourselves and our work constantly, always striving for improvement,” says Steffen. “We are therefore especially pleased that, after Sophie joined me as the next generation in the Christmann family, we have received all this positive feedback affirming us in our chosen path.” Their chosen path is paved with golden Riesling brilliance. 2019 was one of the warmer years but without extremes, and yielded wines with higher acidity than any vintage since 2013. The family are always the first to start picking their vineyards and easily the first to finish. Harvesting their 20 hectares in 2019 took just 16 days, where the norm these days is closer to 21- 24. “Getting the right picking day is probably the most important thing,” says Steffen, adding that the estate uses a disproportionately large team of pickers, with stringent sorting also a vital ingredient. “The wines of ’19 are quite straight, with good structure and dancing acidity,” says Sophie. Herbal, salty, stony and full of Pfalz fruit, they are ripe for maximum enjoyment.



2019 A. Christmann Estate Riesling RRP \$43

*Smoky and flinty with a lot of tension, these characteristics beautifully interwoven with the lemon and tart pear aromas. Long, clean finish. From biodynamically grown grapes with Respekt certification. Drink now. Screw cap. 92 points. **Stuart Pigott, jamessuckling.com August 2020***

2018 A. Christmann Gimmeldingen Riesling RRP \$53

*Although floral and fruity aromas are always present in Christmann’s Riesling wines, it’s their filigree herbal expression I find the most fascinating. The 2018 is already very impressive at Ortswein (village wine) level. Healthy acidity and fine phenolics give the Gimmeldinger plenty of backbone. 17/20 **Michael Schmidt, jancisrobinson.com April 2019***

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PRIEUR OF THE FAITHFUL

It’s three years since we began working with the Labruyère family to bring you these refined burgundies from some of the most exalted parcels on the Côtes d’Or.



Once again winemaker Nadine Gublin and the team have shown their sensitivity in translating the land and the vintage conditions in a very special range of wines. The exceptional mildness and sunshine of March and the first fortnight of April led to rapid development of the vines. The drop in temperatures at the end of April had no consequence and, unlike 2016, the vineyard was spared frost. With temperatures still high, vine development during the vegetation phase was meteoric (early and rapid flowering at the end of May-beginning

of June and “lightning” véraison, completed on August 10th).

With a very warm end of August interspersed with rainy intervals, the grape ripening process accelerated and 2017 enters the ranks of the earliest vintages since the beginning of the 2000s. Harvest began on August 29th.

2017 REDS

2017 Jacques Prieur Volnay 1er Cru Santenots RRP \$289

0.59Ha plot within Jacques Prieur’s Clos des Santenots monopole, with vines planted in 1997.

A more obviously floral-infused nose displays cool nuances of tangerine peel, pear and a hint of matchstick. There is both better volume and richness to the generously proportioned flavours that possess good underlying tension if only average depth on the refreshing finish. 89-91 points. Allen Meadows, Burghound June 2019

2017 Jacques Prieur Pommard 1er Cru Les Charmots RRP \$372

100% Pinot Noir from holdings of 0.27 hectares, coming from two small parcels located on the mid-slope overlooking the 1er cru Les Epenots. The site has ideal east exposure on a well-drained, shallow, stony soil consisting of marly limestone. 21 days in the open wooden vat at controlled temperature; plunged twice a day during alcoholic fermentation. 17 months’ élevage in oak.

Here too there is a discreet application of wood to be found on the softly spicy and quite floral-scented nose of essence of dark currant. The succulent, round and caressing flavours deliver fine length though not quite the same depth though that may well develop as this ages. 89-92 points. Allen Meadows, Burghound June 2019

2017 Jacques Prieur Beaune 1er Cru Clos de la Féguine Rouge RRP \$207

1.59Ha plot on a very steep slope with south exposure. Thin, light brown, light loamy and clay-limestone soil over lots of cracked limestone running through. Perfect drainage. 100% destemmed. Élevage 16 months.

