

TASTING

NOTES

YOUR PERSONAL GUIDE



INCLUDING THE TASTING NOTES OF OUR NEWEST RELEASES

OVER 185 YEARS
 AUSTRALIA'S OLDEST
 WINE FAMILY

THE FLOCK

Our cast of characters are bottled up in some of Australia's finest wines. The Flock are our favourite classic varietals each with their own unique personality. Rebels. Reprobates. Rascallions.

THE DRAMA QUEEN 2015

Méthode Traditionnelle

BLEND—52% Pinot Noir 38% Chardonnay 10% Pinot Meunier

COLOUR—Pale salmon-pink

THE SENSES—An entire bakery of brioche. Early season strawberries, rose petals, pink lady apples, and just a titch of bay leaf. Berry-bagel and proper pretzel, all with the very lightest citrus twist. Hiding behind the fruit, deeper savoury characters. A multitude of bubbles ride light amidst the creamy texture. Crisp and linen-fresh it is phenomenally lingering and intense.

ENJOY WITH—Canapes; bright tasty morsels ideally delivered with a flourish by impeccably trained wait staff at your favourite restaurant. Or anywhere really, it'll still be tasty.

WINEMAKER'S NOTE—'Every winery needs an attention seeking, exaggerated, overly emotional, dramatic diva. Sometimes it's the winemaker, sometimes the boss, or sometimes a family member! Fortunately not here, so we had to create one.'

DRINK—While this wine does not require further aging you can comfortably leave this lying in the cellar for the next five years.

MOOD—Social



THE TRICKSTER 2023

Pinot Grigio

VARIETAL—Pinot Grigio

COLOUR—Brilliant pale straw

THE SENSES—White pear to peach and a breeze of gum florals. Fresh linen. Lemon curd palate deliciously pink lady laden. Elastic band tang stretch and snap. Crunchy, complete and satisfying. Fleet footed and all verve. Clarity and class.

ENJOY WITH—If it swims, has fins and scales and goes glub glub you are onto a winner.

WINEMAKER'S NOTE—'Few varieties capture both lightness of touch and depth of flavour as well as Pinot Grigio. These are grapes that can express themselves feather-light and pale as crystal, or full bodied and steel tinged. We aim at the former, light, brilliant, and fresh. Ideal for days of perfect blue skies.'

DRINK—Now through 1 year. Savour the fresh bouquet while it's in its youth

MOOD—Playful



THE LOOSE CANNON 2024

Fiano

NEW RELEASE

VARIETAL—Fiano

COLOUR—Brilliant straw

THE SENSES—A meadow of florals fresh with dew. Honeysuckle, lemon blossom, thyme. Brioche, custard powder, and oven bronzed pastry. Lemon grass and sorbet. Florals waft through to the palate. Taut and crisp. Succulent citrus swaggers sun dazed throughout. Lightly textured with a grip that gives shape and slip to the fruit.

ENJOY WITH—Keep it fresh and light; the crisp pastry of an Italian torta salata with artichokes and potato is a perfect partner for a Loose Cannon.

WINEMAKER'S NOTE—'Fiano is originally a Southern Italian grape and takes its name from the grape variety the Romans called Vitis opiana - vine beloved of bees. It's more than a bit beloved here in McLaren Vale, seeming to straddle flavour territory somewhere between Pinot Gris and Chardonnay - often even the best of both.'

DRINK—Now through 2 years.

MOOD—Frollicky



THE FLOCK

THE SCALLYWAG 2022

Chardonnay

VARIETAL—Chardonnay

COLOUR—Brilliant straw

THE SENSES—Striking and subtle and satisfying, the Scally sidles up and says 'enjoy'. All white peaches, creamy/toasty oak, both bay and lemon leaves, and also a titch of vanilla and sage leaf. A swaggerous Scallywag that knows it's good and doesn't mind telling you all about it.

ENJOY WITH—Baked rainbow trout with lemongrass, steamed pak choi and coconut rice.

WINEMAKER'S NOTE—'The amazing array of soils and topographies in McLaren Vale make an amazing range of styles and wines possible here. This Scallywag is sourced from the roof of the Vale, just a stone's throw from the Adelaide Hills, and yet retains all the best parts of its regional identity.'

DRINK—Now through 2 years for reliable pleasure.

