

## Australia Brings the Brawn and the Beauty

October 2017  
By Josh Reynolds

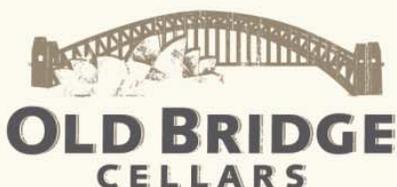
Antonio Galloni  
presents  
**vinous**  
explore all things wine

Australia produces as wide a range of high-quality wines as any country in the world, from almost all imaginable varieties and in all styles, while quality has never been higher than it is today. Consumers who view these wines as all red, all big, all the time are missing out.



### *Australia's wine regions*

A good way to understand the vastness of Australia's wine-producing landscape is to compare the island continent to the United States—not the viticultural U.S. but the whole country. Consider that the Hunter Valley, Australia's easternmost wine region, in New South Wales, is more than 2,500 miles from Margaret River, home to the country's farthest-west vineyards. That's almost 400 miles farther than the distance from Atlanta to San Diego. The geographical differences are stark but to this day wine lovers speak of "Australian wine" in a broad-brush manner that's by turns amusing, bewildering, frustrating and depressing to the country's producers. Australia's vineyards spread across an area that's a thousand miles longer than the distance from Galicia to Kremstal (Austria) but I sure don't hear many wine drinkers talk much about "European" wine in such a generic manner.



Australia can be considered a New World wine region by European standards but in the context of non-European wine-producing areas it's actually quite old, with its roots, literally and figuratively, stretching back to the 1820s. Even more intriguing is that Australia can lay claim to some of the oldest producing vines on earth, including what some say are the most ancient Grenache and Syrah (almost always called Shiraz in Australia) plantings anywhere. Old vines are a common theme across the country—especially in South Australia—and the wines that they produce can be serious show-stoppers for their depth and power; they often sell for extremely reasonable prices as well.

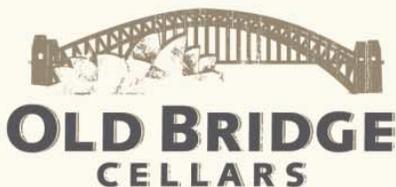
As a jumping-off point for the wines reviewed in this article, a brief overview of most of the country's best-known and mostly highly regarded wine regions is in order. The operative word here is "brief" as any one of the following areas is book-worthy, as are many additional regions that I have left out in the interest of brevity.



*Margaret River*

#### Western Australia: Margaret River

Western Australia, located some 2,500 miles from Sydney, is the source of many of the country's most sought after, small-production and consequently expensive wines. Fortunately the overall standard of wine quality from this vast state is uniformly high. The ocean-influenced Margaret River region is especially intriguing for the fact that it produces not only most of Australia's most elegant, complex and Bordeaux-like Cabernet Sauvignons and Cabernet-based blends but many of the country's most stylish and highly regarded Chardonnays as well. In fact, this zone is home to two of the country's most consistently fine Chardonnay producers, Cullen and Leeuwin Estate, whose versions of this variety should also be counted among the best in the New World, period. Those two wineries are also, unsurprisingly, at the top of the red wine heap in the Margaret River.



High-quality Sauvignon Blanc and Sauvignon Blanc/Sémillon are produced in Margaret River as well, as are a handful of impressive Pinot Noirs, Rieslings and Syrahs, but Cabernet Sauvignon and Chardonnay are the clear marquee varieties here.

Unfortunately, the wines of the region will never be cheap. Land prices are high, as are labor costs. Even more important, the wealthy city of Perth, with by far the largest concentration of people in Western Australia, has an insatiable thirst for the local wines, so a good portion of the Margaret River's relatively small vinous production never makes it far from home.

In 2015 Margaret River experienced a rainy winter and spring, which resulted in a difficult flowering and an ultimate reduction in production. The summer was dry and moderately warm and conditions remained favorable through the harvest. Quality so far appears to be good to very good even if there isn't much wine to go around.

#### Western Australia: Great Southern

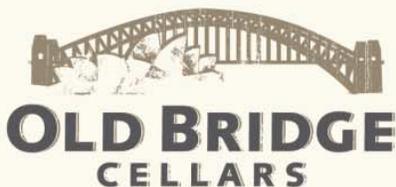
Some of Australia's most impressive examples of Riesling emanate from the cool Frankland River zone, which sits roughly 225 miles south and slightly east of Perth. Frankland River is the most famous of the five sub-regions of Great Southern, along with Albany, Denmark, Porongurups and Mount Barker, and the one that has made the most headway in the international wine market. That's no surprise as this cool, hilly, relatively inland region is well known for producing some of Australia's most racy, sharply delineated Rieslings. The best examples of Frankland River Riesling bear comparison to those from the Clare Valley, which have long been considered the gold standard for this variety in Australia and are among the best in the New World. Production here is limited, though, as wineries in the Great Southern region are almost all on the small, artisanal side, so some hunting may be necessary to land the top wines.

The 2015 vintage in Great Southern brought low yields due to a poor flowering and quality looks mixed, with many grapes harvested at lower-than-usual sugar levels.

#### South Australia: Clare Valley

The vast majority of Australia's most famous wine regions are situated in the state of South Australia, which offers a vast range of geographic and climate conditions and thus a predictably broad variety of wine styles from a large number of varieties. If there ever was a region that defied efforts to generalize about wine styles, South Australia is it.

The finest dry New World Rieslings that I've ever had the pleasure to drink came from Clare Valley, which actually isn't a valley at all but rather a high-altitude plateau that enjoys breezy conditions and cold nights that create an ideal growing situation for cool-climate varieties. The best known and to my mind the top producer of Clare Valley Riesling is Jeffrey Grosset, whose wines created the paradigm for the Clare Valley style with their intense lime-and-grapefruit citrus character, razor-sharp acidity, pronounced minerality and ability to age effortlessly. The overall



standard of quality for Clare Valley Riesling is remarkably high; in fact, it's pretty tough to find an example in the market now that isn't at least very good.

The 2016 Rieslings have turned out exceptionally well, with bright acidity, expressive bouquets and excellent balance. Two thousand fifteen is also an outstanding vintage, having produced fruity wines with the backbone to retain freshness and last well.

#### South Australia: Barossa Valley

For many wine drinkers outside Australia, Barossa Valley wine is Australian wine, at least for the last couple of decades. That outsized, high-alcohol, Xtreme fruit bomb of a Shiraz that burned itself into your taste memory back at the turn of the century? Most likely it came from Barossa. The polarizing character of those wines—and there were plenty of them sent around the world—still dominates many wine lovers' view of Shiraz in particular and Australia in general, and usually not in a good way. But those bottlings were aberrations—and still are, to the extent that they are being made today—and the rest of the Barossa, much less the country, deserves a more sober (as it were) critique by open-minded wine consumers.

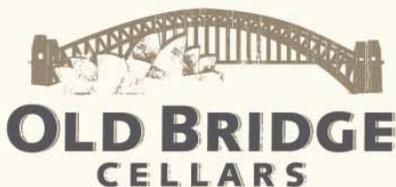
Growing conditions here are hot, often torrid, and grape sugars routinely soar to levels that mean the wines will easily crest 15% alcohol, or even 16%. The trick for winemakers is to ensure that there's enough freshness to balance ripeness in the finished wines and that's made possible by the wide diurnal shifts that affect much of the region. On the technological side of the equation, vine irrigation is common in the warmest sectors here, along with acidification, reverse osmosis and water additions, practices that are common in most other hot wine-growing climates in the world, whether producers admit it or not.

This is not to say that Barossa Valley wines will qualify as “elegant” for wine lovers whose benchmark reds come from the continental climates of Europe or the cool coastal regions of America's West Coast. They won't. But in comparison to most wines from central Spain, southern France and inland California, the best Barossa wines stand up quite well. They also, as a rule, age slowly and positively, shedding their overt fruit and baby fat over time and picking up a more savory character that can sometimes remind one of the northern Rhône.