The 2017 Beaune Clos de la Féguine 1er Cru is a monopole and it is completely destemmed. It has a fresh, clean raspberry and cranberry scented bouquet with hints of vanilla pod. The palate is medium-bodied with grainy tannin, a fine line of acidity, well structured with a brisk, mineral finish. Good potential - I expect this to land towards the top of my banded score. 89-91 points. Neal Martin, Vinous Media January 2019

2017 Jacques Prieur Beaune 1er Cru Champs-Pimont Rouge RRP \$190

This large plot with the name meaning “fields at the foot of the hill” climbs the hillside behind Beaune, towards Pommard. This vines have full south exposure, and produce both white and red wine. The Pinot Noir in its lower part has plenty of clay in the soil, giving powerful wines with colour, while the high proportion of iron often brings out smoky notes. 30% new oak.

A discreet application of wood sets off the red and dark raspberry aromas that offer up wisps of underbrush and spice. Here too there is a beguiling mouth feel to the enveloping medium weight flavours that possess a velvety texture along with plenty of minerality that really comes up on the youthfully austere and softly rustic finish. This is slightly less refined but there is more depth and more aging potential. 90-92 points. Allen Meadows, Burghound June 2019



2017 Jacques Prieur Clos de Vougeot Grand Cru RRP \$520

Clay dominates this terroir, which produces powerful and structured wines which are a little rustic in their early youth. Jacques Prieur's roughly 1Ha is "at the top of the bottom of the Clos"

The 2017 Clos Vougeot Grand Cru includes 20% whole bunches this year. It has a slight mintiness on the nose, quite generous if not as complex as the Corton-Bressandes tasted alongside. The palate is medium-bodied with grainy tannin, quite strict and fresh with a chalky texture, and a slightly curmudgeonly finish. Give this three to four years in bottle to lighten up. 90-92 points. Neal Martin, Vinous Media January 2019

2017 Jacques Prieur Echézeaux Grand Cru RRP \$1568

100% Pinot Noir from a 0.36 hectare plot in the "Champs Traversins", in the heart of historic Echézeaux. It's a north-south planting just outside the Combe d'Orveau. Brown soil, not particularly thick. Pebbles on the surface, very fine and sandy/siliceous. Nice micro-climate, very airy, fresh, healthy with a small stream of fresh air. The grapes were harvested by hand then sorted and totally destemmed. Fermentation lasted 21 days at a controlled temperature in wooden vats. 18 months' ageing.

An overtly spicy nose features notes of Asian-style tea, sandalwood, cassis and lovely floral hints. The caressing yet entirely serious medium weight plus flavours possess good density for the vintage, all wrapped in a surprisingly powerful and lengthy finish. 91-93 points. Allen Meadows, Burghound June 2019

2017 Jacques Prieur Musigny Grand Cru RRP \$2228

It's one of the greatest terroirs of the Côte de Nuits on a fault overlooking the Clos de Vougeot and adjoining the Combe d'Orveau. With a southeast exposure and a confined, sunny micro-climate, the parcel has thin, light soil with a strong presence of stones, guaranteeing good drainage. 100% destemmed. Aged in new oak barrels for 20 months.

The 2017 Musigny Grand Cru, which is completely de-stemmed, has a very sensual and generous bouquet with very pretty black cherries, raspberry preserve, overripe Satsuma and mineral scents that gain intensity with aeration. The palate is medium-bodied with crisp tannin, more backward than the aromatics at the moment but very well balanced with super-fine tannin framing the feminine and quite persistent finish. Good potential here. 92-94 points. Neal Martin, Vinous Media January 2019

2017 Jacques Prieur Chambertin Grand Cru RRP \$1485

0.49Ha plot with deep and highly evolved soil, brown on the surface. Large blocks of cracked limestone below; full east exposure. Totally destemmed and with 18 days at controlled temperature in wooden vats; pigeage twice a day during the active phase of the alcoholic fermentation. Élevage in 100% new oak for 20 months.

This is aromatically quite similar to the Gevrey 1er though with a broader panoply of spice elements. There is more obvious minerality as well as better size, weight and power to the tautly muscular flavours that display excellent focus and drive on the linear, youthfully austere and firmly structured finish. 91-94 points. Allen Meadows, Burghound June 2019

2017 WHITES

2017 Jacques Prieur Meursault Clos de Mazeray Village Monopole RRP \$207

Large (2.87Ha) walled vineyard in Meursault with soil of chalky clay-limestone laid on an old river bed. 10% new oak, though most of the wine is in large barrels resembling Alsace foudres. 20 months' élevage.