MOOD—Relaxed



THE FLOOZIE 2024

Sangiovese Grenache Rosé

NEW VINTAGE

VARIETAL—Sangiovese Grenache

COLOUR—Pale Salmon pink

THE SENSES—Pink ladies and cherry stones. Shifting shades of fennel; wild notes among blueberries, linen, lemongrass, and musk. Early season strawberries, field-fresh, fill the palate. Lush but still taut. Finishing with a lick of acid zest, lively and spry.

ENJOY WITH—Match delicate flavours to match this delicate wine - perhaps a pear, parmesan and walnut salad?

WINEMAKER'S NOTE—'The Sangio from Church can tend toward exuberance in both flavour and colour - making it easy to accidentally create a table wine where a rose was the intention. We temper this tendency with a healthy dose of fruit from Digs Vineyard - a higher and cooler site yielding more delicate flavours; making the tremendous balance in this wine possible.'

DRINK—Now through 1 year

MOOD—Flirtatious



THE SCOUNDREL 2022

Grenache Shiraz Mataro

NEW RELEASE

BLEND—Grenache, Shiraz, Mataro

COLOUR—Crimson violet

THE SENSES—Grenache at the front of the parade throwing roses along a darker path of Shiraz and Mataro; all black tar and split stone. Seductive rather than subtle it rolls with raspberry - right down to the crunch of the seeds. Whiffs of cinnamon, cardamom, and sage. Demerara and violets.

ENJOY WITH—Butter-basted ribeye with crunchy fennel salad, or an Oyster mushroom and leek risotto.

WINEMAKER'S NOTE—'Grenache at the front of the parade throwing roses along a darker path of Shiraz and Mataro; all black tar and split stone. Seductive rather than subtle it rolls with raspberry - right down to the crunch of the seeds. Whiffs of cinnamon, cardamom, and sage. Demerara and violets.'

DRINK—2 - 5 years.

MOOD—Devilish



THE DISRUPTER 2023

Grenache

VARIETAL—Grenache

COLOUR—Brilliant amaranth

THE SENSES—Sandalwood snap, incense wrapped, fire-engine licorice straps. Red berries tease, with rosehip and black tea. Strawberry, bubblegum, cinnamon quills, and cola. Pure pomegranate. Love letter. A boudoir stunner. Beguilingly, satisfyingly opulent. The finish persists, lasting and delicious.

ENJOY WITH—Pork and strawberry salad with crumbled goats cheese, or a strawberry spinach salad with caramelised hazelnuts.

WINEMAKER'S NOTE—'In the heart of suburban Adelaide remains one last patch of Grenache vines of what was once the vast Hamilton Ewell Vineyard. From these we carefully took cuttings, just as has been done for thousands of years, and stuck them into the ground at our McLaren Vale home, continuing a generations old legacy; and they love it here.'

DRINK—Now through 2 years for reliable pleasure.

MOOD—Daring



THE MONGREL 2022

Sangiovese

VARIETAL—Sangiovese

COLOUR—Brilliant cherry red

THE SENSES—A whole basket of ripe raspberries, strawberries, and red cherries. Crushed fennel fronds. Fresh, light spiced, and bright. A succulent palate with an emery bite. High vibrance slush of lush harvest ready berries; red, black, and blue. Lingering.

ENJOY WITH—A fresh fiasco of Sangiovese almost demands Italian - perhaps garlic butter pasta with a rose sauce?

WINEMAKER'S NOTE—'The Sangiovese is enigmatic to the point of being problematic. It will not be pushed in a direction that it doesn't want to go. I got a whole lot better at working with it when I realised that what I want matters very little to this grape.'

DRINK—Now through 2 years.

MOOD—Peckish



THE RATBAG 2022

Merlot

VARIETAL—Merlot

COLOUR—Purple tinged cherry

THE SENSES—Gamey, driven lift. Menthol fresh denim. A plunge pool of red fruits, molasses, violets, and blueberry. Bombastic and showy but underpinned with sweet tobacco, and earthy notes. The plush palate blooms big and succulent leading to a finish both bright and crunchy.

ENJOY WITH—Keep it simple - thin crust pizza with prosciutto and black olives.

WINEMAKER'S NOTE—'Our Church Merlot quietly excels without much fuss. The vines almost balance themselves. The ferment ticks away without fanfare, so too does the maturation. Then one day, without really expecting it, you open a bottle and it blows you away with its fruit purity, elegance, and class.'

