

## Australia Rediscovered Its Mojo March 2016 By Josh Reynolds

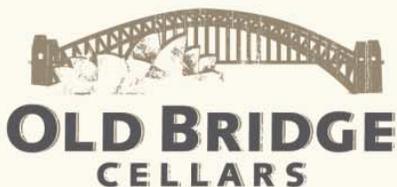
Antonio Galloni  
presents  
**vinous**  
explore all things wine

Slowly but surely, Australian wines, at least those of high quality and in the \$20 to \$50 range, are regaining their foothold in export markets. The reputation of high-end Australian wines was dealt a severe blow by the flood of overblown, over-alcoholic and often sickly-sweet bottlings that the country began producing in the late 1990s, and the damage lingers. A quick scan of wine lists in American restaurants and the shelves of wine retailers will confirm that point, as will conversations with wine collectors, most of whom will proudly, even arrogantly state that their cellars contain not a single bottle of Australian wine.

Fortunately, positive changes have been occurring steadily if mostly under the radar of most consumers and even the trade. Adventurous producers who make elegant, Old World-influenced bottlings are challenging the stereotype that Australia is a one-trick pony that issues only massive, alcoholic wines without energy or complexity, and the number of such wineries is increasing. I saw more graceful, vibrant, well-balanced Aussie wines over the past year than ever before, and they come from across the breadth of that country's wine-producing regions. Still, it's an uphill struggle to get those wines into the glasses of vinous tastemakers, particularly those based in the U.S., as virtually every importer and producer I've talked and tasted with has noted. The Australian wine industry is among the most dynamic in the world right now but, unfortunately, that act seems still to be playing too often on the second stage.

Many wine merchants continue to give Australian wines a wide berth based on their past experiences or, in many cases, on second-hand information that Australia makes only commercial, low-brow wines. That's their—and their customers'—loss as they're missing out on some truly exciting wines that can rival the best in the world for their respective varieties and styles. While the market has clearly indicated its lack of appetite for cartoonish Australian wines at any but the lowest prices and importers around the world are seeking out wines that show more restraint, far too many consumers continue to think that the monster style is still the only one that Australia can produce aside from cheap and cheerful versions.

In the following paragraphs I have provided a very brief general overview of Australia's most important wine regions and what they do best.



### **South Australia and Southeast Australia**

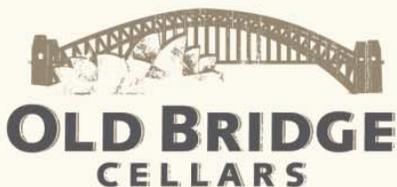
For many people, the red wines from this sprawling and diverse area define Australian wine, for better or worse. This is the home of the Barossa Valley, with its deeply concentrated renditions of Shiraz and Cabernet Sauvignon, as well as the McLaren Vale, which produces many outstanding wines from the same varieties, albeit on a relatively less boisterous scale. The Adelaide Hills excels with taut Sauvignon Blancs, while the Clare Valley is responsible for most of Australia's best Rieslings as well as for vibrant red wines that lean distinctly Old World in character. Coonawarra is renowned for its earthy, ageworthy Cabernet Sauvignon-based wines, the best of which can age and gain in complexity like serious Bordeaux.

### **Victoria**

This relatively cool, mostly hilly region that counts Melbourne as its hub produces Australia's finest Pinot Noirs and Chardonnays, not to mention a small but growing number of energetic wines from Rhône varieties. The Yarra Valley, in particular, is a consistently reliable source for elegant Burgundian Pinot Noirs and Chardonnays that have strong track records for ageworthiness. Melbourne itself, especially its elite restaurants, provides steady, sometimes insatiable demand for the top producers' wines, making them hard to find outside of their home region.

### **Western Australia**

Western Australia is one of the most successful areas in the world for producing Cabernet Sauvignon-based wines, especially the Margaret River region. Western Australia's top wineries



have fiercely loyal, well-heeled local followers who support the wines' often lofty prices. Their best white wines, mostly based on Sauvignon Blanc à la Bordeaux, can also be outstanding, as can Chardonnay and, increasingly, Syrah. There are also a handful of deadly serious producers of world-class Riesling in the area, notably Frankland River and Mount Barker in Great Southern, but Cabernet Sauvignon, often blended with Merlot and other Bordeaux varieties, is the source of Western Australia's fame.

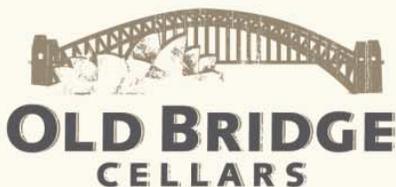


### **Hunter Valley**

Semillon is the signature grape here and classic renditions of the variety, which seldom top 12% alcohol and usually cruise closer to 11% or even 10%, can age and improve for decades. The best Hunter Valley Semillons can be hard to find outside the region as Sydney soaks up more than its fair share of these steely, mineral-driven wines, which are outstanding companions to raw or simply adorned shellfish dishes. The red wines of the area, with Shiraz leading the pack, usually tend to the earthy side in my experience; while they can age well, they rarely attain the complexity of South Australia's versions of the variety. They're also somewhat difficult to find, especially in the U.S. market.

### **Tasmania**

Long considered Australia's great hope for sparkling wines and nervy Chardonnays and Pinot Noirs, Tasmania does indeed produce some outstanding versions of those styles. But since the top wineries tend to be quite small, their wines can be extremely difficult to hunt down off the island. The cool, Southern Ocean-influenced north and east coasts of Tasmania are the source for virtually all of the island's best wines and a handful of them are becoming more readily available in export markets. Perhaps the most interesting recent development here is the emergence of serious



wines from the Coal River Valley in southeastern Tasmania, not far from the island's capital, Hobart. It's still early days but this could turn out to be one of Australia's best sources for Pinot Noir and, perhaps, for Chardonnay as well.

## **BROKENWOOD**

### **94 pts Brokenwood Graveyard Vineyard Shiraz 2013**

Opaque ruby. Sexy dark berry, violet pastille and incense aromas are lifted by peppery spice and mineral notes. Shows excellent focus and intensity on the palate, with the sweet boysenberry, violet pastille and cola flavors betraying no rough edges. Fine-grained tannins build slowly and steadily through a very long, floral finish, with the blue fruit note echoing emphatically. This wine shows surprising depth and power for its 13.5% alcohol.

### **92 pts Brokenwood ILR Reserve Semillon 2009**

Light yellow-gold. Vibrant, mineral-laced lemon, quince and honeysuckle aromas show a hint of waxiness that builds with air. Dry, taut and chewy on the palate, offering bitter citrus pith and quinine flavors and a strong note of tarragon. This sharply delineated, deep wine finishes with superb tension and resonating floral and mineral qualities. Experience says that it will age effortlessly.

### **92 pts Brokenwood Hunter Valley Shiraz 2013**

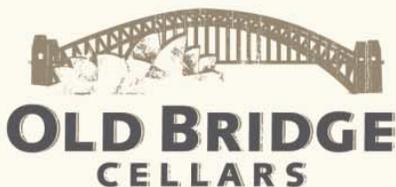
Deep ruby. Complex, highly perfumed bouquet evokes fresh dark berries, floral pastilles, musky underbrush and allspice, with a mineral element adding interest. Sweet, focused and lithe on the palate, offering energetic black raspberry and cherry-cola flavors that turn deeper and sweeter on the back half. Combines power and vivacity effortlessly and finishes juicy and very long, with fine-grained tannins gently shaping the wine's nervy dark fruit.