The 2015 growing season began with plenty of welcome rain in winter and early spring (precipitation is always welcome here) followed by a warm, mostly dry late spring and summer. Near-ideal conditions carried through the summer and harvest. This is shaping up to be a classic vintage.

#### South Australia: Eden Valley

Located within the Barossa zone, the cool, hilly Eden Valley produces mostly Shiraz and Shiraz-based wines that are markedly different from those of the Barossa Valley and often distinctly Old



World in style, displaying bright acidity, distinct florality and red fruit character. Yalumba and Henschke are two of the region's best producers and their wines are widely available worldwide.

It's cool enough in most of the Eden Valley to produce outstanding dry Riesling as well and, in fact, that variety makes up almost 25% of the region's vine plantings, with Shiraz slightly ahead at just over 31%.

Those whose tastes run to dry Austrian or German Rieslings owe it to themselves to check out what's happening here; producers like Pewsey Vale, Henschke, Mesh and Penfolds are great places to start.

Riesling was a top performer in 2016: the wines are elegant and precise, with the equilibrium to age. Two thousand fifteen looks highly promising to exceptional for Shiraz thanks to a cool, steady growing season and a dry, perfectly timed harvest with optimally ripe grapes.

#### Southern Australia: Adelaide Hills and Greater Adelaide

Sauvignon Blanc has been especially successful here and I'd count the region as the most reliable source for stand-alone renditions of the variety in Australia. The cool, higher-altitude, ocean-influenced geography sets the stage for taut, nervy, Loire-style wines that usually sell for extremely reasonable prices given their quality. With rare exception the wines are made to drink upon release but the best examples will reward some patience thanks to their zesty acidity and balance.

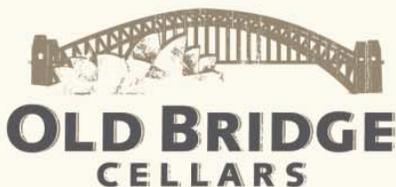
Some serious Chardonnay is also made in this region, with more than a few showing the sort of vibrancy, minerality and precision that one might associate with Chablis. The general style of Chardonnay here definitely references the Old World more than the New and the best versions are excellent cellar candidates.

Riesling also grows well in the Adelaide Hills and an increasing number of serious examples of Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet-based blends, Pinot Noir and Shiraz are being made here as well, all of them in an elegant, focused, low-octane style that reflects the area's growing conditions. Those looking for Barossa Valley-style fruit bombs aren't going to find such wines in these parts.

Two thousand sixteen provided an above-average quantity of high-quality fruit thanks to well-timed spring and late summer rains. The white wines are turning out fresh and silky, while the 2015 reds show real energy and excellent balance.

#### South Australia: McLaren Vale

A full range of white wines of every imaginable style and weight is produced from the widely varied soils here, from dry Rieslings and Sauvignon Blancs to richer Marsanne, Roussanne, Viognier and Chardonnay bottlings. But the region is best known for its powerful yet well-balanced red wines, especially those based on Shiraz, with the other Rhône red varieties—and Cabernet Sauvignon—playing supporting but extremely important roles as well. This is one of Australia's oldest wine-



growing regions: its first vines were planted in 1838 and its first commercial wineries opened in 1850. Some of the country's best-known and most widely exported producers are located here, such as d'Arenberg, Wirra Wirra, Chapel Hill and Kay Brothers Amery. Its location near the capital city of Adelaide, with a population of almost 1.2 million people, has ensured a robust local market for the best wines, which means that some of the area's most sought-after bottlings will always be tough to find in export markets.

My early look at the 2016 white wines from McLaren Vale turned up wines that are lively and precise, with intense perfume and very good depth. The region's 2015 reds come from a short harvest but look to be of very high quality, with strong concentration allied to good energy.

#### South Australia: Coonawarra

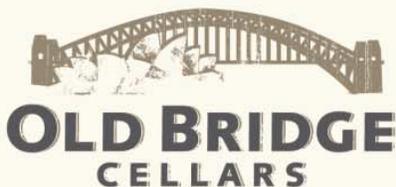
Situated near South Australia's border with Victoria, Coonawarra is actually a sub-region of Limestone Coast but its fame has for years overwhelmed that of the larger zone. That renown is due to the fact that many of Australia's most highly regarded Cabernet Sauvignon and Cab-based blends have been made from fruit grown here since the 1950s. These wines tend to be quite solid on release, with very good depth and tannic structure that ensure reliable cellaring potential. A well-aged and carefully cellared Coonawarra Cabernet from the likes of Penley Estate or Wynn's has fooled me more than a few times into thinking that I was drinking a top-notch Left Bank Bordeaux (there are remarkable climate similarities between these two areas), such was their savory character, chewy texture and bright acidity.

Fans of old school Cabernet Sauvignon should be pleased with the 2015s from Coonawarra. An ideal growing season and issue-free harvest produced clean, ripe fruit with good but not excessive tannin levels and healthy acidity. The better wines should age slowly and gracefully.

#### Victoria: Yarra Valley

The majority of Australia's most elegant wines, especially those made from cool-climate varieties like Pinot Noir and Chardonnay, come from the state of Victoria. Situated in the southernmost point of the country, its wine-growing regions enjoy the cooling influence of the Southern Ocean and its hilly sites benefit from wide diurnal temperature shifts. Shiraz is also very successful across Victoria, producing wines that are usually distinctly northern Rhône-like in personality. Cabernet Sauvignon also has a long, positive history across the region, producing wines that can often rival those from Margaret River for elegance, balance, savory character and cellarworthiness.

The roster of top-drawer wineries in the Yarra Valley, which sits roughly 50 miles east of the state capital Melbourne, features an all-star lineup of Australian producers, with Giant Steps, Mac Forbes, Yarra Yering, Yering Station and Yeringberg among the best known. Pinot Noir and Chardonnay make up the majority of the best wines, in my opinion, with Shiraz and Shiraz-based blends and Cabernet Sauvignon close behind in quality if not sheer number. There's a distinctly European cast to most Yarra Valley wines, which should be no surprise in light of the area's



geography and climate. Given its proximity to Melbourne and its world-class restaurant scene, its natural beauty and the fact that there are more than 160 wineries here, it's no surprise that the Yarra Valley is a popular tourist destination and that much of the region's wine production is consumed locally. Many of the Yarra Valley's best limited-production wines are a chore to find outside Victoria.

All varieties performed exceptionally well in 2015, thanks to a cool growing season punctuated by a tiny bit of well-timed rain and ending with a warm, picture-perfect fall and harvest.

#### Victoria: Heathcote

Located roughly an hour's drive north of Melbourne, Heathcote is a relatively cool inland region justly renowned for producing powerful, structured yet graceful Shiraz and Cabernet Sauvignon-based wines with enviable track records for aging. The nutrient-poor pre-Cambrian soils found here are between 500 million and 550 million years old—among the oldest to be found on earth. There is also a good amount of granite in the area, which is extremely hospitable to Shiraz, as any northern Rhône producer, such as Michel Chapoutier, will tell you. In fact, Chapoutier was impressed enough to bet money on it by setting up a project here with the Laughton family of Jasper Hill (the most famous winery in Heathcote) back in 1998.

Like the rest of Victoria, Heathcote enjoyed a smooth, mostly cool 2015 growing season and a harvest that went off under ideal conditions. It's a bit early to make a call on Cabernet-based wines but, from my handful of tastings of these wines to date, they look highly promising.