DRINK—1-4 years.

MOOD—Waggish



THE VILLAIN 2021

Cabernet Sauvignon

VARIETAL—Cabernet Sauvignon

COLOUR—Deep crimson

THE SENSES—Intense varietal lift. Brambly black fruit backed with sliced cayenne, paprika, green olives, and roast chestnut. A garden of lift; Dried thyme, oregano, and effusive florals sprouting exotically throughout. Sandalwood, cinnamon, and rose. Split stone, graphite, and blood. Supple, muscular, taut, poised.

ENJOY WITH—Roast beef short ribs, sautéed wild mushrooms with fresh parsley.

WINEMAKER'S NOTE—'The Cabernet from the Black Sheep Block is fleet on it's feet, having more high tone perfume and exotic spices. Comparatively, the Cabernet grown at Cellar Black tends more toward weight and texture. Careful blending of the two blocks produces a wine of both presence and elegance. This is the Villain.'

DRINK—2-6 years.

MOOD—Rebellious



THE RASCAL 2021

Shiraz

VARIETAL—Shiraz

COLOUR—Purplish red

THE SENSES—Black fruited and brooding, dense and earthy. Black denim, licorice, molasses and black tea leaves. Right in the heart of the palate the black yields to deep red - Raspberries, cherries, and hibiscus. Spiced throughout with cinnamon quills and star anise. Cigar leaf richness. Emery texture supporting a solid palate. To let it really shine will take patience. Cellar well and be rewarded, or enjoy now in all it's jostling youth.

ENJOY WITH—You'll need your barbecue nice and hot. Char siu BBQ pork, balsamic-soy mushrooms.

WINEMAKER'S NOTE—'The Rascal is a celebration of the three distinct styles that are achieved on these sites when the vines are tended carefully and the wine made with absolute respect for time and place.'

DRINK—Still fresh, the best is yet to flesh out, 4-12 years.

MOOD—Confident



THE MOOCHER 2021

Mourvèdre

VARIETAL—Mourvèdre

COLOUR—Vibrant crimson/purple

THE SENSES—A big soft punch of plums, honey-bacon, and a whole field of multiple florals. India ink, rosemary, coal, and raspberry. Soft, lip smacking, smoochy palate. Pulpy fresh, and bright. Lolls like caramel; lingering. Mocher speed.

ENJOY WITH—Pan fried maple and apple pork chops, or a roast beetroot and butternut pumpkin salad with tahini.

WINEMAKER'S NOTE—'The rows of the Church vineyard are hemmed in by a creek at one end and an enormous old gum at the other. Many years this can mean one end is dipping its toes in the water while the other is getting fairly thirsty. I think the range of flavours we see rolling about this wine is, at least in part, due to this variation along each row. Rich fruit but still crisp and with tremendous structure.'

DRINK—1-4 years

MOOD—Lazy



THE FLOCK

THE LARRIKIN Shiraz Cabernet

BLEND—60% Shiraz, 40% Cabernet

COLOUR—Purple tinged crimson

THE SENSES—Begins with a frisson of fine French oak and smoky sandalwood before plunging into a full fruit basket; plums, mulberries, blackberries, and blackcurrants. The palate pulses with fruit filled verve. Rosehip, and cocoa notes. Leather, bay, and thyme.

ENJOY WITH—Slow roast leg of lamb or rosemary garlic hasselback potatoes, but probably both just to be sure.

WINEMAKER'S NOTE—'It's well known that McLaren Vale makes great Shiraz, but less well known is that Vale Cabernet can also excel. With good harvesting decisions you can create a blend with lift and elegance but also with a rich full palate. Something I believe we have achieved with our Larrikin.'

DRINK—Now through 5 years

MOOD—Classic



THE RUFFIAN Liqueur Muscat

VARIETAL—Brown Muscat
COLOUR—Bright polished walnut

THE SENSES—The most apt description of 'The Ruffian' would be 'nectar'. It is fragrantly spiced with youthful floral and rose petals and has aromas of ripe raisins, with an earthy spirit lift. Its smooth texture and great lingering length is balanced with clean acidity and aromatic spirit.

ENJOY WITH—The Yin to the Yang of a vintage cheddar.