### **91 pts Brokenwood Area Blend Shiraz 2013**

(76% of this fruit came from McLaren Vale, 14% from the Hunter Valley and 10% from Beechworth): Deep ruby. Smoke-accented aromas of black raspberry, licorice and botanical herbs, with a peppery nuance adding urgency. Sappy cherry, cassis and rhubarb flavors show a touch of medicinal bitterness initially but sweeten up with aeration. Distinctly Old World in style, displaying a very good balance of depth and vivacity. Closes with repeating smokiness, dusty tannins and strong fruity persistence.

### **90 pts Brokenwood Hunter Valley Semillon 2014**

Bright straw. Aromas of ripe lemon, beeswax and jasmine, with a hint of tarragon emerging with air. Silky and seamless on the palate, in a somewhat more forward style than usual for this bottling, offering good depth and heft to its juicy citrus and orchard fruit flavors. Lingers with good fruity persistence, leaving notes of tangerine and pear behind.



**90 pts Brokenwood Pinot Noir 2014**

Light, bright red. Extremely fragrant and spicy on the nose, displaying vibrant cherry and raspberry scents with hints of potpourri and white pepper. Silky and precise in the mouth, offering tangy, refreshingly bitter-edged red fruit and floral pastille flavors. Closes firm and long, with a touch of smokiness and supple, late-arriving tannins.

**CHAMBERS**

**96 pts Chambers Rare Muscadelle**

Dark amber with a bright orange rim. A heady, wildly complex bouquet evokes roasted coffee, mocha, peach pit, orange marmalade and gingerbread, with honey and toffee nuances building in the glass. Utterly stains the palate with deeply concentrated spicecake, coffee, orange zest and brown sugar flavors. At once weighty and graceful, showing remarkable vivacity for its density. Closes with outstanding and resonating pit fruit liqueur and candied orange notes. This refuses to let up. The most amazing thing is that, for me at least, there's no sense of overt thickness or treacly sweetness.

**95 pts Chambers Rare Muscat**

Dark chestnut-brown with a greenish rim. Powerful, expansive aromas of brown sugar, molasses, dark chocolate and candied dates, with exotic black cardamom and Moroccan spice overtones. Lush, deeply concentrated and emphatically sweet, offering powerful, palate-coating fruitcake, cola, espresso and dark chocolate flavors. Downright relentless on the broad, emphatically sweet, clinging finish, which eventually leaves smoky molasses, black toffee and raisin bread notes behind.

**95 pts Chambers Grand Muscadelle**

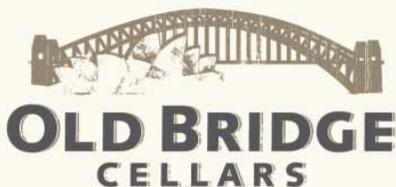
Deep, orange-tinged amber. A strikingly complex bouquet evokes an array of dried pit fruits, crème brûlée, candied fig and brown sugar, along with an exotic gingerbread overtone. Emphatically sweet, seamless and penetrating, offering orange marmalade, apricot preserve, toffee and membrillo flavors that completely stain the palate while showing surprising vivacity. Combines richness and vivacity with a deft hand and finishes extremely long and spicy, with lingering brown sugar and candied orange qualities that don't let up.

**94 pts Chambers Grand Muscat**

Dark brown, with a shimmering green rim. Deeply pitched aromas and flavors of fruitcake, pomegranate molasses, Café Brûlot and candied date, with a subtle hint of smokiness emerging slowly with air. Broad, concentrated and very sweet, showing a spherical texture and superb back-end power. The molasses and coffee qualities come back strong on a strikingly persistent, spice-tinged finish, which leaves behind a very sweet note of fig paste.

**91 pts Chambers Rutherglen Muscat**

Bright amber-gold. Smoke- and spice-accented scents of orange, toffee and baked apple, with notes of caramel and honey in the background. Sweet and silky but penetrating on the palate, offering



bitter orange pith and cinnamon pastry flavors that show surprising vivacity for their richness. Closes sweet, spicy and quite long, leaving orange liqueur and baking spice notes behind.

**90 pts Chambers Rutherglen Muscadelle**

Gold-tinged brown. Deeply pitched scents of toffee apple, candied date and cherry pit, with notes of mocha and fruitcake emerging with air. Sweet, broad and velvety, offering intense baked orchard fruit and spicecake flavors and a strong toffee quality. Weighty, very sweet and lush, finishing with strong cling and lingering smokiness. A touch less vivacious than its Muscadelle sibling and best suited for serving on its own, or maybe with a rich chocolate dessert.

**CULLEN**

**94 pts Cullen Diana Madeline Cabernet/Merlot 2013**

Bright purple. Primary, very ripe scents of black and blue fruits, dark chocolate and pipe tobacco, with floral and mineral nuances adding complexity. Smooth, weighty and alluringly sweet, with its intense cassis and singed plum flavors sharpened and given a spicy edge by a suggestion of cracked pepper. Sweet vanilla and mocha qualities build on the impressively long, gently tannic finish of this lush, seamless blend.

**93 pts Cullen Kevin John Chardonnay 2013**

Vivid yellow. Youthful, focused scents of ripe orange, pear, vanilla and smoky minerals are complicated by nuances of fennel, jasmine and iodine. Sappy, penetrating and pure in the mouth, offering juicy citrus and orchard fruit and honeysuckle flavors enlivened by a jolt of juicy acidity. Impressively concentrated yet graceful and fat-free, in the style of a serious Puligny-Montrachet. Finishes with excellent thrust and persistent floral and mineral qualities.

**92 pts Cullen Mangan East Block 2013**

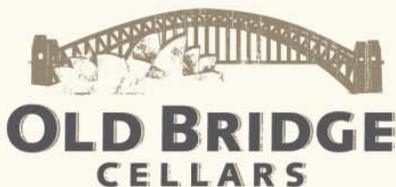
Inky ruby. Powerful black and blue fruit aromas are complicated by licorice, pipe tobacco and an exotic touch of orange rind. Densely packed, spice-tinged blueberry and cassis flavors display a round, fleshy texture and no rough edges. The youthfully tannic finish is sappy, sweet and expansive, hanging on with noteworthy tenacity and resonating spiciness.

**92 pts Cullen Ephraim Clarke Sauvignon Blanc/Semillon 2014**

Light, hazy yellow. Smoky, assertively perfumed aromas of poached pear, melon and lemon curd are complemented by suggestions of fennel, jasmine and vanilla. Supple and broad on entry, then more taut in the middle, offering juicy orchard fruit and orange zest flavors and a hint of toasty lees. Shows a suave blend of power and finesse and finishes sappy, smoky and very long, with a sexy floral quality. This complex wine reminded me a lot of a top-notch white Bordeaux.