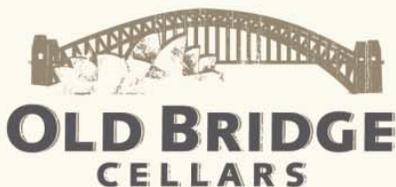
#### Victoria: Mornington Peninsula

If any region of Australia can compete with the Yarra Valley for high-quality Pinot Noir and Chardonnay, it would be the Mornington Peninsula. Located just under 50 miles from Melbourne, the cool, wind-swept vineyards here produce wines of uncommon clarity and finesse. Tasting a Pinot Noir from a top producer such as Bindi, Ten Minutes by Tractor, Moorooduc or Paradigm Hill for the first time can be a head-spinning experience for those who think that graceful versions of the variety are exclusive to Europe, Oregon and coastal California. Victoria's Chardonnays can be equally impressive but they're not easy to track down away from their home turf.

The cool-climate varieties planted in the Mornington Peninsula experienced an ideal growing season in 2015 and the harvest went off without a hitch. Both white and red wines are shaping up to be of very high quality and among the best of the last decade.

#### New South Wales: Hunter Valley

Located just over a three-hour drive north of Sydney, the Hunter Valley was first planted to vines in the 1820s, making it Australia's oldest wine-growing region. The region is especially warm and humid, which makes it a challenging place to grow the thin-skinned Sémillon, which is the variety



for which the Hunter Valley is best known. Left too long on the vine, Sémillon is an easy target for noble as well as ignoble rot so the fruit here is almost always harvested very early, at sugar levels that produce high-acid, extremely ageworthy wines that clock in as low as 10% alcohol in many vintages. That style has found a following over the decades, to the point that dry Sémillon is now the touchstone wine of the region.

Shiraz is the dark horse in the Hunter Valley and Brokenwood (whose Sémillons are also among Australia's best) has been the standard-bearer for quality since it released its first Shiraz from the 1983 vintage. In fact, many Australian wine aficionados count Brokenwood's Graveyard Vineyard bottling as among the country's finest, regardless of region. Tyrrell's also makes first-rate Shiraz but these bottlings are often overlooked because of the winery's Sémillons, which are the most renowned renditions of the variety in Australia.

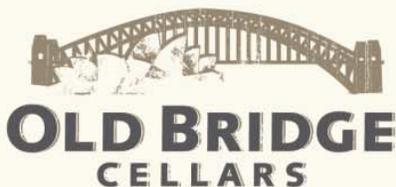
Sémillon was highly successful in 2016 after experiencing a bizarre growing season that saw epic rains during the summer followed by the driest autumn in a generation. The wines should turn out to be exceptionally ageworthy thanks to a combination of concentration and healthy acidity. Conditions were challenging for Shiraz in 2015 as a consequence of rain and hailstorms, making it a vintage to buy with care.

#### Tasmania

With its heavily ocean-influenced situation and extreme southern location it isn't surprising that the island of Tasmania produces bright, racy wines from cool-climate varieties, notably Pinot Noir and Chardonnay. Josef Chromy and Dalrymple's wines are consistently strong performers with reasonably wide distribution. Some of Australia's finest sparkling wines are made here but local demand, not to mention often ambitious pricing, has made them rare birds in export markets. Tasmania is steadily gaining a foothold abroad, though, as more and more producers see the advantage of making their wines available to an outside world that is steadily developing a taste for the kind of graceful, nervy wines made here.

As with the rest of the southern tier of Australia in 2015, Tasmania enjoyed an ideal, relatively cool growing season that allowed for fresh wines with textbook balance of concentration and liveliness.

I tasted all of the wines in this report in New York over the last several months. Our next installment of Australian reviews will include wines I try during my upcoming trip to Western Australia, South Australia and Victoria, as well as plenty of others that I'll taste back home.



## **BROKENWOOD**

### **92 pts Brokenwood Oakey Creek Semillon 2011**

Light, green-tinged yellow. A vibrant, assertively perfumed nose displays intense Meyer lemon, fennel and jasmine scents and a building mineral overtone. Dry and focused in the mouth, offering bitter citrus pith, dried pear and fresh fig flavors that pick up a spicy element with aeration. Shows real tension but doesn't come off lean. Finishes with excellent energy and mineral-driven persistence.

### **91 pts Brokenwood Hunter Valley Semillon 2015**

Pale gold. Sharply focused lemon zest, green apple and floral scents, along with a hint of chalky minerality. Dry and nervy in the mouth, offering bitter citrus pith and fresh orchard fruit flavors that put on weight with air. Nicely concentrated yet light on its feet, finishing with impressive energy, firm cut and strong, stony persistence.

### **90 pts Brokenwood Beechworth Pinot Noir 2015**

Bright red. Red currant, raspberry and candied rose scents, lifted by a peppery nuance. Becomes sweeter with air and picks up a smoky nuance on the back half. Silky and refreshingly bitter on the youthfully tannic finish, which shows solid thrust and very good persistence. There's definite old-school structure here, but the succulent fruit handles it well.

## **CHAMBERS**

### **97 pts Chambers Rare Muscadelle NV**

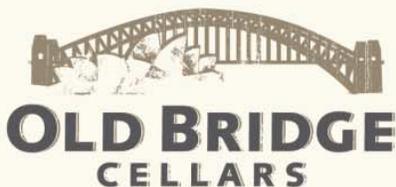
Dark brown, almost black. Deep-pitched aromas of roasted coffee, cola, caramelized nuts, woodsmoke, toffee and burnt orange. Incredibly deep and impressively concentrated, offering sweet, palate-staining date cake, raisin, maple syrup, coffee and candied pecan flavors and a strong suggestion of dark chocolate. The orange and coffee notes dominate an endless, supple, broad finish that features an intensely sweet touch of molasses.

### **96 pts Chambers Rare Muscat NV**

Deep, green-rimmed brown. Powerful aromas of caramel, fig paste, gingerbread, orange marmalade, toffee and candied date. Sweet, seamless and expansive on the palate, offering an array of candied pit fruit, toffee and molasses flavors and notes of mocha, caramel and candied nuts. Manages to be both powerful and lively, with absolutely no rough edges. Finishes extremely long and sweet, displaying resonating spiciness, a touch of baking spices and excellent clarity.

### **94 pts Chambers Grand Muscadelle NV**

Dark brown. Powerful aromas of candied fig, cola, molasses and orange marmalade, along with suggestions of candied ginger, honey and brown sugar. Broad and weighty on the palate, offering intensely sweet preserved pit fruit, toffee and orange zest flavors that show impressive depth and surprising energy. The orange and fig notes repeat emphatically on the extremely long, intensely sweet finish, which leaves behind a suggestion of gingerbread.



**94 pts Chambers Grand Muscat NV**

Amber-rimmed brown. Heady aromas of mocha, fig jam, molasses, raisins and candied dates, backed by a hint of smokiness. Broad, sweet and deeply concentrated, offering palate-coating molasses cookie, toffee, dark chocolate, coffee liqueur and candied fig flavors and a touch of maple syrup. Refuses to let go on the finish, which emphatically echoes the molasses and date notes.

**92 pts Chambers Rutherglen Muscat NV**

Dark brown. Dark chocolate, cherry liqueur, singed plum and burnt sugar on the deeply perfumed nose. Lush, broad and intensely sweet, offering plush mocha, toffee and dark chocolate flavors and a subtle touch of allspice that adds back-end lift. Clings with impressive tenacity on the finish, leaving coffee liqueur, cola and burnt sugar notes behind.

**91 pts Chambers Rutherglen Muscadelle NV**

Deep amber-gold. Turbinado sugar, tangerine, honey and gingerbread aromas, along with a touch of candied almond in the background. Sweet and penetrating on the palate, offering sappy citrus and pit fruit flavors and a hint of toffee. Shows very good energy and thrust on the clinging, penetrating finish, which leaves a singed orange zest note behind.

