

———— TYSON STELZER'S ————

AUSTRALIAN

SPARKLING

REPORT

———— 2017 ————





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Pinot noir ripe for harvest in the Tamar Valley, Tasmania
Tyson Stelzer Photography

It is a great privilege to present the second edition of Australia's only dedicated sparkling wine report. I invite you to download this document free of charge from TysonStelzer.com and to reproduce, forward and share it ad nauseam. This is made possible thanks to the kind support of my sponsoring partners:

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RIEDEL

With special thanks to Jody Rolfe and Felicity Farroway, my tireless helpers in cataloguing, researching and unpacking a tonne of sparkling wines (more than a tonne, actually!).

ENDORSEMENT

EVERYTHING YOU COULD EVER WANT TO KNOW
ABOUT AUSTRALIAN SPARKLING
FROM CHAMPAGNE GURU TYSON STELZER

Evan Schwarfen, Australian Associated Press

A MOST COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW AND
AN ENORMOUSLY VALUABLE REFERENCE...
METICULOUS ATTENTION TO DETAIL
AND ALL SUPPORTED BY EXEMPLARY TASTING NOTES

Ross Brown, Brown Brothers

THE SCOPE, LEVEL OF DETAIL AND
INDUSTRY INFORMATION ARE FANTASTIC

Ed Carr, Accolade Wines

TYSON STELZER IS AUSTRALIA'S
FOREMOST REVIEWER OF SPARKLING WINES

Wolf Blass Wines

I'VE BEEN INSPIRED BY THIS REPORT, BECAUSE UNTIL NOW
I HAVEN'T BEEN MUCH OF A SPARKLING WINE CONSUMER.
AFTER READING THE 2016 REPORT I BOUGHT SOME LUIGI
BORMIOLI STEMS AND A SIX PACK OF WOLF BLASS RED LABEL...
FOR LESS THAN \$100 THE JOURNEY HAS BEGUN!

Nathan Gogoll, Editor, Australian & NZ Grapegrower & Winemaker

A MUST READ WITH BUBBLES IN HAND!