**92 pts Cullen Amber 2014**

Very light, copper-tinged orange. Poached pear, tangerine, honey and vanilla on the toasty, deeply perfumed nose. Smooth, broad and fleshy on the palate, offering powerful orchard and pit fruit



and vanilla pastry flavors sharpened by suggestions of candied ginger and smoky minerals. Shows the heft of a red wine but the vibrancy and bite of a white--or pink--one. The pear and ginger notes linger with impressive tenacity on the lucid, seamless finish. While this intriguing orange wine is carrying 15% alcohol it does not come off as heavy or warm.

### **d'ARENBERG**

#### **93 pts d'Arenberg The Dead Arm Shiraz 2012**

Youthful purple. Primary black and blue fruits, floral pastilles, Indian spices and vanilla on the deeply perfumed nose, with a smoky mineral quality adding urgency and lift. Sweet, deeply pitched boysenberry and cherry-cola flavors spread out impressively on the palate, picking up spiciness and a touch of mocha on the back half. This lush, broad, seamless Shiraz finishes with excellent clarity and smooth tannins that contribute structure and gentle grip.

#### **92 pts d'Arenberg The Dead Arm Shiraz 2011**

Opaque ruby. The nose displays an array of dark fruit and floral scents, along with suggestions of pipe tobacco, violet and cracked pepper. Chewy and focused on entry, then fleshier in the mid-palate, offering bitter cherry and cassis flavors that are slow to open up. Less lush than usual for this bottling, which is the norm for virtually all 2011 South Australia red wines, with dusty tannins coming in late to add grip to the lingering, pepper-accented cherry pit and blackcurrant flavors. In the context of this difficult vintage this is a pretty successful effort.

#### **92 pts d'Arenberg The Coppermine Road Cabernet Sauvignon 2012**

Inky ruby. Smoky, oak-tinged aromas of dried cherry, cassis and pipe tobacco, with a peppery nuance adding lift. Sappy and penetrating on the palate, with bitter cherry and floral pastille flavors showing very good clarity and refreshing spiciness. The cherry and tobacco notes build strongly on the clinging finish, which is framed by smooth, slowly building tannins.

#### **92 pts d'Arenberg The Ironstone Pressings 2012**

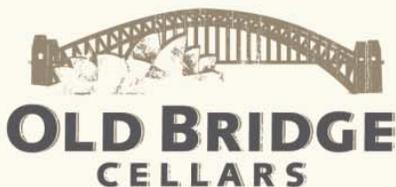
Inky ruby. Expansive, spice-accented aromas of raspberry and boysenberry, potpourri and smoky minerals. Sweet and creamy in texture, offering palate-staining red and dark berry and lavender pastille flavors complicated by a smoky nuance. This rich yet energetic red blend shows very good depth and a firm spine of acidity. The floral quality recurs on the powerful, gently tannic finish.

#### **91 pts d'Arenberg The Coppermine Road Cabernet Sauvignon 2011**

Saturated ruby. Sexy, oak-spiced dark berry and cherry scents, with hints of vanilla and cigar box building in the glass. Sweet and expansive on the palate, offering juicy blackberry and cherry-vanilla flavors sharpened by a jolt of tangy acidity and a touch of cracked pepper. Unfolds nicely on the lively finish, which features smooth tannins and an echo of sappy dark berries.

#### **91 pts d'Arenberg d'Arry's Original Shiraz/Grenache 2012**

Brilliant ruby-red. Fresh cherry, black raspberry, floral pastilles and a hint of smokiness on the



highly fragrant nose. In the mouth, sappy, concentrated cherry and boysenberry flavors are sharpened by a suggestion of peppery spices and smoky minerals. Pliant and appealingly sweet on the long, subtly smoky finish, which leaves notes of bitter chocolate and candied lavender behind.

**91 pts d'Arenberg The Lucky Lizard Chardonnay 2013**

Brilliant yellow. At once vibrant and expansive on the nose, displaying an array of ripe citrus and orchard fruit aromas complicated by a suave floral nuance. Silky, focused pear and tangerine flavors are given lift and spine by juicy acidity and pick up a smoky mineral flourish on the back half. This concentrated, lively Chardonnay finishes with solid thrust and strong, mineral-driven persistence.

**91 pts d'Arenberg The Money Spider Roussanne 2013**

Light, bright gold. Vibrant dried lemon, fig and pear skin scents are complemented by deeper-pitched suggestions of honey and marzipan. Smooth, broad and fleshy, with concentrated orchard and pit fruit flavors sharpened by a hint of gingery spices. Quite lively given its density, this Roussanne finishes with firm grip and an intense mineral quality.

**91 pts d'Arenberg The Twenty Eight Road Mourvedre 2013**

Brilliant ruby. Powerful, spice-accented dark berries, cherry and candied licorice on the highly perfumed nose. Juicy blackcurrant, bitter cherry and violet pastille flavors are lifted and sharpened by zesty acidity and a strong jolt of peppery spices. Lingers with very good intensity on a subtly sweet finish given shape and grip by fine-grained tannins.

**90+ pts d'Arenberg The Derelict Vineyard Grenache 2012**

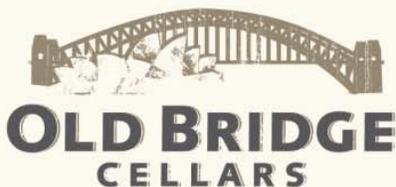
Ruby-red. Medicinal cherry, pungent herbs and candied rose on the nose, with hints of white pepper and anise in the background. Spicy, taut and sharply focused, offering bitter cherry and redcurrant flavors that unfold slowly with aeration. In a vibrant style and extremely youthful. Aeration brings out raspberry and floral pastille qualities, plus an exotic touch of candied orange peel. Fine-grained tannins sneak up on the long, focused finish, which leaves a subtly sweet red berry note behind.

**90 pts d'Arenberg The Ironstone Pressings 2011**

Saturated ruby. Smoke-accented aromas of cassis, cherry and licorice, with a suave floral nuance building in the glass. Appealingly sweet and expressive, offering energetic dark berry and rose pastille flavors and a touch of spicecake. Shows very good focus and thrust on a long, sappy finish framed by harmonious tannins. This suave wine is drinking very nicely right now.

**90 pts d'Arenberg The Wild Pixie Shiraz/Roussanne 2013**

Lurid violet color. Vibrant and emphatically spicy on the nose, displaying scents of fresh red berries, cherry pit, pungent flowers and cracked pepper. Juicy and precise in the mouth, showing strong lift and cut to its bitter cherry, redcurrant and rhubarb flavors. Aeration brings out darker blackcurrant and licorice qualities that carry through a very long, youthfully tannic finish.



**90 pts d'Arenberg The High Trellis Cabernet Sauvignon 2012**

Opaque ruby. Deeply pitched blackcurrant, cherry and pipe tobacco scents show a spicy overtone. Rich yet light on its feet, offering faintly medicinal flavors of bitter cherry and dark berries. Finishes clean, spicy and penetrating with dusty tannins and a persistent dark berry note.

**90 pts d'Arenberg The Footbolt Shiraz 2012**

Deep ruby. Powerful, smoke-tinged aromas of black and blue fruits, anise, black cardamom and espresso. Rich yet lively on the palate, offering bitter cherry, blackberry and dark chocolate flavors and a building note of sweet floral pastilles. Dusty tannins give grip and focus to the long, smoke-tinged finish, which leaves cherry and berry skin notes behind. This year's version of this bottling comes off as more serious and ageworthy than usual.