A very Meursault-like nose offers up notes of hazelnut, various white orchard fruit and soft lemon zest nuances. There is both excellent volume and richness to the sappy and seductively textured medium

weight flavours that deliver fine length on the refreshing finish. This generously proportioned effort isn't especially refined but it delivers fine quality for its level. 89 points. Allen Meadows, Burghound June 2019

2017 Jacques Prieur Puligny-Montrachet 1er Cru Les Combettes RRP \$330

Facing south-east, this 1.5 hectare plot has clay-limestone soil with a strong presence of pebbles. Whole bunch-pressed, settled over 12 to 14 hours and then full barrel fermentation (about 30% new). 100% MLF. 17 months' élevage.

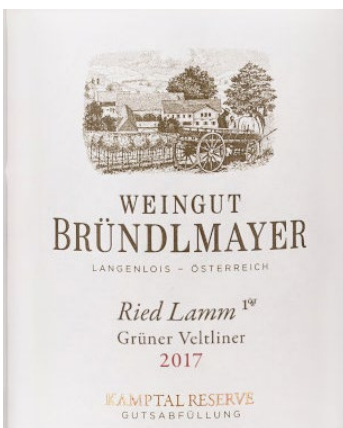
Here too the wood toast influence isn't subtle as it includes discreet notes of vanilla on the markedly floral aromas that include wisps of lilac, lavender, acacia and gardenia along with mildly exotic fruit nuances. The very rich, succulent and borderline opulent medium-bodied flavours coat the palate with copious dry extract that also buffers the moderately firm acid spine shaping the bitter lemon-inflected finish. This is both stylish and classy and should amply reward up to a decade of cellaring; besides it will need at least a few years to integrate the wood. 90-93 points. Allen Meadows, Burghound June 2019

2017 Jacques Prieur Montrachet Grand Cru RRP \$2558

From a 0.59-hectare parcel. Very sunny, mid-slope, perfect drainage. East/southeast exposure. Thin, stony soil, higher in sodium. Outcrop of white marl. The grapes are harvested by hand in small crates, then whole bunches are pressed in a pneumatic press. The juice is cold settled after pressing for 12 to 14 hours. Alcoholic fermentation and ageing are 100% in new oak barrels. Full MLF. Élevage of 21 months.

This too is quite leesy and impossible to read today. More interesting are the bigger, rich and more muscular broad-shouldered flavours that deliver superb depth and persistence on the equally driving and hugely long finish. This carries its imposing weight effortlessly and while it's no ballerina, the fine balance and proportions impress me. 92-95 points. Allen Meadows, Burghound June 2019

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LAMM TO THE SLAUGHTER

Epidemiologists are looking into the link between emerging from lockdown and plunging into a Grüner-fuelled orgy. There has been such a run on Austria's signature white grape here at CellarHand that stocks of entry-level Veltliner are being drained dry at a rate of knots.

What better excuse does one need to dive into the Grüner deep-end? It's less crowded here - so much room to splash around! We've picked out a few select goodies in the strictly limited but utterly awesome realm of single-vineyard Veltliner - plus a village-designated Smaragd - and hope we can tempt you to dip in!

2017 F.X. Pichler Dürnstein Grüner Veltliner Smaragd RRP \$75

Spice, ginger, juicy grapefruit, green banana, creamy vanilla yoghurt smoothness, but bright and fresh too, lively and weighty, then comes the pepper and celery on a long cool finish. Wonderful. 94 points. Gary Walsh, The Wine Front

2018 F.X. Pichler Dürnstein Grüner Veltliner Smaragd RRP \$75

From the first harvest pass in all the terraces (from younger vines) and from riper fruits in the flat area, the 2018 Dürnstener Grüner Veltliner Smaragd is clear, bright and white-fruited on the spicy-elegant nose. On the palate, this is a full-bodied but also fresh and piquant Veltliner Smaragd with good grip and nice bitters. Tasted at the domain in September 2019. 90 points. Stephan Reinhardt, Wine Advocate

2014 F.X. Pichler Ried Kellerberg Grüner Veltliner Smaragd RRP \$139

*Headily fragrant and lusciously mouth-filling honey-slicked peach and mango are complemented by incisive pepper, piquant peach kernel, pungent green herbs, smoky tobacco, zesty citrus peel and shimmering crushed stone. Sheer energy seems to reverberate in an unforgettably ravishing and sustained finish. 95 points **David Schildknecht, Vinous Media***