**CULLEN**

**94 pts Cullen Diana Madeline 2014**

Youthful violet. A highly perfumed, complex bouquet displays smoke-accented cherry liqueur, cassis, vanilla, pipe tobacco and incense aromas and a sexy Moroccan spice overtone. Sweet and lively on the palate, offering concentrated dark fruit, floral pastille, chewing tobacco and mint flavors that deepen and pick up a hint of cola with aeration. Seamless, focused and lithe for its depth, finishing very long and spicy, with building florality and fine-grained tannins lending gentle grip.

**93 pts Cullen Kevin John Chardonnay 2014**

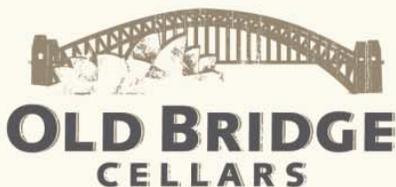
Green-tinged gold. An expressive, highly perfumed nose evokes ripe melon, poached pear, vanilla and honey, while lemon pith and floral nuances build in the glass. Shows impressive depth as well as energy on the palate, offering mineral-accented Meyer lemon, nectarine and honeydew melon flavors that pick up a floral accent on the back half. Emphatically repeats the pear and honey notes on the impressively long, subtly sweet finish, which shows powerful thrust and a touch of smoky lees.

**92 pts Cullen Ephraim Clarke Sauvignon Blanc/Semillon 2015**

Light bright gold. Complex aromas of ripe orchard and pit fruits, buttered toast, smoky lees and white flowers. Supple and expansive on the palate, offering intense nectarine, pear and Meyer lemon flavors that pick up a suggestion of honey with aeration. Fleshy and densely packed but surprisingly energetic, finishing with powerful thrust and a smoky mineral flourish.

**92 pts Cullen Mangan Vineyard 2014**

Opaque ruby. Expressive aromas of black currant, vanilla and pipe tobacco, plus an emerging hint of cocoa powder. Juicy and seamless on the palate, offering sappy bitter cherry, black currant and spicecake flavors and hints of mint and licorice. Finishes with solid thrust, building tannins and a persistent dark chocolate note.



## **d'ARENBERG**

### **93 pts d'Arenberg The Coppermine Road Cabernet Sauvignon 2013**

Inky ruby. Cherry compote, blackberry, woodsmoke and a sexy vanilla nuance on the nose; a pipe tobacco note gains strength with aeration. Juicy, palate-coating dark fruit flavors show a deft mix of power and energy and pick up an exotic floral pastille flourish on the back half. Finishes smooth, sappy and impressively long, featuring strong echoes of sweet dark berries and peppery spices.

### **93 pts d'Arenberg The Dead Arm Shiraz 2013**

Inky ruby. Heady, smoke-accented blueberry, cassis, violet and vanilla aromas show excellent clarity and a hint of allspice. Sweet and broad in the mouth, offering concentrated black and blue fruit and floral pastille flavors plus a building suggestion of mocha. Closes with emphatic spicy cut, an echo of candied flowers and smooth, harmonious tannins that sneak in late.

### **92 pts d'Arenberg The Ironstone Pressings 2013**

Brilliant ruby-red. Pungent, spice-accented scents of fresh red and dark berries, licorice, cola and smoky minerals. Lively and focused on the palate, offering juicy cherry and boysenberry flavors complemented by a hint of peppery spices. Becomes deeper and chewier with air, with no loss of energy, and finishes smoky and very long; building tannins add shape and grip.

### **92 pts d'Arenberg The Galvo Garage 2013**

Inky ruby. Pungent cherry, dark berries, smoky minerals and dried flowers on the nose. Vibrant and well delineated, displaying sappy blue fruit, floral pastille and peppery spice flavors and a sweetening vanilla note. Finishes broad and smooth, delivering a jolt of minerality and silky, slow-building tannins.

### **92 pts d'Arenberg The Derelict Vineyard Grenache 2013**

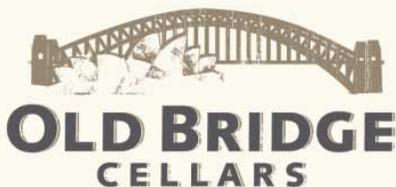
Deep ruby. Complex, highly perfumed dark berry, succulent herb and Asian spice scents, along with a building floral quality. Sweet and velvety in the mouth, offering deep-pitched flavors of black raspberry, anise and smoky minerals. Very long and perfumed on the finish, where harmonious tannins add gentle grip.

### **92 pts d'Arenberg The Laughing Magpie Shiraz Viognier 2012**

Inky ruby. Smoke-accented aromas of ripe dark berries, game, pungent flowers and cola, joined by a hint of white pepper that emerges slowly and adds spicy lift. Concentrated, seamless bitter cherry, blackberry and fruitcake flavors become more energetic as the wine opens up. Round, even tannins shape the finish, which hangs on with impressive, dark-fruit-dominated persistence.

### **92 pts d'Arenberg The Money Spider Roussanne 2015**

Pale gold. Orange, nectarine and pear nectar aromas are complemented by suave floral and chalky mineral accents. Silky and expansive in the mouth, offering concentrated, mineral-tinged poached pear and cling peach flavors that pick up honey and ginger qualities as the wine opens up. Sappy and seamless in texture but surprisingly energetic as well, showing solid closing thrust and lingering suggestions of honeysuckle and candied pit fruits.



**91 pts d'Arenberg The Money Spider Roussanne 2014**

Light bright yellow. Aromas of orange zest, melon and honeysuckle, along with a subtle touch of smoky minerals. Dry and focused on the palate, offering nicely concentrated citrus fruit and honeydew flavors and a succulent herb accent. Finishes with very good clarity, an echo of pit fruits and strong persistence.

**91 pts d'Arenberg The Feral Fox Pinot Noir 2014**

Deep red. Spice-accented black raspberry and cherry cola scents are complicated by hints of candied flowers and allspice. Sweet and expansive on the palate, offering lively red and dark berry flavors along with suggestions of mocha and anise. Open-knit, accessible and seamless in texture, delivering strong finishing punch, even tannins and strong persistence.

**91 pts d'Arenberg The Twenty Eight Road Mourvedre 2014**

Inky ruby. Mineral- and spice-accented cassis, cherry liqueur and licorice aromas, along with a hint of olive in the background. Juicy and focused on the palate, showing very good depth as well as energy to the bitter cherry, dark berry, spicecake and floral pastille flavors. Chewy tannins build steadily and lend shape to the finish, which shows intense mineral cut and emphatic, spice-driven persistence.

**91 pts d'Arenberg The Laughing Magpie Shiraz Viognier 2013**

Opaque ruby. Deep-pitched dark berry, candied flowers and white pepper scents pick up a smoky mineral overtone with aeration. Juicy, broad and concentrated, showing good clarity to the sappy blackberry, cherry and violet pastille flavors. Round and seamless in texture, displaying strong closing tenacity, harmonious tannins and resonating florality.

**91 pts d'Arenberg The Bonsai Vine 2013**

Vivid ruby-red. Highly fragrant, smoke-tinged aromas of fresh dark fruits, incense and lavender are sharpened by a spicy pepper note. Fleshy and broad in the mouth, offering bitter cherry, boysenberry and spicecake flavors that become sweeter with air. Finishes smooth and quite long, showing very good clarity and velvety tannins that sneak in late.

**91 pts d'Arenberg The Lucky Lizard Chardonnay 2015**

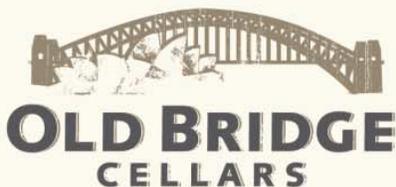
Pale yellow-gold. Complex scents of tangerine, yellow apple, chamomile and anise; a subtle mineral flourish builds in the glass. Silky and focused on the palate, offering mineral-laced citrus and orchard fruit flavors and a touch of sweet butter that adds depth. Shows a suave blend of richness and nerve and finishes gently smoky and very long, leaving pear nectar and floral notes behind.