**90 pts d'Arenberg The Custodian Grenache 2012**

Vivid ruby. Deeply pitched black raspberry and cherry compote scents are energized by a suggestion of cracked pepper. Fleshy and broad in the mouth, offering ripe red and dark berry flavors and a building element of medicinal bitterness. The gently tannic finish display resonating spiciness and very good persistence.

**90 pts d'Arenberg The Broken Fishplate Sauvignon Blanc 2014**

Bright straw. Ripe citrus and orchard fruit scents and flavors are complemented by a sexy floral nuance and a touch of honey. Silky, seamless and expansive on the palate, with a hint of white pepper adding back-end cut. Closes sappy and long, with nervy bite and strong persistence.

**90 pts d'Arenberg The Dry Dam Riesling 2014**

Light, green-tinged yellow. Lime pith, ginger and a whiff of kerosene on the vibrant nose. Dry and focused in the mouth, offering zesty citrus fruit and green apple flavors. No fat on these bones, but there's no sense of malnourishment either. In a lithe, mineral-driven style, finishing with strong bite, very good persistence and resonating lime character.

**90 pts d'Arenberg The Hermit Crab Viognier/Marsanne 2014**

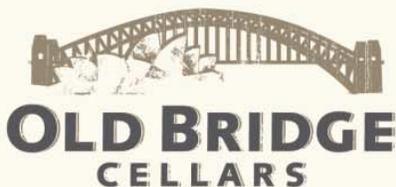
Light, bright yellow. Ripe pear and peach on the fragrant nose. Plush, round and seamless, offering sappy pit fruit and melon flavors and a refreshingly bitter jolt of pear skin. Closes on a gingery note, with very good clarity and a sexy, persistent floral quality.

**90 pts d'Arenberg The Olive Grove Chardonnay 2013**

Bright yellow. Ripe citrus and orchard fruit aromas are complemented by a subtle sexy floral nuance and a touch of honey. Silky, seamless and expansive but also displays appealing sappiness and tangy lift to its round tangerine and pear flavors. Finishes with building spiciness, a touch of ginger and good nervy bite.

**89 pts d'Arenberg The Love Grass Shiraz 2012**

Saturated ruby. Deeply pitched dark berry scents are complemented by suggestions of olive paste,



black pepper and smoky minerals. Chewy and concentrated on the palate, offering ripe blackcurrant and cherry liqueur flavors that gain in verve and spiciness on the back half. Dusty tannins build slowly on the long, spicy finish, giving grip to the lingering black and blue fruit flavors.

**89 pts d'Arenberg The Olive Grove Chardonnay 2014**

Light yellow-gold. Aromas of pear nectar, tangerine and jasmine, with a hint of leesiness in the background. Spicy and broad on the palate, offering yellow apple and pear flavors with a touch of bitter citrus pith. Closes spicy and taut, leaving floral and anise notes behind.

**89 pts d'Arenberg The Dry Dam Riesling 2015**

Pale straw. Citrusy and focused on the nose, with dusty mineral and floral nuances adding complexity. Taut, dry and delineated on the palate, with bitter lemon pith and quince flavors unfolding slowly. A hint of fennel appears on the stony, lingering finish.

**89 pts d'Arenberg The Hermit Crab Viognier/Marsanne 2013**

Pale yellow. Dried lemon, green apple and jasmine on the spice-accented nose. Taut, nervy and focused on the palate, offering lively orchard and citrus fruit flavors that flesh out slowly with air. A gingery note adds bite to the clinging finish of this concentrated, vibrant blend.

**89 pts d'Arenberg The Stump Jump Sauvignon Blanc 2014**

Pale yellow. Fresh orchard and citrus fruits, jasmine and a hint of honey on the fragrant nose. Pliant and smooth in the mouth, offering juicy pear and fresh fig flavors braced by a suggestion of bitter orange zest. In a silky, lithe, fruit-driven style, finishing with a subtle floral element.

**89 pts d'Arenberg The Stump Jump Riesling 2015**

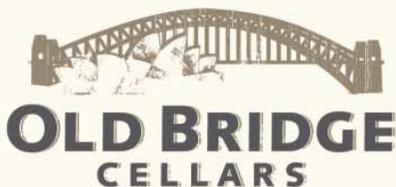
Pale yellow. Aromas and flavors of ripe citrus fruits and green apple, with a suggestion of nectarine adding depth. Emphatically fruity and supple in texture, picking up a refreshing hint of ginger on the back half. Closes taut and nervy, with lingering spiciness and a touch of candied lime.

**89 pts d'Arenberg The Stump Jump Red 2012**

Saturated ruby. Smoke- and spice-accented aromas of cassis, dried cherry and licorice, with a hint of tobacco in the background. Juicy and focused on the palate, showing good depth and energy to its bitter cherry and dark berry flavors. Dusty tannins shape the finish, which shows good cut and subtle spicy persistence.

**88 pts d'Arenberg The Derelict Vineyard Grenache 2011**

Vivid ruby-red. Aromas of cherry pit, licorice and dark chocolate, along with a touch of smokiness. Musky and firm-edged, offering dried cherry and bitter chocolate flavors and a touch of cracked pepper. The cherry quality carries through the finish, which is framed by chewy, rather unyielding tannins. I'd have liked more succulence here.



**88 pts d'Arenberg The Stump Jump Sauvignon Blanc 2015**

Light, bright straw. Pungent aromas of fresh grapefruit and lime pith, with an herbal overtone and a hint of white flowers. Dry and tangy on the palate, offering bitter citrus pith and quinine flavors that deepen on the back half. The herbal note comes back on the brisk, vaguely tart finish, which leaves an echo of bitter grapefruit zest behind.

**88 pts d'Arenberg The Stump Jump White 2014**

Green-tinged straw. Citrus pith, dried fig and a musky herbal nuance on the nose. Dry and tightly wound, offering bitter lemon zest and quinine flavors that slowly put on weight with aeration. Closes dry and tangy, with good bite and an echo of succulent herbs.

**FRISK**

**88 pts Frisk Prickly Riesling 2014**

Bright straw. Lime, grapefruit and a strong suggestion of honeysuckle on the nose and in the mouth. Highly perfumed, racy and vaguely spritzy, this acts a lot like a lot like Muscat. Finishes with deeper mango and peach notes, a touch of citrus zest and good length. This wine would pair nicely with a wide range of spicy foods, especially those of the Asian persuasion.

**GIANT STEPS**

**93 pts Giant Steps Sexton Vineyard Pinot Noir 2014**

Deep red. Highly fragrant bouquet evokes ripe red berries, incense and candied flowers, with a smoky mineral nuance building in the glass. Sappy and penetrating on the palate, offering deep bitter cherry and raspberry flavors accented by a zesty Asian spice accent. Fine-grained, precise Pinot Noir with excellent finishing power, resonating spiciness and subtle tannins.