WINEMAKER'S NOTE—'Time in oak allows the wine to reduce to a viscous liqueur due to the evaporation which occurs in barrels, it is also during this process that the wine deepens in colour from a light white wine at the start to a rich bright walnut colour over the years.'

DRINK—Whenever you're ready.

MOOD—Indulgent



GA-LOR-IA! Sangiovese Grenache Frizzante

BLEND—50% Sangiovese, 50% Grenache

COLOUR—Violet tinged crimson

THE SENSES—Strawberry bubble-gum with a simmering blue fruited background. A shadow of spice understudies the fruit; adding depth to the main game. Palate is a fresh scented berry fruit blast. A straight-splash of fun bubbles gloriously release and then leave the palate ready for the next red fruited depth-charge. Brighter than a straight-A student yet still simple enough just to enjoy the ever effusive, effervescent joy that is Ga-lor-ia!

ENJOY WITH—Built to build appetite, mix Ga-lor-ia! with all types of aperitif, or simply match with a picnic rug and good company!

WINEMAKER'S NOTE—'It wasn't too long after pressing that I knew which wines must go together to make this blend, but it would be another six months and many trials later to realise I was missing the key ingredient - bubbles! A light splash of gas to pep up the palate gives this wine an essential rush of playfulness, celebrating both base wines in a fruit filled frizzante smack of fun.'

DRINK—Now through 2 years



BLOODLINE

Hugh and Mary bring you their own unique trio of wines in honour of their black sheep forebear, Richard Hamilton. 185 years on, Richard's legacy and secret are materialised in a beautifully crafted tailor's crate.

HAMILTON 1837 Grenache

VARIETAL—Grenache

COLOUR—Ruby with purple edges

THE SENSES—Raspberries, fine leather, tobacco and ink. The bright red fruit is impeccably balanced against teasing and complex herbal characters. Fruit is generously ripe without being overbearing or cloying. The tannin line is critical to rounding out this wine and is exceptionally fine and graphitic.

ENJOY WITH—Matches as well with Coq au Vin as with Chinese BBQ pork.

WINEMAKER'S NOTE—'There is an amazing duality in the 'Hamilton 1837 Grenache'. It is fresh, perfumed and alive but there is also such amazing depth and length to the palate.'

DRINK—For depth of flavour drink 4-8 years from vintage.



HAMILTON 1837 Shiraz

VARIETAL—Shiraz

COLOUR—Deep violet/red

THE SENSES—Elusive and beguiling. The aromatics shift between lifted fresh fruit - blackberries, raspberries and fine spice characters - sandalwood, cinnamon, cardamom. The result is forceful yet brilliantly deft. Ultimately a complex and compelling wine that unfolds slowly in the glass.

ENJOY WITH—Black Dorper saltbush mutton in vine leaves, verjuice peas and tendrils, heirloom potato.

WINEMAKER'S NOTE—'The Shiraz is the product of three separate vineyards: a vineyard on a steep slope at the northern extreme of McLaren Vale, Block 4 from our Black Sheep Vineyard and 21 rows in the middle of our Church Block.'

DRINK—Drink now or allow further depth of flavour to develop in 10-15 years from date of vintage.



HAMILTON 1837 Pedro Ximenez

VARIETAL—Pedro Ximenez

COLOUR—Amber, trimmed with orange

THE SENSES—Massive 'rancio' lift; nutty, caramel notes and subtle 'cold tea' aromatics all of which follow through to the voluptuous, rich, honeyed and layered palate. An incredible lingering finish, which leans more toward savoury than sweet.

ENJOY WITH—Fine praline chocolate, cheese and toasted hazelnuts.

WINEMAKER'S NOTE—'Voluptuous, intense and sustained, the Pedro is a masterpiece made possible only by time and patience; so long in fact that the wine has long ago outlived the vineyard which made it.'

DRINK—Drink whenever, this wine will age indefinitely. Once opened, consume with haste.



Bloodline Wines only available in 'The Bloodline Set'. Purchase online at: www.hughhamiltonwines.com.au/the-bloodline-set/

BLACK BLOOD

The Black Blood series are a trio of wines that represent a wonderful journey into the *terroir* of our three vineyards. 'Terroir' is a word that encapsulates the taste of a wine due to its unique environment - altitude, climate, rainfall, temperature and soil.