**91 pts d'Arenberg The Love Grass Shiraz 2013**

Inky ruby. Smoke-accented cherry, blackberry and candied licorice on the highly perfumed nose. Vibrant black and blue fruit and violet pastille flavors feature a complementary peppery nuance and put on weight with aeration. Spicy and precise on the persistent finish, which shows appealing sweetness and just a hint of dusty tannins.

**91 pts d'Arenberg The Custodian Grenache 2013**

Brilliant ruby-red. Expressive aromas of candied red berries, incense and white pepper are joined by a suave floral note. Juicy, broad and energetic on the palate, offering appealingly sweet raspberry, cherry and spicecake flavors and a suggestion of candied lavender. Finishes smooth and broad, featuring sneaky tannins and strong, spice-driven persistence.



**91 pts d'Arenberg The Footbolt Shiraz 2013**

Bright violet. Fresh dark berries, cherry pit and peppery spices on the perfumed nose. Smoky and focused on the palate, offering juicy blackberry and bitter cherry flavors that deepen and unfurl slowly with air. The spicy element comes back on a very long, youthfully tannic finish that leaves behind notes of bitter cherry, licorice and cracked pepper.

**91 pts d'Arenberg d'Arry's Original Shiraz Grenache 2013**

Brilliant ruby-red. Vibrant, spice-accented cherry and red berry and floral scents show very good clarity and a gentle touch of smokiness. Sappy and seamless on the palate, offering appealingly sweet raspberry and cherry flavors that become spicier with air. Shows very good energy and spicy thrust on the finish, which is shaped by supple, slow-building tannins.

**91 pts d'Arenberg The Sticks & Stones 2012**

Deep ruby. Deep-pitched dark berry, licorice and floral aromas, joined by cracked pepper and cola nuances in the background. Sappy and focused on the palate, offering bitter cherry and blueberry flavors that are given backbone and lift by a core of juicy acidity. A smoky nuance appears on a long, dark-fruit-driven finish shaped by gently chewy, harmonious tannins.

**90 pts d'Arenberg The Olive Grove Chardonnay 2015**

Light bright yellow. Ripe pear, nectarine and honey aromas are complemented by suggestions of fennel and buttered toast. Fleshy and pliant in the mouth, offering silky orchard and pit fruit flavors and a spicy hint of candied ginger. Finishes with gentle grip and very good spice- and smoke-tinged persistence.

**90 pts d'Arenberg The Hermit Crab Viognier/Marsanne 2015**

Limpid yellow. Powerful aromas of ripe citrus and pit fruits and jasmine are complicated by hints of dusty minerals and ginger. Juicy and seamless on the palate, offering pit fruit nectar and orange pith flavors that show very good clarity and mineral cut. The pear floral note comes back on the incisive finish, which hangs on with very good tenacity.

**90 pts d'Arenberg The Broken Fishplate Sauvignon Blanc 2015**

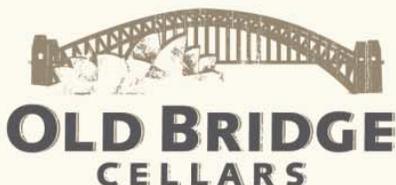
Bright straw. Fresh quince, pink grapefruit and lemongrass on the fragrant nose and in the mouth. Floral and mineral nuances emerge with air, along with a hint of quinine. Shows zesty cut and spicy lift on the long, penetrating finish, which leaves a suave floral note behind.

**90 pts d'Arenberg The High Trellis Cabernet Sauvignon 2013**

Vivid ruby. Aromas of cherry pit, black currant and pipe tobacco, lifted by a peppery element. Broad and appealingly sweet, offering juicy black and blue fruit and spicecake flavors plus a touch of mocha. Closes smooth and spicy, showing very good cling and round, even tannins.

**88 pts d'Arenberg The Stump Jump White 2015**

Very pale yellow. Fresh orange, white peach and honeydew melon on the nose. Juicy and seamless in texture, offering subtly sweet orchard fruit and melon flavors and a touch of succulent herbs. Closes smooth and broad, leaving a hint of bitter peach pit behind.



## GIANT STEPS

### **93 pts Giant Steps Tarraford Vineyard Chardonnay 2015**

Vivid yellow. Intense mineral- and lees-accented citrus and orchard fruit aromas show excellent clarity and hints of honeysuckle and iodine. Displays a deeper pit fruit character on the palate, offering juicy, smoke-accented nectarine and pear skin flavors that show excellent tension. The mineral quality comes back strong on the finish, which leaves behind suave Meyer lemon and floral notes.

### **93 pts Giant Steps Sexton Vineyard Pinot Noir 2015**

Brilliant ruby-red. High-pitched, expansive red berry liqueur and potpourri aromas are complicated by suggestions of Asian spices, candied rose and smoky minerals. Sappy, finely etched red fruit and spicecake flavors gain depth and power with aeration while maintaining a sense of finesse. Sappy, seamless and impressively pure on the impressively long finish, which is given shape by silky, well-integrated tannins.

### **92 pts Giant Steps Sexton Vineyard Chardonnay 2015**

Light bright gold. Vibrant, mineral-accented citrus, orchard fruit and ginger qualities on the highly perfumed nose; a suave honeysuckle nuance gains strength with air. Dry, chewy and focused on the palate, offering bitter pear skin and quinine flavors and a deeper, sweeter melon quality. Closes minerally and long, displaying resonating floral character and firm, spicy cut.

### **92 pts Giant Steps Applejack Vineyard Pinot Noir 2015**

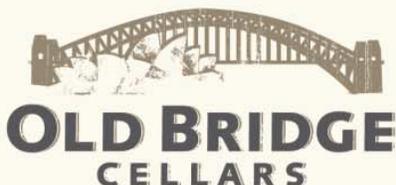
Brilliant red. Fresh red berries, pungent flowers and smoky minerals on the highly perfumed nose. Lively, spice-accented cherry and raspberry flavors pick up a smoky nuance as the wine stretches out. Echoes the floral note on a very long, taut finish that features a zesty mineral quality and smooth tannins.

### **91 pts Giant Steps Yarra Valley Pinot Noir 2015**

Vivid red. Spice-tinged raspberry and cherry aromas are complicated by sassafras, musky herb and allspice nuances. Sweet and focused on the palate, offering juicy red and dark berry flavors with suggestions of cola and star anise. Closes with strong finishing punch, gentle tannins and very good, spicy tenacity.

### **90 pts Giant Steps Yarra Valley Chardonnay 2015**

Limpid gold. Deep-pitched aromas of poached pear, peach and honey take on a hint of smokiness with air. Broad and fleshy in style, offering sappy orchard and pit fruit flavors sharpened by a refreshingly bitter lemon zest nuance. Finishes smooth, round and long, leaving a peach nectar note behind.



## **INNOCENT BYSTANDER**

### **93 pts Innocent Bystander Mea Culpa Syrah 2014**

Bright purple. Powerful, expansive black and blue fruit, incense, Indian spice and violet scents show outstanding clarity and pick up a smoky mineral nuance as the wine stretches out. Sweet, seamless and focused on the palate, offering sappy boysenberry, cherry liqueur, olive and spicecake flavors enlivened by a spine of juicy acidity. Delivers a serious payload of dark fruit and spice character but shows no excess fat. Lingers with serious persistence on the gently tannic finish, which leaves black cardamom and candied licorice notes behind.

### **92 pts Innocent Bystander Syrah 2014**

Brilliant violet. A heady, smoke-tinged bouquet evokes fresh dark fruits, olive paste and potpourri, and a spicy nuance emerges slowly. Fine-grained and focused on the palate, offering energetic black and blue fruit and spicecake flavors that deepen and spread out on the back half. Powerful yet graceful in style, finishing with impressive energy and subtle tannins that fold smoothly into the energetic fruit.