**93 pts Giant Steps Tarraford Vineyard Chardonnay 2014**

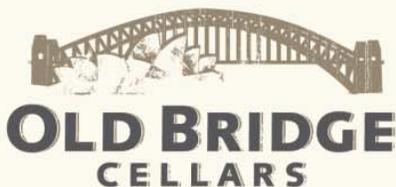
Pale gold. A wildly complex bouquet evokes fresh citrus and orchard fruits, oyster shell, iodine and white flowers, with a hint of saffron emerging with air. Sappy, penetrating and pure, offering palate-staining Meyer lemon, pear skin, ginger, nori and toasted brioche flavors that deepen and spread out on the back half. Powerful and deeply concentrated yet lithe, finishing with wonderful energy and lingering floral and mineral flourishes.

**92 pts Giant Steps Applejack Vineyard Pinot Noir 2014**

Vivid red. Vibrant, spice-accented red and dark berry scents pick up notes of succulent herbs and minerals with air. Juicy, focused and energetic on the palate, offering sappy black raspberry and cherry-cola flavors with hints of five-spice powder and mocha. Closes very long and spicy, with resonating red fruit character and silky, late-arriving tannins.

**92 pts Giant Steps Sexton Vineyard Chardonnay 2014**

Light yellow-gold. Complex scents of pear skin, peach pit, tangerine, chamomile and iodine, with a



smoky mineral flourish building in the glass. Supple and expansive on the palate, offering intense, mineral-tinged citrus and orchard fruit flavors and hints of fennel and buttered toast. Shows a suave blend of richness and vivacity and finishes smoky, minerally and very long, leaving poached pear and Meyer lemon notes behind.

### **INNOCENT BYSTANDER**

#### **92 pts Innocent Bystander Mea Culpa Syrah 2013**

Opaque ruby. Deeply pitched aromas of cherry skin, dark berry liqueur, licorice and espresso are energized by a suave floral topnote. Sappy, concentrated and expansive on the palate, offering sweet black and blue fruit and violet pastille flavors plus a sexy touch of spicecake. Combines richness and vivacity with a sure hand, finishing very long and youthfully tannic, with a sweet blueberry note.

#### **92 pts Innocent Bystander Mea Culpa Chardonnay 2013**

Pale, hazy gold. Deeply pitched, complex aromas of ripe citrus and orchard fruits, buttered toast, iodine and white flowers. Smoky and expansive on the palate, offering intense white peach, pear and Meyer lemon flavors that pick up a suggestion of anise with aeration. Fleshly and densely packed but distinctly lively as well, finishing with strong thrust and a lingering mineral flourish.

#### **92 pts Innocent Bystander Mea Culpa Pinot Noir 2013**

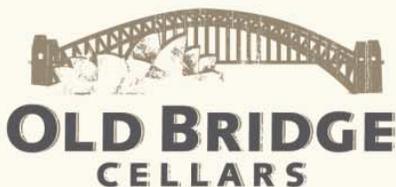
Vivid red. Bright, energetic scents of smoke-accented black raspberry, cherry-cola and Indian spices, plus a suggestion of potpourri. Spicy and broad on the palate, offering sweet dark berry and cherry liqueur flavors and a hint of mocha. The berry and spice qualities resonate emphatically on an impressively long, seamless finish featuring silky tannins and building florality.

#### **91 pts Innocent Bystander Syrah 2013**

Deep ruby. Fresh and expansive on the nose, displaying intense cherry, blueberry, licorice and violet scents along with suave Indian spice and potpourri flourishes. Plush and creamy on the palate, offering gently sweet black and blue fruit flavors that deepen and become spicier with air. A rich, nicely balanced Syrah with no rough edges. Velvety tannins give shape to the very long, spicy finish, which lingers with notes of star anise and cracked pepper.

#### **90 pts Innocent Bystander Pinot Noir 2014**

Light red. Intensely perfumed nose combines red berries, potpourri and Asian spices, with a hint of musky sassafras in the background. Juicy and incisive on the palate, offering sappy raspberry and cherry flavors and a strong suggestion of spicecake. Shows excellent clarity and lift on the floral, firmly tannic finish. This is a wonderful value in Pinot Noir.



## JASPER HILL

### **94 pts Jasper Hill Emily's Paddock Shiraz/Cabernet Franc 2013**

Vibrant ruby. Highly expressive aromas of black and blue fruit, potpourri, incense and smoky oak, lifted by a powerful spicy overtone. Stains the palate with vibrant blackcurrant, bitter cherry and spicecake flavors, with suggestions of vanilla, licorice and dark chocolate emerging with air. Dense, vivacious wine with no rough edges. Closes silky and extremely long, with fine tannins and lingering sweetness. This very suave wine has the balance to age effortlessly.

### **93 pts Jasper Hill Georgia's Paddock Shiraz 2013**

Inky purple. Explosive, focused aromas of black and blue fruits, licorice and candied violet, with a sexy note of smoky Indian spices emerging with air. Weighty and plush on the palate, offering creamy blueberry and cherry liqueur flavors with intense spicecake, vanilla and white pepper flourishes. In a rich but vibrant style, finishing with excellent energy and smooth, late-arriving tannins.

### **92 pts Jasper Hill Georgia's Paddock Riesling 2014**

Pale gold. Vibrant and precise on the intensely perfumed nose, displaying an array of citrus fruit and floral scents underscored by a powerful mineral nuance. Shows excellent focus and lift on the palate, offering bitter lemon pith and pear skin flavors and a suggestion of bitter quinine. Tarragon and beeswax qualities emerge on the lingering mineral finish. Offers a compelling combination of power and finesse.

## JOHN DUVAL WINES

### **94 pts John Duval Eligo Shiraz 2012**

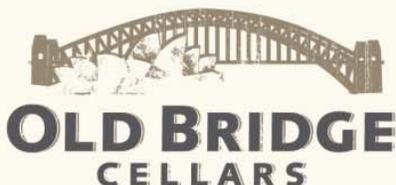
Glass-staining purple. Heady spice- and smoke-tinged boysenberry and cherry scents are complicated by suggestions of candied violet, licorice and incense. Vibrant and focused on the palate, with appealingly sweet, oak-tinged black and blue fruit flavors deepening and spreading out in the mid-palate. Deeply concentrated yet graceful and precise, conveying real energy and power. Silky tannins give shape and subtle grip to a strikingly long, seamless finish that leaves sappy blue fruit, vanilla and licorice pastille notes behind.

### **93 pts John Duval Annexus Grenache 2013**

Bright ruby. Vibrant, expansive aromas of dark berries, floral pastilles, Indian spices and smoky minerals. Silky, alluringly sweet and focused, offering intense black raspberry, cherry-cola and spicecake flavors and a suave lavender flourish. Strikes a compelling balance between power and finesse, with no rough edges. Very pure and energetic but also seamless, finishing subtly tannic and long, with resonating floral and spice notes.

### **93 pts John Duval Entity Shiraz 2013**

Opaque ruby. Exotic black and blue fruits, incense and smoky Indian spices on the explosively



perfumed nose. Sweet, round and fleshy in the mouth, with primary dark fruit flavors complicated by hints of candied violet, cola and licorice. Chewy, building tannins give shape and structure to the wine's youthful fruit, which dominates the very long, broad, juicy finish. There's great potential here but I'd give the wine at least a few more years in the cellar for its components to harmonize more completely.