BLACK BLOOD I Cellar Vineyard Shiraz

VINEYARD—Cellar Vineyard

COLOUR—Dense dark purple/plum

THE SENSES—Florals tease out the top of a plume of black currant and coal smoke. Raspberry compote, dark plum, cinnamon quill, clove, and bitumen. Pomegranate molasses, rosehip, and violet. The palate rumbles, a deep and resonant baritone. Dutch liquorice and texture dominate. This is all too rowdy and rough for now but give it time to triumph and it will.

ENJOY WITH—A choice cut of aged beef, cooked simply, but well - charred to taste.

WINEMAKER'S NOTE—'Cellar Block is often the slowest to shine; the secrets of the black clay only told in time. The trade for this longevity in bottle is a more defined texture in its youth that needs age to become supple.'

DRINK—The hint is in the name Cellar - this wine will reward the time. Think 6-10 years.



BLACK BLOOD II Church Vineyard Shiraz

VINEYARD—Church Vineyard

COLOUR—Blood tinged violet

THE SENSES—Iodine and earth. A rusty sword drawn from a block of granite. Coal-smoke-sweet, demerara sugar, tobacco leaf. Fresh fennel, pomegranate, cherry and strawberry compete for attention. Sweet red fruit and char. Violets and vanilla. Fire-engine licorice tearing up the bitumen. Satisfying bright finish.

ENJOY WITH—Chinese roasted plum duck.

WINEMAKER'S NOTE—'There's never enough wine from this block; the phenomenally plush mid palate is useful in almost any Shiraz blend. For me this fruit is truly at the heart of the Vale - both geographically and deliciously.'

DRINK—Fresh and crunchy, or deeper and more nuanced - it's up to you. 2-8 years.



BLACK BLOOD III Black Sheep Vineyard Shiraz

VINEYARD—Black Sheep Vineyard

COLOUR—Brilliant crimson violet

THE SENSES—Fine leather and savoury spice lull among brighter primary fruits; cherry stone, cranberry, blackberry. Tight with black tea leaves packed right in the chest. Violets. Both salts and lamb fat. Fresh turned earth. Palate is punchy. Packing a fine line of tannin just waiting to resolve.

ENJOY WITH—This perfume loves spice - Try seared 5 spice duck breast, or slow roast the whole duck.

WINEMAKER'S NOTE—'There are years where this 'Ballot Dancer' is a bit of a 'Prima Donna' the price of poise and elegance is an incredible level of viticultural diligence, patience, and luck. Here the performance is not only flawless but appears effortless.'

DRINK—4-8 years.



EXOTICA

It began as a fascination, now it is Hugh's obsession. The ancient grape Saperavi hails from the cradle of winemaking in Georgia, dating back to 6000BC. With the help of his good friend and Georgian Winemaker, Lado Uzunashvili, Hugh is thrilled to present the Exotica Collection. Hugh is now the President of the Australian Saperavi Association and continues to lead the Australian charge.

BLACK OPS Shiraz Saperavi

BLEND—70% Shiraz, 30% Saperavi

COLOUR—Purple-black

THE SENSES—Dense dried spice and violets are followed with an entire Black Forest of heady fruit. Plums and blackberries. Iodine and beets. Rose and coal smoke, Black tea and raspberry. All opulence in the mouth. A steady wave of fruit and firm grip ploughs down the palate. Bombast but with both charm and class. Bold, brooding, and intense.

ENJOY WITH—Team it up with a classic Reuben Sandwich; perhaps swap out the corned beef for smoky beetroot to match the mix.

WINEMAKER'S NOTE—'At the Western end of our Black Sheep Block is a packet of Shiraz that lands a mighty punch of meaty-spiciness that couples perfectly with our exotic Saperavi. Contrasting, but complimentary and complex, this has fast become the backbone of the Black Ops Blend.'

DRINK—1-10 years



THE ODDBALL Saperavi

NEW VINTAGE

VARIETAL—Saperavi

COLOUR—Purple-black

THE SENSES—A violet lined coal mine packed with blocks of palm sugar and sandalwood. Vanilla lurks layers deep in the dark. Black leather wrapped red fruit. Pomegranate compote. Sweet tobacco pouch. Iron edged cherry. Tannin rustic, yet somehow slick, still demands time to lie in the cellar and achieve a proper polish.

ENJOY WITH—Espresso rubbed dry-age T-bone with roast beetroot, baby spinach, and goat's cheese.