### **91 pts Innocent Bystander Yarra Valley Pinot Noir 2015**

Vivid red. Lively raspberry and Asian spice aromas are complemented by suggestions of tea rose and musky rhubarb. Spicy and energetic on the palate, offering juicy red fruit and spicecake flavors that deepen slowly through the midpalate. Shows appealing sweetness on a long, floral-tinged finish that's given shape by sneaky tannins.

### **90 pts Innocent Bystander Pinot Gris 2015**

Pale yellow. Pungent pear skin, peach and lemon pith scents show very good clarity and a suave floral nuance. Silky and seamless on the palate, offering concentrated orchard and pit fruit flavors that tighten up slowly on the back half. Lithe and energetic in style, showing floral-tinged persistence and a touch of dusty minerality.

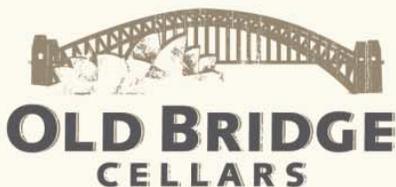
## **JASPER HILL**

### **94 pts Jasper Hill Emily's Paddock Shiraz Cabernet Franc 2014**

Bright purple. Vibrant, expansive aromas of dark berries, floral pastilles, pipe tobacco and smoky minerals. Broad, alluringly sweet and seamless in texture, offering intense black raspberry, cherry cola and bitter chocolate flavors and a suave candied rose flourish. Shows a compelling interplay of power and finesse and no rough edges. Gains spiciness with air and finishes youthfully tannic and extremely long, featuring resonating floral and tobacco notes.

### **93 pts Jasper Hill Georgia's Paddock Shiraz 2014**

Inky ruby. Highly perfumed aromas of blue fruit and cherry preserves, potpourri, vanilla and candied licorice. Lush and palate-staining but also surprisingly lithe, offering sappy blueberry, cassis and cherry-vanilla flavors and hints of allspice and violet. Dusty tannins sneak up with air and fold steadily into the densely packed fruit, which dominates the long, smooth finish.



**93 pts Occam's Razor Shiraz 2013**

Opaque ruby. Highly fragrant blackberry, boysenberry and Indian spice scents show excellent clarity and pick up a vanilla quality with aeration. Impressively concentrated but lithe, offering sappy red and blue fruit and floral pastille flavors that caress the palate and show no rough edges. Candied lavender and spicecake notes cling on a very long, gently tannic finish that echoes the blue fruit note.

**93 pts Occam's Razor Shiraz 2014**

Youthful purple. Expressive dark berry preserve, incense and floral oil scents, along with hints of allspice and dusty minerals. Sweet and expansive on the palate, offering concentrated boysenberry, cherry cola and floral pastille flavors that smoothly blend depth and energy. Closes on a youthfully tannic note, showing strong tenacity, excellent clarity and lingering florality.

**92 pts Jasper Hill Georgia's Paddock Riesling 2015**

Vivid yellow-gold. An expansive bouquet evokes ripe melon, nectarine and candied orange and carries an intense floral overtone. Juicy, plush and subtly spicy on the palate, offering sappy citrus and pit fruit flavors enlivened by a gingery nuance. Shows very good depth and subtle creaminess but comes off lively, even nervy. The impressively long, silky finish leaves notes of tangerine and candied ginger behind.

**JOHN DUVAL**

**94 pts John Duval Eligo Shiraz 2014**

Brilliant purple. Aromas of ripe black and blue fruits, along with hints of candied licorice, star anise and incense. Palate-staining bitter cherry and boysenberry flavors put on weight and spread out with air while maintaining urgency. Shows outstanding clarity and mineral lift on the strikingly long, blue-fruit-driven finish, which features a smoky mineral quality and harmonious, fine-grained tannins.

**93 pts John Duval Entity Shiraz 2014**

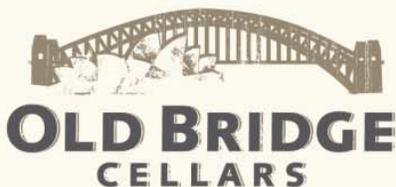
Inky ruby. Powerful aromas of blackberry, violet and woodsmoke are complemented by a hint of cola that emerges with air. Sweet, seamless and full-bodied, offering ripe cassis, blackberry, floral pastille and licorice flavors given spine by a core juicy acidity. Deepens and becomes spicier on the penetrating finish, which features building tannins and a lingering floral nuance.

**93 pts John Duval Plexus SGM 2014**

Vivid ruby-red. Expansive aromas of ripe red berries, candied flowers and spicecake, complemented by a subtle mineral nuance. Juicy, concentrated and seamless on the palate, offering sweet raspberry, boysenberry and lavender flavors that become tighter and more lively with air. Shows excellent depth as well as vivacity; fine-grained, firming tannins build slowly on a long, floral-driven finish. In the context of high-end Aussie red wines, this one delivers exceptional value.

**92 pts John Duval Plexus MRV 2015**

Green-tinged yellow. Pungent Meyer lemon, pear and orange zest scents show excellent clarity and suggestions of fennel and smoky lees. Round and minerally on the palate, offering pear nectar and citrus fruit flavors and deeper notes of sweet butter and honey that gain strength on the back half. Shows impressive heft as well as energy and finishes silky and long, featuring a refreshingly bitter orange pith nuance.



## **KILIKANOON**

### **95 pts Kilikanoon Attunga Shiraz 1865 2013**

Bright purple. Ripe dark berry and cherry cola scents are complemented by suggestions of star anise, vanilla and woodsmoke. Palate-caressing blueberry, bitter cherry and violet pastille flavors develop peppery spice and sweet mocha qualities as the wine opens up. Rich but lively as well, showing no excess weight. The suave, seamless and extremely long floral-driven finish is framed by supple, harmonious tannins.

### **93 pts Kilikanoon Oracle Shiraz 2013**

Opaque purple. Potent black and blue fruit, floral pastille and vanilla scents; a bright mineral quality adds urgency and focus. Sweet blueberry, black raspberry, mocha and cola flavors show impressive depth and pick up cracked pepper and oak spice nuances on the back half. Plush, broad and seamless in style, showing excellent clarity and smooth tannins on a very long, dark-berry-dominated finish.

### **93 pts Kilikanoon Attunga Mataro 2013**

Glass-staining ruby. Intensely perfumed black and blue fruit, floral pastille, mocha and smoked meat aromas are sharpened by a peppery nuance. Juicy, smooth and deeply concentrated on the palate, offering sappy, sweet blueberry and cherry-vanilla flavors that slowly open up and acquire a spicy nuance with air. Finishes smoky, chewy and very long, displaying lingering spiciness and firming tannins. I suspect that this wine is destined for a long, positive evolution.

### **93 pts Kilikanoon Mort's Reserve Riesling 2015**

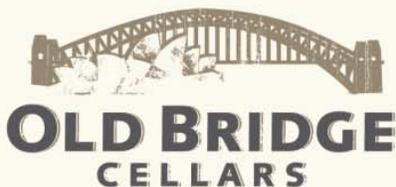
Pale brilliant straw. High-pitched citrus fruit and honeysuckle scents carry a chalky mineral overtone. Vibrant and tense on the palate, offering juicy lime and green apple flavors that unfurl slowly through the midpalate. Shows an emphatically stony character on the incisive, impressively persistent finish, which leaves behind emphatic citrus fruit and bitter quinine notes.

### **92 pts Kilikanoon Covenant Shiraz 2014**

Glass-staining ruby. Ripe blackberry, cherry liqueur, violet and woodsmoke on the highly perfumed nose. Fleeshy, appealingly sweet and expansive on the palate, offering plush black and blue fruit flavors and a hint of candied licorice that builds with air. Becomes more energetic with air and finishes on a smoke-accented dark berry note, showing powerful thrust, polished tannins and impressive persistence.