**92 pts John Duval Plexus White 2014**

Green-tinged yellow. Bright, perfumed nose displays scents of fresh melon, nectarine and honey, with lemon pith and honeysuckle nuances building in the glass. Suave and seamless on the palate, offering good depth to its mineral-laced lemon curd, white peach and poached pear flavors. In a generous, lively, vaguely Old World style, finishing with subtle sweetness and persistent ripe citrus fruits.

**92 pts John Duval Plexus Red 2013**

Bright violet color. Vibrant spice- and mineral-accented red fruits and candied flowers on the highly perfumed nose. Silky, seamless and appealing sweet, showing Pinot-like finesse and clarity to its fresh raspberry and cherry flavors. Finishes very long and sappy, with suave tannins coming in late to add gentle grip.

**KILIKANOON**

**94 pts Kilikanoon Attunga 1865 Shiraz 2012**

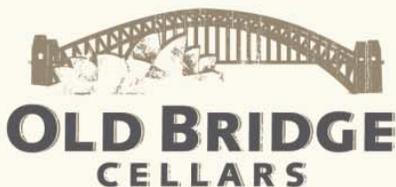
Inky purple. Drop-dead, intensely perfumed aromas of ripe blueberry, cassis, incense and vanilla, with woodsmoke and violet nuances emerging with aeration. Smoky, concentrated and penetrating on the palate, offering vivacious black and blue fruit flavors that stretch out and become more lively on the back half. Finishes extremely long and sappy, with outstanding focus and smooth, even tannins that build slowly and fold effortlessly into the wine's plush fruit. As the name suggests, these vines date back to 1865.

**93 pts Kilikanoon Oracle Shiraz 2012**

Deep violet color. A heady, complex bouquet displays aromas of ripe dark berries and floral pastilles, with a spicy topnote and a smoky mineral accent. Sweet, deeply concentrated boysenberry and cherry-vanilla flavors are sharpened by a spicy nuance and a hint of cola that builds with aeration. Closes with superb energy and breadth, leaving sweet violet pastille and spiced notes on the gently tannic finish.

**93 pts Kilikanoon Green's Vineyard Shiraz 2012**

Bright purple. Displays intense boysenberry, cherry-cola, licorice and musky floral scents, along with a strong mineral nuance. Sweet, deeply pitched black and blue fruit and bitter chocolate flavors show excellent clarity and power, with juicy acidity adding lift and spine. Combines power and finesse with a deft hand, finishing on a sweet lavender pastille note and with fine-grained tannins lending shape and gentle grip.



**92 pts Kilikanoon Mort's Reserve Riesling 2014**

Light, bright yellow. Incisive aromas of grapefruit, quinine, white flowers and chalky minerals. Dry, tangy and sharply focused, offering bitter citrus pith and green apple flavors that unfold slowly, picking up deeper melon and nectarine qualities on the back half. Closes firm, spicy and very long, with an intense, lingering mineral nuance.

**92 pts Kilikanoon Exodus Shiraz 2013**

Glass-staining ruby. Deeply pitched black and blue fruits, licorice and mocha on the oak-spiced nose. Plush, expansive and seamless on the palate, offering appealingly sweet boysenberry and violet pastille flavors that firm up slowly on the back half. At once rich and energetic, finishing with excellent power and supple, slow-building tannins. No shortage of grip here.

**92 pts Kilikanoon Covenant Shiraz 2013**

Inky purple. Deeply pitched cassis, blueberry, licorice and vanilla scents are enlivened by a spicy nuance and a bright jolt of smoky minerals. Lush and open-knit, offering sappy, vivacious black and blue fruit flavors. Floral pastille and spicecake flavors stain the palate, picking up candied violet and cola notes on the back half. The vanilla and mineral notes comes back strong on a youthfully tannic, strikingly persistent finish.

**92 pts Kilikanoon Baudinet Blend GSM 2013**

Deep ruby. Smoky and spicy on the perfumed nose, displaying scents of fresh cherry, candied licorice, star anise and cracked pepper. Offers intense bitter cherry and cassis flavors that are underscored by a strong mineral quality that adds lift and spine. Concentrated yet lithe, with strong closing thrust, chewy, building tannins and a very persistent note of cherry compote lingering.

**91 pts Kilikanoon Prodigal Grenache 2013**

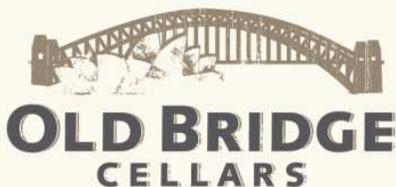
Vibrant ruby-red. Energetic, highly perfumed, nose displays fresh raspberry, lavender and peppery spice scents plus a hint of mocha. Smooth and juicy on the palate, offering appealing sweet red and dark berry flavors and a touch of spicecake, with the floral note reappearing as the wine opens up. In a seamless, fruit-driven style, with excellent closing focus and supple tannins building steadily and adding shape.

**91 pts Kilikanoon Bocks Road Cabernet Sauvignon 2013**

Bright violet color. Spicy blackberry and boysenberry aromas are complicated by suggestions of black pepper, cedary oak and smoky minerals. Fresh dark berry and bitter cherry flavors are sweetened by suggestions of vanilla and mocha. Delivers plenty of upfront fruity appeal, with silky tannins adding shape and closing grip to the very long, sappy finish.

**90 pts Kilikanoon Skilly Valley Pinot Gris 2014**

Vivid straw. Bright, racy scents of citrus zest, white flowers and smoky minerals. Dry, nervy and precise on the palate, offering intense tangerine and melon flavors that expand on the back half while picking up a hint of ginger. Blends power and vivacity smoothly, finishing clean, stony and



long, with lingering florality and a hint of tarragon.

**90 pts Kilikanoon Kavel's Flock Shiraz 2013**

Lurid ruby. Ripe black and blue fruits, vanilla and smoky oak on the deeply perfumed nose. Lush and open-knit, offering energetic blueberry and cherry compote flavor sharpened by a suggestion of cracked pepper. Emphatically fruity and forward in style, with no rough edges. Finishes on a gently sweet note, with very good breadth and cling and supple tannins that sneak in late.

**90 pts Kilikanoon Killerman's Run Shiraz 2013**

Deep ruby. Fresh, perfumed scents of ripe dark berries, violet and cola, with a peppery nuance adding vivacity. Smooth and broad on entry, then more taut in the middle, offering sweet blackberry and cherry flavors and a building touch of vanilla. Generous, supple Shiraz with solid finishing punch and gentle tannins sneaking in late to add grip.

**90 pts Kilikanoon Killerman's Run Riesling 2014**

Green-tinged straw. Aromas of fresh peach, melon, jasmine and ginger, with a hint of white pepper emerging slowly with air. Silky and open-knit, offering ripe yellow plum and honeydew flavors tightened by a jolt of lemon pith. Rich yet vibrant Riesling with strong closing bite and subtle lingering notes of pit fruits and flowers.

**90 pts Kilikanoon Mort's Block Riesling 2014**

Pale straw. Vibrant citrus fruit, honeysuckle and mineral scents pick up a hint of kerosene with aeration. Vibrant and sharply focused on the palate, offering zesty lime and quince flavors with subtle tarragon and ginger flourishes. Closes taut, linear and quite long, leaving floral and citrus fruit notes behind.