WINEMAKER'S NOTE—'Saperavi is a very odd variety. The grapes are so darkly coloured the Georgian's named it with their word for 'dye'. The skins are black and unusually the pulp of the berry also carries colour. The wines that it makes are similarly dark, often very depth driven and textural, and our Oddball always rewards cellaring. The wines are often so intense that we have come to describe this variety as Shiraz raised entirely on a diet of lightning.'

DRINK—Cellar with confidence for 5-20 years.



ODDBALL THE GREAT Saperavi

NEW VINTAGE

VARIETAL—Saperavi

COLOUR—Purple-black

THE SENSES—Lively fruit belies the time that has fined the bouquet bringing depth and flavour - but not at the cost of primary fruit. Rose petalred-leather. Cocoa powder and dates.

ENJOY WITH—This is not a wine built for fish or fine white sauces, lift your game with game, foraged mushrooms and butter; lots of butter.

WINEMAKER'S NOTE—'There's a bravery in embracing big and this is a wine where everything towers tall. The darkest fraction of a wine leaves the winemaker last - loaded with enormous amounts of all of the characters that make a wine great - and we took only of this fraction and aged it in 100% new oak barrels. A lesser wine would be flooded by that much barrel; only the great can take it.'

DRINK—Leave it longer than you think you should, maybe longer than you think you can - 6-15 years



DARK ARTS

Elusive and fiercely independent Black Sheep wines that will not be pinned down. The Dark Arts is a range of wines from varieties that are not meant to go together, but work! They refuse to be part of the status quo; they are wine as art.

AROMA PAGODA 2023

Grillo Riesling Frontignac

BLEND—45% Grillo, 35% Riesling, 20% Frontignac
COLOUR—Pale Straw
THE SENSES—Lemon curd and herbs corralled by camomile and honey. Peach fuzz, pear, almond, and apricot. A fitch of eucalyptus scents fresh-linen; hanging to dry under blue skies. Thyme. Passionfruit palate cracks seeds between the teeth. Teasingly textured – present but pleasant.
ENJOY WITH—It's difficult to get better than a chicken pho – layers of flavours on layers of flavours.
WINEMAKER'S NOTE—'This brief is the best I get – go out and find flavour, then blend as much of it as possible into a single wine that can showcase the strengths of all sources. It's every bit as fun to make as it is to drink.'
DRINK—Now through 1 year



AGENT PROVOCATEUR 2023

Grenache Frontignac Touriga Gewurztraminer

BLEND—55% Grenache, 21% Frontignac, 18% Malbec, 6% Viognier
COLOUR—Vibrant purple
THE SENSES—An overt provocateur smoulders out of the glass – great wafts of steamy raspberry and blackberry. A fog of florals, bay, and pomegranate. Hickory barbecue, clove, and bathsalt bubblegum. For all the glass-side plume the palate is feather-light. Bright, beautiful, and ever-elegant.
ENJOY WITH—Tea smoked duck with plum sauce, or mixed mushroom 5-spice steamed buns.
WINEMAKER'S NOTE—'Primary colours are blended to make an array of many other colours. When we lay out the parts of the Agent the strong character of each base wine is like a primary colour – there's something very special about the various shades of flavour that come to light when we blend these parts.'
DRINK—Now through 2 years



SHEARER'S CUT 2022

Shiraz

VARIETAL—Shiraz
COLOUR—Crimson tinged violet
THE SENSES—Raspberry, rhubarb, and tea smoke waft around slick plum, pomegranate molasses and blueberry compote. Violets and rose backed with black pepper roll through to punchy fruit, all laid out over a gravelly textured palate. Lengthy and satisfying.
ENJOY WITH—Tender cuts of beef and game, rocket roast-walnut and baby spinach salad with loads of olive oil.
WINEMAKER'S NOTE—'The blend is a perfectly balanced expression of what the Black Sheep does best – bright fruit elegance. As always the wine is made in the Vineyard and the bunches selected by our Shearers have made all the difference.'
DRINK—3-8 years



BLACK SHEEP CLUB EXCLUSIVES

The seal of the Black Sheep denotes a special group of wines made for our members with an appetite for something special. Here we have taken traditional varietals and pushed the boundaries on quality with small parcels of grapes.