### **91 pts Kilikanoon Mort's Block Riesling 2015**

Green-tinged yellow. Fresh citrus and orchard fruits on the incisive, mineral-accented nose. Fleeshy but refreshingly brisk, offering juicy tangerine and pear skin flavors and a bracing hint of bitter quinine. Closes minerally, precise and pure, featuring an echo of zesty orange pith and very good length. The pH here is a very low 2.85 and the wine is carrying 12.8 percent alcohol.



**91 pts Kilikanoon Killerman's Run Shiraz 2014**

Opaque ruby. Powerful, spice-accented aromas of ripe black and blue fruits, violet, licorice and smoky minerals, backed by a hint of cracked pepper. Juicy and energetic on the palate, offering appealingly sweet dark fruit and spicecake flavors that open slowly with aeration. In a graceful, open-knit style, finishing with excellent clarity and length and just a touch of fine-grained tannins.

**90 pts Kilikanoon Killerman's Run Cabernet Sauvignon 2014**

Bright ruby. Ripe cherry and blueberry on the perfumed nose, accompanied by a hint of mocha in the background. Smooth and seamless in texture, offering pliant blue fruit and floral pastille flavors, while a hint of white pepper adds back-end spiciness. Finishes supple and broad, showing good persistence, a hint of sweet tobacco and no obvious tannins.

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

Brilliant ruby-red. Aromatic aromas of ripe, spice-tinged red and blue fruits, incense and candied flowers. Plush and seamless on the palate, offering juicy raspberry, blueberry and spicecake flavors that fan out nicely on the back half. Fruit-driven and approachable in style, finishing with very soft tannins and an echo of candied red fruit.

**90 pts Kilikanoon Killerman's Run Riesling 2015**

Vivid straw. Vibrant grapefruit, green apple and quince scents and flavors, along with a chalky mineral overtone. Dry, nervy and precise, showing very good clarity and cut. Puts on weight with air and finishes long and stony, featuring resonating citrus pith and pear skin qualities.

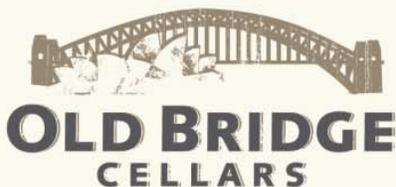
**90 pts Kilikanoon Prodigal Grenache 2014**

Vivid ruby-red. Lively, sharply focused scents of ripe red berries, candied flowers and peppery spices. Juicy black raspberry and bitter cherry flavors are braced by zesty acidity and a hint of white pepper. Nicely balanced and focused, finishing long and sappy, with gentle grip and well-knit tannins.

**LEEWIN ESTATE**

**95 pts Leeuwin Estate Art Series Chardonnay 2013**

Pale yellow-gold. A highly complex, mineral-laced bouquet evokes fresh citrus and orchard fruits, iodine, toasted brioche and white flowers, and a hint of fennel emerges with air. Shows superb depth and delineation, offering vibrant orange, pear, sweet butter and anise flavors that tighten up slowly on the back half. Powerful yet graceful, displaying superb focus and thrust on an impressively long finish that features lingering floral and mineral flourishes.



**93 pts Leeuwin Estate Art Series Cabernet Sauvignon 2012**

Vivid ruby-red. Powerful, oak-tinged blackberry, cherry, candied rose, cured tobacco and mocha scents, accompanied by succulent herb and mineral flourishes. Sappy and seamless on the palate, offering densely packed but energetic bitter cherry, dark berry, mocha and licorice flavors that unfurl slowly. Youthful tannins shape a very long, sweet finish, which features resonating spice, mineral and floral pastille notes. This wine's energy and balance suggest that it will enjoy a long, smooth evolution in bottle.

**92 pts Leeuwin Estate Art Series Riesling 2015**

Green-tinged straw. High-pitched citrus zest and floral aromas carry a smoky mineral overtone and a background hint of quinine. Vibrant, dry and focused on the palate, offering intense lime and green apple flavors that deepen and become juicier with air. Shows impressive tension and a bright mineral character on the incisive finish, which leaves behind bitter citrus pith and honeysuckle notes.

**92 pts Leeuwin Estate Art Series Shiraz 2013**

Opaque ruby. Smoke-accented aromas of fresh red and blue fruits, succulent herbs, violet and cracked pepper, accompanied by a vanilla note that builds in the glass. Rich yet energetic in style, offering sweet, mineral-tinged black raspberry, blueberry and floral pastille flavors and a suggestion of five-spice powder. The floral and vanilla notes repeat on the long, focused, subtly tannic finish, which leaves a hint of cracked pepper behind.

**92 pts Leeuwin Estate Art Series Sauvignon Blanc 2014**

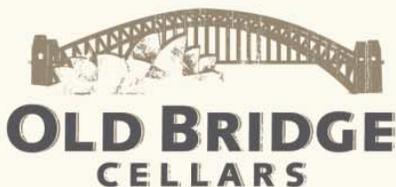
Pale gold. Heady orange, pear and chamomile scents pick up succulent herbal and floral notes with air. Concentrated and focused on the palate, offering pear nectar, tangerine and fennel flavors supported by a core of juicy acidity. Smoothly plays power off finesse and finishes very long and minerally, leaving a subtle floral note behind.

**91 pts Leeuwin Estate Prelude Vineyards Cabernet Sauvignon 2013**

Bright ruby. Smoke-accented cherry and raspberry on the nose, plus a hint of cedary oak in the background. Juicy and focused on the palate, showing very good lift to the bitter cherry and red berry flavors. Turns sweeter on the youthfully tannic finish, which hangs on with strong, spicy tenacity.

**91 pts Leeuwin Estate Prelude Vineyards Chardonnay 2014**

Green-hued yellow. High-pitched, smoke-tinged orange and yellow apple aromas, along with floral and buttered toast notes. Juicy and expansive on the palate, offering sappy tangerine and pear nectar flavors that pick up a sweet vanilla note with air. Shows repeating smokiness on the finish, which lingers with very good, floral-tinged persistence.



**91 pts Leeuwin Estate Siblings Shiraz 2013**

Opaque ruby. Complex aromas of red and blue fruits, cola, peppery spices and fresh flowers. Round and seamless on the palate, offering sweet blueberry and cherry compote flavors that slowly tighten up and become spicier with air. Shows very good focus and solid punch on a long, gently sweet finish firmed by dusty, fine-grained tannins.

**90 pts Leeuwin Estate Siblings Sauvignon Blanc Semillon 2015**

Pale gold. Fresh citrus and orchard fruit scents and a hint of smokiness on the nose. Juicy pear, melon and Meyer lemon flavors show good depth and a snap of zesty acidity. Weighty yet vibrant in style, finishing long and supple, featuring lingering smokiness and very good focus.

**MAISON L'ENVOYÉ**

**91 pts Maison L'Envoyé Tasmania Pinot Noir 2015**

Light bright red. Lively aromas of red currant, raspberry, cinnamon and allspice carry a suave floral topnote. Light-bodied and energetic on the palate, offering tangy, spice-tinged red berry and rose pastille flavors and a refreshingly bitter hint of blood orange. Closes on a minerally note, displaying very strong persistence and lingering spiciness.

**MOUNT MARY**

**94 pts Mount Mary Quintet 2013**

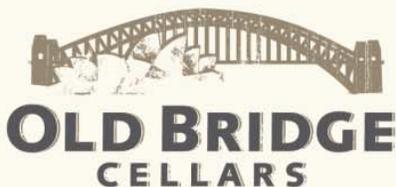
Vivid ruby. Potent black currant, cherry and cedary oak aromas are complicated by notes of cured tobacco, candied rose and cracked pepper. Silky and seamless on the palate, offering fresh dark berry, bitter cherry and mocha flavors plus a touch of smokiness. Delivers a serious punch of flavor and comes off lithe and precise. Finishes with supple tannins, a jolt of peppery spices and outstanding, floral-driven persistence.