**89 pts Kilikanoon Killerman's Run GSM 2013**

Brilliant ruby. Lively, spice-accented aromas of red and dark berries, with a subtle floral overtone. Shows good lift and focus to its bitter cherry and raspberry flavors, which slowly put on weight as the wine opens with air. The spicy note comes back on the youthfully tannic, persistent finish.

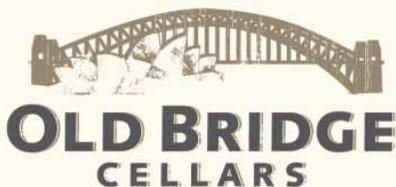
**89 pts Kilikanoon Killerman's Run Cabernet Sauvignon 2013**

Bright ruby. Spice-accented aromas of ripe cherry and dark berries, with musky tobacco and camphor overtones. Taut and tangy on entry, then puts on weight and gains sweetness in the middle palate, offering juicy blackcurrant and chewing tobacco flavors and a touch of vanilla. Shows good energy and lift on the finish, which features a lingering black pepper quality and gentle tannins.

**LEEWIN ESTATE**

**94 pts Leeuin Estate Art Series Chardonnay 2012**

Light, bright yellow. Musky pear skin and honeydew on the nose, with jasmine, ginger, vanilla and



smoky mineral nuances adding complexity. Juicy, seamless and sharply focused, offering concentrated citrus and orchard fruit flavors that flesh out and become spicier with aeration. The mineral and floral qualities come back strong on the strikingly persistent, seamless finish. There's no way I'd have guessed that this wine was aged in all new oak.

**93 pts Leeuwin Estate Art Series Cabernet Sauvignon 2011**

Inky ruby. Powerful smoke- and spice-accented aromas of ripe dark fruits, cured tobacco, vanilla and cedary oak, all lifted by a suave floral topnote. Stains the palate with concentrated cassis and cherry-vanilla flavors, with zesty acidity and a strong suggestion of peppery spices giving the wine lift. At once rich and lithe, this Cabernet finishes with strong thrust, a touch of smoky minerality and harmonious shaping tannins.

**92 pts Leeuwin Estate Art Series Shiraz 2012**

Vivid ruby. Heady aromas of black raspberry, floral pastilles, Indian spices and woodsmoke, with a hint of vanilla emerging slowly. Smooth, sweet and expansive on the palate, offering energetic dark berry and cola flavors and a hint of spicecake. Distinctly elegant in style, displaying a silky, Pinot-like texture and strong back-end lift. Closes very long and sappy, with harmonious tannins and an emphatic echo of sweet red fruit.

**91 pts Leeuwin Estate Art Series Sauvignon Blanc 2013**

Pale yellow. Fresh citrus fruit, melon and floral scents display very good clarity, with a mineral element building in the glass. Dry, nervy and sharply focused, offering intense orange pith, pear and honeydew flavors and zero excess fat. In a distinctly linear, graceful style, finishing with strong cut and mineral-driven persistence.

**91 pts Leeuwin Estate Prelude Vineyards Chardonnay 2013**

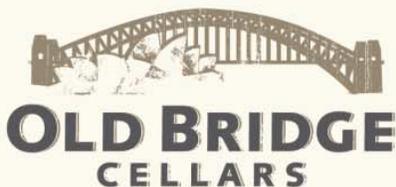
Light yellow-gold. Citrus pith, dried pear, fennel and toasty lees on the deeply perfumed nose. Plush and round on the palate, offering ripe citrus and orchard fruit flavors that tighten up and become spicier with aeration. In an ample style but not lacking for vivacity thanks to juicy acidity. Vanilla and smoky mineral notes linger on a very long finish, with the vanilla, pear and fennel notes repeating strongly.

**91 pts Leeuwin Estate Art Series Riesling 2014**

Bright straw. Textbook Riesling aromas of fresh citrus and orchard fruits, white flowers, quinine and diesel fuel, with a bright mineral overtone. Dry, incisive and sharply focused, offering zesty Meyer lemon and bitter quince flavors that unfold slowly as the wine opens with air. Vibrant and utterly fat-free, finishing with strong thrust and emphatic citrus zest and honeysuckle notes.

**90 pts Leeuwin Estate Prelude Vineyards Cabernet/Merlot 2011**

Deep ruby. Lively, spice-tinged aromas of cherry, redcurrant and fresh flowers, with a subtle hint of herbacity in the background. Broad and appealingly sweet on the palate, offering pliant red and dark berry flavors that tighten up on the back half. The floral quality comes back strong on a sweet,



persistent finish framed by supple, late-arriving tannins. This wine is quite approachable now, especially with a little air time.

**90 pts Leeuwin Estate Siblings Sauvignon Blanc/Semillon 2014**

Pale yellow. Highly perfumed, incisive nose displays energetic mineral- and spice-accented peach and tangerine scents and a suggestion of honey. Shows very good clarity and lift on the palate, offering fresh citrus and pit fruit flavors that deepen with air. In a seamless, pliant style, this blend finishes with excellent focus and length and lingering hints of tarragon and honeysuckle.

**90 pts Leeuwin Estate Siblings Shiraz 2012**

Brilliant ruby-red. Expressive red berry and floral pastille aromas are lifted by mineral and spice notes. Lush, seamless and emphatically fruity on the palate, with cola and allspice nuances building in the glass. In a juicy, fruit-driven, very approachable style, finishing sappy, focused and very long, with just a hint of dusty tannins.

**PENLEY ESTATE**

**92 pts Penley Estate Cabernet Sauvignon Reserve 2012**

Opaque ruby. Expressive cherry and dark berry aromas are complemented by woodsmoke, cured tobacco and vanilla. Spicy, concentrated and seamless on the palate, offering gently sweet blackberry and cherry-vanilla flavors brightened by juicy acidity. Closes smooth, spicy and very long, with velvety tannins building slowly and folding into the wine's juicy, oak-spiced fruit.

**92 pts Penley Estate Chertsey 2012**

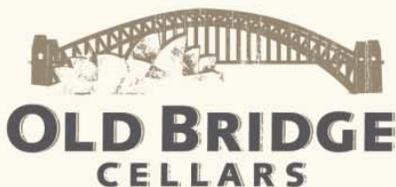
Dark purple. Pungent, seductively perfumed scents of ripe blackberry, vanilla, pipe tobacco, candied rose and woodsmoke. Deep, supple and sweet on the palate, offering sappy black and blue fruit flavors accented by black pepper and licorice nuances. Broad, rich, energetic blend, with supple tannins providing focus and grip to the persistent finish.

**91 pts Penley Estate Special Select Shiraz 2012**

Inky purple. Blueberry, candied cherry and vanilla on the highly perfumed nose, with suave floral and anise qualities adding complexity. Deep and alluringly sweet but also focused, offering powerful black and blue fruit and violet pastille flavors and a jolt of peppery spices. Smoothly plays richness off of elegance and finishes very sweet and long, with building smokiness. smooth tannins sneak in late to add shape and closing grip.

