



Wine & Spirits

February 2015



96 pts Chambers Rosewood Vineyards Rutherglen Rare Muscat

Stephen Chambers is the sixth generation of the family to tend vineyards in Rutherglen, as well as their solera-like cellar that includes wines dating back more than 100 years. His Rare Muscat focuses on those oldest lots, an ebony, glass-coating liquid that seems to have captured the sun. What's extraordinary about this wine is how something so dark can be so vibrant, how flavors of figs, dates and all-spice can feel fresh. One taster described it in parallel to "really good dark chocolate that has a fruitiness to it." Sophisticated and powerful, this is a glorious wine.

95 pts Chambers Rosewood Vineyards Rutherglen Rare Muscadelle

Heady ginger scents drive an arrow of acidity through this remarkably rich wine. It tastes of plumped prunes and rose petals, carried along on a silken texture, a gentle sensation that lasts for minutes after a sip. Complex and beautifully balanced, this reveals layers of time, scent memories from a century in the cellar.

93 pts Kilikanoon Clare Valley Killerman's Run Riesling 2011

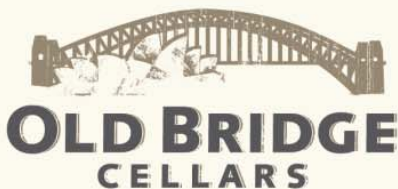
It's hard to believe this is Kilikanoon's basic Riesling. The cool 2013 season produced a wine that courses with energy, classic Clare in its clean line of minerally lime flavor; tasting director Stephanie Johnson described it as "electric." Focused and firm when first opened, this mellows into a deliciously creamy, lime-rich Riesling over the course of several days. A sure bet for the cellar, this will be close to mature at six to eight years.

93 pts Yeringberg Yarra Valley Shiraz 2012

Guill de Pury began replanting his family's vineyards in 1969, a north-facing hillside in Coldstream where his grandfather, a Swiss baron, had first established vines in 1863. His daughter, Sandra, now makes their wines from nine acres of vines amid the sheep and cattle at their 1,100-acre farm. This 2012 buzzes with energy, with the meatiness of *finocchiona* and cracked black peppercorn spice. The stemmy greenness adds depth to the flavor while the gentle tannins make all the zesty flavor more friendly and accessible. A classic from Yarra.

92 pts Chambers Rosewood Vineyards Rutherglen Grand Muscat

Stephen Chambers blends this wine from his family's collection of stocks reaching back more than 100 years. It's luscious and ripe, with scents of candied orange rind and baking spices. The fruit feels succulent, the texture broad and rich. Though the wine is sweet, it's balanced by refreshing acidity, making it compellingly drinkable long into the evening.



91 pts/BEST BUY Plantagenet Omrah Shiraz 2012

Based in Mount Barker, Plantagenet produces this wine from vineyards in Great Southern. It's a lean, spicy Shiraz with clean lines, focused by mineral-infused tannins. There's an herbal greenness, the scent of karri forest, the bite of green olives, the spice of cracked green peppercorns, all carried with moderate weight on a graceful texture. A by-the-case buy.

91 pts Yeringberg Yarra Valley 2012

Bright and fragrant with violets and sweet blue fruit, this is a plump blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Franc, Malbec and Petit Verdot. The texture is voluptuous, while there's enough zesty acidity to clean up the finish. For brisket.

90 pts Greywacke Marlborough Pinot Noir 2012

New oak darkens the scent of this wine, but there's plenty of stemmy fruit to support it. Crisp acidity turns its flavors toward pink grapefruit in the finish. Bosky and vinous, this will open up in the company of roast squab or other dark-meat game birds.

89 pts/BEST BUY d'Arenberg McLaren Vale The Dry Dam Riesling

Presented in a low-alcohol, just off-dry style, this wine's talc-like acidity keeps the peachy fruit tight and linear. It's structured and fragrant, a white to chill for Thai shrimp curry.

88 pts/BEST BUY d'Arenberg The Stump Jump Sauvignon Blanc 2013

A round and supple style of sauvignon, this wine's broad, waxy fruit is juicy enough to keep its feral pyrazines at bay. Match the wine's meaty funk to braised veal.

Year's Best Chilean Reds

91 pts Chilensis Lazuli 2011

Ripe red fruit flavor comes pouring out of the glass, followed by equally exuberant black fruit, making this a voluptuous red to uncork at a steakhouse. Its pointed acidity will find a welcome companion in rare filet mignon.