

# Wine Spectator

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## 9 Australian Gems to Discover the Country's Wine Bounty

It's not all Shiraz—Cabernet, Chardonnay and Riesling get their time to shine as well



Chapel Hill winery is located on the edge of Onkaparinga River National Park, with views of Gulf St.-Vincent. (Simon Casson)

By MaryAnn Worobiec

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Here's an exciting group of Australian wines that showcase the geographical diversity and range of styles that the country is known for—with price tags that make it easy to explore.

McLaren Vale makes a strong showing here. I've always admired the polished and fresh fruit flavors this region's reds are known for, with plenty of spicy blueberry and red berry flavors. The [First Drop](#) Mother's Ruin Cabernet is a wonderful example of what McLaren Vale can do: juicy, accessible fruit flavors at the core, with plenty of style. Owners Matt Gant and John Retsas make terrific wines with whimsical labels. "Mother's Ruin" was a nickname for gin when it was abused in the 1700s in England; the label (pictured below) shows the subsequent debauchery of the era.

Also from McLaren Vale is [d'Arenberg's](#) The Stump Jump Chardonnay, a crisp version with only a hint of old French oak barrels used. Winemaker Chester Osborn is perhaps best known for his dense and boldly tannic red wines, but I find plenty of charm to the white wines in his portfolio, which tend to be aromatic and refreshing.

I wish there were more wines from Coonawarra imported to the U.S., like the [Penley](#) Phoenix bottling. The Cabernets grown in the unique red-hued terra rossa soils of Coonawarra are intense and often have a distinctive green herbal note that I love—here, it manifests as sage and thyme.



## KILIKANOON

Riesling Clare Valley Killerman's Run 2018

Score: 92 | \$20

**WS review:** Mouthwatering, offering a mix of mandarin orange, ruby grapefruit and peach notes, with lip-smacking acidity. Details of minerality and lanolin take this white to the next level, and all the flavors sing on the long finish. Drink now through 2029. 500 cases imported.—*M.W.*



## d'ARENBERG

Chardonnay McLaren Vale The Stump Jump Lightly Wooded 2018

Score: 87 | \$13

**WS review:** Pear, apple and citrus flavors are fresh and light, with a touch of almond skin on the crisp finish. Drink now. 750 cases imported.—*M.W.*



## PENLEY

Cabernet Sauvignon Coonawarra Phoenix 2017

Score: 87 | \$20

**WS review:** Firm, dusty tannins provide an appealing framework for black cherry, currant and red licorice flavors, with a thread of juicy acidity and details of sage and thyme that linger in the background. Drink now through 2029. 4,300 cases imported.—*M.W.*