**94 pts Mount Mary Chardonnay 2013**

Pale gold. Sexy, highly perfumed, mineral-accented aromas of peach, pear nectar, melon and tangerine, along with a bright floral overtone. Juicy and densely packed, showing a suave interplay of richness and vivacity; orchard and pit fruit flavors pick up smoky lees, honey and orange zest nuances with air. Shows excellent power and depth on the impressively long finish, which echoes the peach and floral notes.

**93 pts Mount Mary Pinot Noir 2013**

Bright red. A complex, highly perfumed bouquet displays scents of fresh cherry, raspberry and cola, and a sexy floral nuance builds with air. Sweet and seamless on the palate, showing very good heft and focus to the intense red fruit and spicecake flavors. Shows impressive energy and lift on the gently tannic finish, which hangs on with serious tenacity.



## **PENLEY ESTATE**

### **92 pts Penley Estate Chertsey 2013**

Inky ruby. Heady aromas of candied cherry, red and black currant, pipe tobacco and potpourri, joined by a hint of smokiness that emerges with aeration. Shows impressive depth and energy; bitter cherry, cassis, floral pastille and spicecake flavors firm up slowly on the back half. Sappy, appealingly sweet and focused on the youthfully tannic finish, which clings with impressive tenacity and building sweetness.

### **92 pts Penley Estate Steyning Cabernet Sauvignon 2013**

Glass-staining ruby. Smoke-tinged cherry, cassis and licorice scents, along with hints of cured tobacco and cola. Gently sweet and focused on the palate, offering concentrated yet lithe dark fruit, floral pastille and roasted coffee flavors sharpened by a peppery nuance. A vanilla note emerges on a very long, supple finish shaped by velvety tannins.

### **91 pts Penley Estate Tolmer Cabernet Sauvignon 2013**

Deep ruby. Powerful aromas of blackberry, cherry cola, pipe tobacco and smoky oak, plus a hint of mocha. Sweet, sappy and broad on the palate, offering juicy dark berry, cherry liqueur and licorice flavors firmed by a spine of zesty acidity. Spreads out slowly and becomes spicier on the persistent finish, which features fine-grained tannins and a lingering floral nuance.

### **90 pts Penley Estate Atlas Shiraz 2014**

Deep ruby. Smoke-accented dark berries, licorice pastille and pungent flowers on the nose; a suave mineral overtone adds energy. Smooth and broad on the palate, offering sweet black and blue fruit flavors, a velvety texture and a hint of mocha. The sweet, gently tannic, persistent finish leaves juicy cherry and blueberry notes behind.

### **90 pts Penley Estate Hyland Shiraz 2014**

Bright ruby. Highly fragrant raspberry, blackberry and floral aromas, complicated by vanilla and woodsmoke qualities. Juicy dark berry, mocha and spicecake flavors show good depth and no rough edges. Finishes bright, sweet and long, featuring a repeating vanilla note and round, even tannins that come in late.

### **89 pts Penley Estate Phoenix Cabernet Sauvignon 2014**

Deep ruby. Spice-accented dark berries, cherry and succulent herbs on the nose and palate. Smooth and fleshy in style, showing good focus and a sweeter mocha quality on the back half. A peppery note comes up on the nicely persistent finish, which is shaped by supple, even tannins.



**89 pts Penley Estate Gryphon 2014**

Brilliant ruby-red. Pungent cherry, red berries, vanilla and a hint of dried flowers on the nose. Vibrant and nicely delineated, offering sappy red fruit, floral pastille and peppery spice flavors that deepen on the back half. Finishes fresh and smooth, displaying a touch of spice and dusty, building tannins.

**88 pts Penley Estate Aradia Chardonnay 2015**

Light bright yellow. Tangerine, melon and a hint of peach on the nose and in the mouth. Supple and open-knit, showing good depth and straightforward, fruity appeal. Finishes smooth and vaguely warm, leaving a hint of bitter citrus pith behind.

**SHOOFLY**

**90 pts Shoofly Shiraz 2015**

Bright violet. Aromas of ripe dark fruits, licorice and succulent herbs, along with a hint of smokiness in the background. Smooth and fleshy in the mouth, offering bitter cherry and blueberry flavors and a sweetening touch of mocha. Tightens up on the long, penetrating finish, which features fine-grained tannins and a lingering hint of juicy blue fruit.

**90 pts Shoofly Chardonnay 2015**

Light bright yellow. Ripe melon, tangerine and jasmine on the nose and in the mouth; a touch of honey builds in the glass. Silky and seamless in the mouth, offering juicy honeydew and citrus fruit flavors and a bitter orange zest flourish that adds back-end cut. Smoothly blends richness and vivacity and closes with bright, tangy lift and very good, floral persistence.

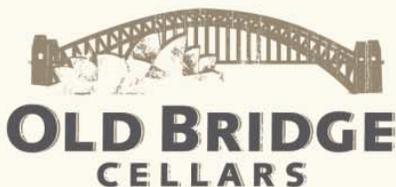
**89 pts Shoofly Pinot Noir 2015**

Brilliant red. High-pitched strawberry and candied rose scents are complemented by suggestions of musky rhubarb, white pepper and succulent herbs. Shows good energy and lift to the juicy red berry and floral pastille flavors, and a hint of orange zest adds a firming edge. Closes taut, spicy and precise, fine-grained tannins adding shape and grip.

**YERINGBERG**

**94 pts Yeringberg Cabernet Blend 2013**

Brilliant ruby. Pungent cherry pit, dark berry, pipe tobacco, vanilla and candied rose aromas, backed by a peppery nuance. Vibrant and sharply delineated, displaying impressively concentrated black currant, bitter cherry, floral pastille and succulent herb flavors that become sweeter on the back half. Shows outstanding tenacity on the floral-dominated finish, which is shaped by youthfully chewy tannins.



**94 pts Yeringberg Shiraz 2013**

Opaque ruby. Deep-pitched black and blue fruit scents are complicated by suggestions of smoky minerals and violet, and a subtle hint of star anise emerges with air. Juicy, focused and pure, offering alluringly sweet black raspberry and cherry cola flavors and a jolt of peppery spices. The penetrating, strikingly long finish delivers solid punch and supple tannins that fold smoothly into the clinging fruit.

**93 pts Yeringberg Pinot Noir 2013**

Bright red. A complex, highly perfumed bouquet evokes fresh red berries, Asian spices and potpourri, and a hint of rhubarb emerges with aeration. Juicy raspberry and bitter cherry flavors stretch out and become sweeter and deeper on the back half. Shows excellent clarity and fruity thrust on the persistent finish, which is framed by harmonious tannins that fold smoothly into the juicy fruit.

**93 pts Yeringberg Marsanne/Roussanne 2014**

Light bright yellow. High-pitched aromas of orange zest, pear and honeysuckle, along with a bright overlay of smoky minerals. Taut and brisk on the palate, offering impressively concentrated citrus and orchard fruit and melon flavors and a touch of succulent herbs. Finishes with excellent clarity, an echo of candied pear and lingering florality.

**92 pts Yeringberg Viognier 2014**

Pale gold. Vibrant aromas of ripe orchard and pit fruits are complemented by hints of chalky minerals and pungent flowers. Juicy and concentrated but energetic on the palate, offering sappy pear and nectarine flavors that show very good clarity and mineral lift. The pit fruit and floral notes repeat on the energetic finish, which shows strong cut and persistence.

**92 pts Yeringberg Chardonnay 2014**

Vivid yellow. Fresh citrus and tropical fruit aromas are complicated by mineral and herb nuances. Chewy, focused and lively on the palate, offering zesty lemon pith and bitter pear skin flavors that show a touch of smoky reduction and deepen on the back half. Closes with solid grip, a touch of fennel and strong, sappy persistence.