CINDERELLA 2022

Chardonnay

VARIETAL—Chardonnay
COLOUR—Brilliant straw
THE SENSES—White blossom, almond, white peach, vanilla pod, and lightly toasted brioche. A slipper of fine French oak. Poised white fleshed fruit is complemented by a subtle chalky texture. Both the build and poise of a dancer; limber and lithe.
ENJOY WITH—Linguine porcini carbonara – with or without smoked pancetta.
WINEMAKER'S NOTE—'This wine, above the Mount Bold, is why this stylish fruiterer seeks to hold its picturesque vineyard. The road to this wine is tough, with many twists and turns, by comparison it could have been more straightforward. Simply striking.
DRINK—Now through 5 years.



THE MADAM 2020

Sparkling Shiraz

VARIETAL—Sparkling Shiraz
COLOUR—Purple-black
THE SENSES—Bakehouse lift – brioche, cookie dough, and fresh bread. Blackberries fresh and ready to bake straight into a pie. Blackcurrants. Earthy, chocolate-cocoa notes. Rich rolling palate pricked deliciously throughout with vibrant bubbles, it glides on this gas to a pristine finish – all the aromatics coming true on the palate.
ENJOY WITH—Remarkably robust the Madam will consort readily with many dishes – try roast peking duck, or a roast mushroom hoisin noodle bowl.
WINEMAKER'S NOTE—'Sparkling Red is a curiously Australian invention, further testament to our fearless try-it-and-see attitude. Made in the same way as Champagne is traditionally produced we have pulled out all the stops here – secondary fermentation in bottle, time on lees, riddling and disgorgement, and finally tirage. If these strange words mean nothing to you, have no fear, it's delicious Shiraz, just with bubbles in it; enjoy!
DRINK—Now through 5 years



ANCIENT EARTH 2022

Shiraz

NEW VINTAGE
VARIETAL—Shiraz
COLOUR—Purple-black
THE SENSES—Charcoal plums. Cherry, rosehip, and violets ride raucous over charcuterie, cumin, and leather-bound French oak. Graphite tight. An ever-present blackberry backdrop; though never hefty. Pops of fruit lobbed like cherry bombs right in the middle of a grand wave of fine tannin. Somehow slick yet rustic still.
ENJOY WITH—Garlic butter roast portobello mushrooms with polenta, or herb-crustured top loin beef roast with all the sides.
WINEMAKER'S NOTE—'An assembly of excellent parcels sourced from a cross-section of McLaren Vale to create a regional expression of Shiraz. In contrast to the Black Bloods that highlight sub-regions, Ancient Earth aims to target the highest quality subregions across the entire area and blend them into a seamless representation of what the Vale does best.'
DRINK—5-10 years



JEKYLL & HYDE 2022

Shiraz Viognier

BLEND—92% Shiraz, 8% Viognier
COLOUR—Deep purple shot with crimson
THE SENSES—Strawberry laden thunder rolls overhead; a fresh-baked pie filled with cherries and apples steams on a windowsill; the dense scent of pastry crust thick in the air. Fragrant whorls of red fruit, cranberry, black pepper, bubblegum, rosehips, and slate. The palate plays hide-and-seek, savoury to sweet. Tannins taut. Alive and lithe. Leather slap, cherry smack. A whip crack whack of smart fruit.
ENJOY WITH—Spiced slow roast lamb, mushroom beet risotto as a side or a main.
WINEMAKER'S NOTE—'There aren't many occasions where adding a lighter colour leads to one which is darker, however the Jekyll is just that kind of paradox. By co-fermenting the two varieties the Viognier skins help form more stable complexes, and thereby a darker colour. There are other changes too that modulate and intensify flavour; all part of the strange case that is Jekyll and Hyde.'
DRINK—2-8 years



LOOSE LIPS IV 2022

Malbec Grenache Pinot Gris Frontignac Gewurztraminer Viognier

BLEND—63% Malbec, 21% Grenache, 6% Pinot Gris, 4% Frontignac, 3% Gewurztraminer, 3% Viognier
COLOUR—Brilliant purple shot with black
THE SENSES—A fully feral, lip-sticked, lip smacking, truck-stop ballerina. Big, gummy, glowing lift of raspberry and cherry-berry fruit. Layers of hard-to-place flavours please nonetheless. Peach stones, torn strawberries, smooched raspberries. Licks of tar underlie streets of sweet fruit. A blunderbuss of delicious nonsense.
ENJOY WITH—More an aperitif than a main course, sip solo or with hors d'oeuvres such as rocket crostini or maple-caramelised figs topped with smoky bacon.
WINEMAKER'S NOTE—'Sometimes strange things just work – like the wild combo of peanut butter, banana, and bacon that makes the Elvis Sandwich. Unexpected certainly but proven fit for a king. This blend is about enjoying great flavour wherever you find it. Deeply bizarre and unusually delicious.'
DRINK—Now through 3 years