2015 Franz Hirtzberger Ried Axpoint Grüner Veltliner Smaragd RRP \$107

*Ripe white peach and Persian melon are wreathed with honeysuckle in this product of a November 3-4 picking. A silken and expansive palate preserves succulent fruit and alluring inner-mouth perfume while exhibiting transparency to almondy, piquant, stony and pronouncedly peppery nuances. The lusciously lingering finish epitomizes this bottling's marriage of richness with animation and refreshment. (But yes, it's true that one could be forgiven for thinking this a Riesling.) 93 points. **David Schildknecht, Vinous Media***

2017 Franz Hirtzberger Ried Kirchweg Grüner Veltliner Smaragd RRP \$96

*Generous and fleshy, but with just a hint of creaminess, this is a very attractive, medium-to full-bodied Grüner Veltliner. Long, silky finish that has real finesse. Drink or hold. 93 points. **Stuart Pigott, jamessuckling.com***

2017 Stadt Krems Ried Wachtberg Grüner Veltliner RRP \$764

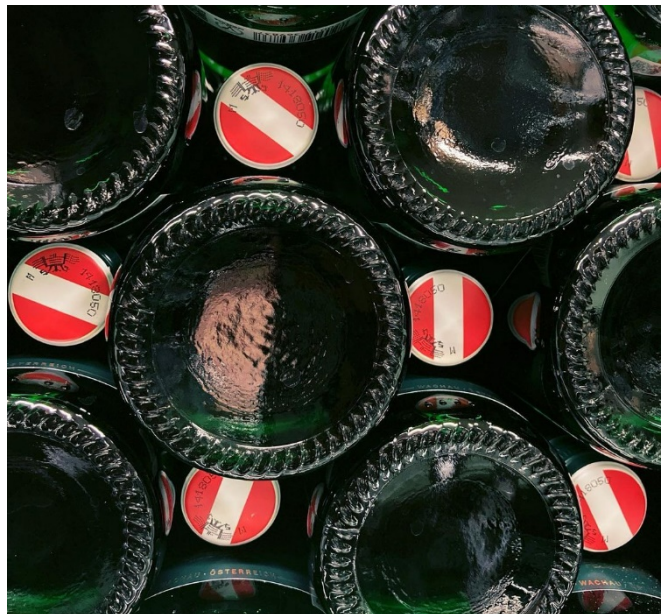
*Beautifully aromatic notes of ripe Russet pear peel beckon on the nose. On the palate, this lovely fruit is joined by zesty pithiness with just an edge of pleasant bitterness that lends real grip amid the flowing, exuberant juiciness. It is the aromatic pear that owns the long finish. 93 points. **Anne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

2016 Bründlmayer Ried Spiegel Grüner Veltliner RRP \$121

*A well structured yet cool and rather sleek Gruner Veltliner with a rather closed nose, but very good potential if you can be patient. Long, firm and texturally complex finish. From organically grown grapes. Better from 2019. 93 points. **Stuart Pigott, jamessuckling.com***

2017 Bründlmayer Ried Lamm Grüner Veltliner RRP \$141

*Bründlmayer's intensely yellow coloured 2017 Grüner Veltliner Ried Lamm 1ÖTW offers a deep, dense, very clear and slightly oaky bouquet that indicates a substantial wine of great class and style. Full-bodied, lush and very elegant on the well-balanced palate, this is a concentrated, firm, pure, finessed Lamm with great mineral tension on the long, complex, persistently salty finish. A great astringent Ried Lamm with enormous aging potential. It is one of the finest Veltliners I tasted from the 2017 vintage. 94 points. **Stephan Reinhardt, Wine Advocate***



2017 Groiss Ried Sauberg Grüner Veltliner RRP \$75

A riper aspect of pear plays on the nose, but it is not until the wine reaches the palate that it comes alive. There is a still tight core that holds notes of yeast, shimmering white pepper, celery salt and

wet earth, which unfold slowly with a bit of air. This is concentrated but not heavy, impressive but relaxed and simply balanced perfectly. 94 points. Anne Krebiehl MW, Wine Enthusiast

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