**90 pts Penley Estate Hyland Shiraz 2013**

Opaque ruby. Expansive, deeply pitched black and blue fruit aromas are complemented by licorice, pipe tobacco and mocha. Lush and seamless on the palate, with ripe blackcurrant and cherry liqueur flavors picking up a smoky quality on the back half. Distinctly rich but not burly, finishing sappy and long, with gentle tannins adding shape.



**90 pts Penley Estate Tolmer Cabernet Sauvignon 2012**

Dark ruby. Oak-spiced dark berry and mocha aromas are complemented by notes of vanilla and candied licorice. Smooth and open-knit, conveying an appealing sweetness to its plump blackberry and cassis flavors. This supple, broad Cabernet finishes with solid punch, gentle spiciness and smooth, velvety tannins.

**90 pts Penley Estate Aradia Chardonnay 2013**

Light yellow-gold. Ripe pear and honey on the nose, with a suggestion of Meyer lemon adding vivacity. Broad and fleshy but energetic, offering pear skin and orange zest flavors and a touch of honey on the back half. A smoky mineral element emerges on the finish to join the lingering citrus fruit character.

**89 pts Penley Estate Condor Shiraz/Cabernet 2013**

Vivid purple. Aromas of ripe cherry and plum are lifted by a spicy quality that gains power with aeration. Smooth, broad and appealingly sweet, offering plump blackberry and cherry liqueur flavors and a touch of vanilla. Clings nicely on the finish, which features a repeating plum note and soft, well-integrated tannins.

**89 pts Penley Estate Pinot Noir 2014**

Deep red. Ripe cherry and dark berries on the pungent nose and palate. Smoky and broad, with a peppery nuance adding back-end lift and spicy bite. Finishes smooth and gently sweet, with repeating spiciness and dusty, gently gripping tannins. In an easygoing style and quite approachable already.

**89 pts Penley Estate Phoenix Cabernet Sauvignon 2013**

Ruby-red. High-pitched aromas of red- and blackcurrant, cherry and black pepper, with hints of fresh flowers and pipe tobacco. Shows good energy and lift to the zesty red fruit, bitter chocolate and spice flavors. The smooth finish shows gentle tannic grip, leaving a warm cherry note behind.

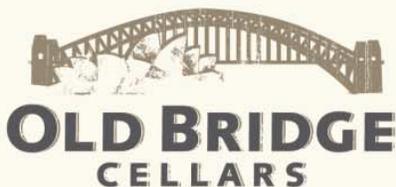
**88 pts Penley Estate Gryphon Merlot 2013**

Saturated ruby. Ripe cherry, candied plum and pungent flowers on the nose, with a hint of dark chocolate emerging slowly. Plush and seamless on the palate, offering gently sweet cherry-vanilla and blackberry flavors and a touch of cracked pepper. Shows some warmth on the smoothly tannic finish.

**PLANTAGENET**

**91 pts Plantagenet Cabernet Sauvignon 2013**

Inky ruby. Blackcurrant, cherry, pipe tobacco and cedary oak on the highly perfumed nose. Fresh and juicy on the palate, offering smoky red and dark berry flavors that put on weight as the wine opens with air. Finishes spicy, focused and very long, with building tannins and lingering hints of candied flowers and vanilla.



**91 pts Plantagenet Estate Shiraz 2013**

Opaque ruby. Smoky cherry pit, cassis and licorice scents, along with suggestions of olive paste, cracked pepper and violet. Distinctly northern Rhône in character, offering bitter cherry, dark berry and floral pastille flavors with a late hint of smoked meat. Shows refreshing spiciness and lift on the gently tannic, tenacious finish, which leaves a sweet floral pastille note behind.

**90 pts Plantagenet Estate Riesling 2014**

Pale straw. Stony, sharply focused and pure on the nose, displaying fresh lime and orange zest scents and a hint of candied ginger. Dry and tightly wound, with nervy citrus and orchard fruit flavors showing a refreshingly bitter edge. A suggestion of succulent herbs comes forward on the long, incisive finish, which leaves a touch of candied lime behind.

**90 pts Plantagenet Omrah Shiraz 2013**

Brilliant ruby. Textbook Syrah aromas of dark berries, olive paste, violet and smoky bacon on the perfumed nose show distinct Old World character. Ripe, smoke-accented black and blue fruit and floral pastille flavors are sharpened and given spicy bite by a suggestion of black pepper. Closes firm and smoky, with a lingering blue fruit quality and chewy tannins.

**90 pts Plantagenet Estate Chardonnay 2014**

Light yellow. Aromas of ripe citrus and orchard fruits, with suggestions of honey, vanilla and clove emerging with air. Broad and fleshy on entry, then tighter in the middle, offering fresh pear, melon and tangerine flavors and a suggestion of smoky lees. A hint of tarragon comes up on a long, supple, gently sweet finish that echoes the pear and tangerine notes. I would have guessed from this wine's supple texture that at least some of it had gone through malo, but I'd have been wrong.

**88 pts Plantagenet Omrah Pinot Noir 2013**

Bright red. Subdued red fruit and floral scents are complemented by succulent herbs and cocoa powder. Taut and focused on the palate, offering bitter cherry and redcurrant flavors that unfold slowly while picking up a hint of licorice. In an understated, cool style, finishing with solid closing punch; dusty tannins give the back end a slightly rigid character.

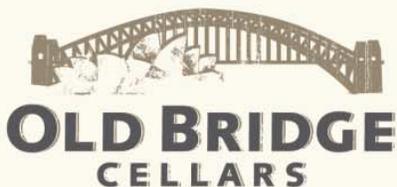
**88 pts Plantagenet Omrah Cabernet/Merlot 2012**

Deep ruby. Primary dark berry and cherry aromas are lifted by a peppery nuance and a hint of fresh flowers. Broad, fleshy and slightly jammy on the palate, offering plump blackcurrant and cherry flavors that firm up slowly on the back half. Dusty tannins give the wine's sweet dark fruit an unyielding quality.

**SHOOFLY**

**90 pts Shoofly Shiraz 2014**

Brilliant ruby. Deeply pitched black and blue fruit and licorice aromas are lifted by a peppery nuance and a sexy floral quality. Broad and weighty on the palate, offering lush blueberry, cherry



compote and spicecake flavors given lift and spine by juicy acidity. Plays richness off of vivacity with a sure hand, finishing smooth and long, with just a hint of dusty tannins.

**90 pts Shoofly Pinot Noir 2014**

Bright red. Lively and focused on the perfumed nose, displaying fresh red berry, potpourri and five-spice powder scents along with a hint of smokiness. Lithe and subtly sweet, offering vibrant raspberry and bitter cherry flavors that become sweeter and spicier with aeration. In an elegant, fat-free style, with silky tannins making a late appearance on the persistent back end. This wine was made with 10% whole clusters but from its spicy, perfumed character I would have guessed that there were more stems.

**89 pts Shoofly Chardonnay 2013**

Light yellow. Aromas of dried pear, pineapple, fennel and ginger, with subtle floral and herbal nuances in the background. Sappy and penetrating on the palate, offering bitter pear skin, melon and Meyer lemon flavors that gain in depth in the mid-palate. Shows good power and stony lift on the zesty, mineral-driven finish.