THREE-CARD MONTE 2022

Montepulciano Cabernet Sauvignon Touriga

BLEND—55% Montepulciano, 37% Cabernet Sauvignon, 8% Touriga
COLOUR—Deep plummy purple
THE SENSES—Pomegranate grenadine and cinnamon quill. Double floral combo – rose and violet. Smouldering bitumen background. A confectionary/savoury see-saw where rhubarb rubs up close against almond and apple blossom. A fulcrum of black fruit. Sorry-not-sorry tannins, ever palate present, lengthy, elegant, and pleasant.
ENJOY WITH—Smoky BBQ – ribs, brisket, shoulder, 'shrooms or aubergines.
WINEMAKER'S NOTE—'Australia has always excelled in creating red blends – merging classic European varieties in un-thought of ways to create unthinkable good new combinations. This, not so classic, collision combines fruits of Abruzzo, Portugal, and Bordeaux in a complete Contiki style tour of 'Euro' flavour, Aussie style.'
DRINK—3-10 years



THE NIMBLE KING 2022

Cabernet Sauvignon

VARIETAL—Cabernet Sauvignon
COLOUR—A regal ruby/purple
THE SENSES—Arresting yet delicate. Red on blue on black. Coal smoke and slick fruit. Bubble-gum, blood, and iron. Ripe red fruit, cherry, strawberry, raspberry. All fleshy and fresh, the fruit softly rumbles on the palate. Tannin taut but never stretched beyond textural. Poise of a dancer, grace of a player.
ENJOY WITH—Mushroom-quinoa burgers with rosemary mayo, or fillet steak smothered in mushroom sauce.
WINEMAKER'S NOTE—'Not so long ago Black 3 at Black Sheep vineyard was anything but noble. It was riddled with dead wood and non-producing vines as the effects of age crept in. Our vineyard team took to it with chainsaws, reducing the vines to stumps. In time the stumps shot out fresh shoots, mostly, and we re-established the trellis with a focus on high quality. The work has proven worth it.'
DRINK—2-8 years



THE BLACK SHEEP 2019

Shiraz

NEW VINTAGE
VARIETAL—Shiraz
COLOUR—Purple dyed crimson
THE SENSES—Speaks with an immediacy of intensity. The exotic bedding brilliantly with the familiar. Blood and blueberries. Plums on a butchers block. Hibiscus smoke, rosehip, candied rhubarb and black pepper. Shifting aromatically like a pulsing ocean; at once primary and savoury. The palate rolling, rollicking, then finishing with a lick of incense.
ENJOY WITH—Keep it simple and solid – lamb shanks, and/or roasted and herbed root vegetables.
WINEMAKER'S NOTE—'Vintage 2019 threw some challenges our way in the form of a very dry summer and prolonged heat. It is no coincidence that the vineyard selections for the Black Sheep are from blocks that are traditionally harvested early; Being able to take advantage of the dry weather, and avoid the heat, led to excellent fruit quality with enormous depth of flavour.'
DRINK—5-12 years



BLACKOUT 2022

Fortified Saperavi

VARIETAL—Saperavi
COLOUR—Deep crimson fades to black in the depths of the glass.
THE SENSES—Boondocks liquor and sporty fruit. High-violet and a crackling fire. Smoky plum, star anise, bubblegum. Clouds precedent to a storm and all the lightning too. Sparking out of the glass – snappy raspberry, vanilla pod, coconut, and split redgum.
 The palate is massive, a flavour firecracker. Aromatic, portentous and pure. This is a circus-train running on straight rails direct to your skull. Endlessly entertaining, riotous, unexpected, and profuse.
WINEMAKER'S NOTE—'Fortified Saperavi – sure; it makes sense, embrace a Vintage Port style and lean into the intense spice box that is Saperavi. Now – mature it entirely in Kentucky Bourbon barrels? That's a sideways move.'
DRINK—Now and into the unseen future



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