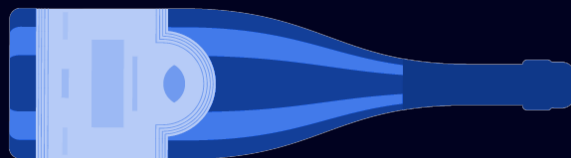
Trio Wine



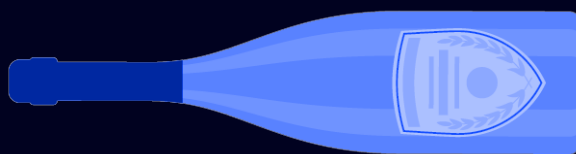
AUSTRALIAN SPARKLING

2015-2016

85 000 000
BOTTLES SOLD
UP 4.8% on 2014-2015



SPARKLING RECORDED
SIMILAR GROWTH
TO STILL WINE
IN BOTH DOMESTIC
& EXPORT MARKETS



70 000 000
BOTTLES SOLD DOMESTICALLY
UP 4.9% on 2014-2015



15 200 000
BOTTLES EXPORTED
UP 4.6% on 2014-2015



ESTIMATED SPARKLING
SALES VALUE
\$550 000 000



SPARKLING REPRESENTS
ONLY 11%
OF DOMESTIC WINE SALES

SPARKLING REPRESENTS
JUST 2%
OF AUSTRALIAN WINE EXPORTS



SPARKLING IMPORTS

2015-2016



18 400 000
BOTTLES IMPORTED
UP 8% ON 2014-2015
INCLUDING 11 500 000
BOTTLE FERMENTED



7 400 000
CHAMPAGNE
BOTTLES IMPORTED
VALUED AT
\$150 000 000

15.7% OF
WINE IMPORTS
IN AUSTRALIA
ARE SPARKLING



\$235 000 000
TOTAL VALUE OF IMPORTS



GLOBAL SPARKLING

2016

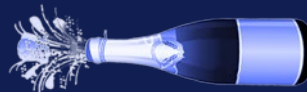


8% OF WINE
CONSUMED GLOBALLY
IS SPARKLING
UP FROM 5% IN 2000

SPARKLING WINE TIPPED
TO GROW AT
5X THE PACE
OF STILL WINE
IN THE COMING YEARS



4.1% GROWTH
IN SPARKLING SALES
IN 2015-2016
MORE THAN
3X THE GROWTH
OF STILL WINES



PROSECCO & ROSÉ
THE BIG GROWTH CATEGORIES

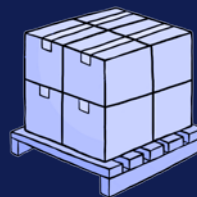


2X GROWTH
OF SPARKLING
EXPORTS GLOBALLY
OVER THE PAST DECADE

2 700 000 000
BOTTLES OF SPARKLING
SOLD IN 2016



SPARKLING PRODUCTION
VALUED AT
\$70 000 000 000



2 900 000 000
BOTTLES OF SPARKLING
TIPPED TO SELL IN 2020



SPARKLING BOTTLE PRICES
3X AVERAGE
STILL WINE PRICES

SPARKLING TIPPED
TO LEAD INTERNATIONAL
WINE GROWTH
UNTIL AT LEAST 2019



THE YEAR AUSTRALIAN SPARKING CAME OF AGE

2016 was the year we'd all been waiting for.

Sparkling wines have long covered in the shadows of still and fortified wines in Australia. No longer, thanks to the events of the past year.

In Australian capital city wine show history, no sparkling wine has ever eclipsed all still and fortified wines to win champion wine of show. Until now.

And not just any capital city show, The National Wine Show in Canberra, the grand finale of all Australian Wine Shows. In late 2015, House of Arras Blanc de Blancs 2006 made history as Champion Wine of Show.

And this was no one off. Within months, its sister cuvée, House of Arras Grand Vintage 2007, trumped every still white, red and fortified wine in the room to win Grand Champion Wine of Show at the Royal Queensland Wine Show.

Just a few weeks later, I had the privilege of chairing the sparkling panel at the Sydney Royal Wine Show. I witnessed a result I've never seen in twelve years of judging. Every judge and every associate in my panel gave a 19 point top gold score to the same wine on very first tasting. And that wine went forward to take out the top gong, Best Wine of Show. It was the same wine that cleaned up in Brisbane, House of Arras Grand Vintage 2007.

In September 2016 my Events Manager Jody and I hosted a series of champagne and Australian sparkling tastings in Hong Kong. One wine outsold all the champagnes and sparklings in our tasting. Arras Blanc de Blancs 2006.

2016 was the year Australian sparkling came of age.

And not just Arras. Before the end of the year, Josef Chromy Vintage Sparkling 2010 was named Champion Wine of Show at The National Cool Climate Wine Show.

2016 was a year of optimism for Australian sparkling wine, with sales figures finally showing a long-awaited turnaround. After a drop of 6% in 2014-2015, domestic sales of Australian sparkling wine rallied in 2015-2016 to register 4.9% growth, keeping up with growth in still wine sales to maintain 11% of domestic wine consumption, upholding Australia's position as the tenth largest sparkling wine market in the world. Meanwhile, off the back of a massive drop of 16% in 2014-2015, Australian sparkling wine exports rose 4.6% in 2015-2016.



While China is still a small sparkling consumer on a global scale, popping just 18 million bottles in 2016, it is set for tremendous growth to a forecast 26 million by 2020. This spells tremendous opportunity for Australian sparkling exports. In 2016, Australia's exports to China jumped an incredible 51%, and the country became our biggest wine export market.

Australia falls far short of its sparkling potential

These are promising trends, and worthy of popping a cork to celebrate. The importance of the sparkling category in Australia and the world right now cannot be overstated, representing one of the most important and fastest growing beverage categories on earth. But Australia falls far short of its potential in the big picture of global sparkling. Australia's sparkling imports grew at almost double the rate of its domestic sparkling sales last year, registering impressive 8% growth to represent almost 16% of all imports.

A long-term perspective is even more telling. In the past decade, Australia sparkling wine sales at home and abroad have increased from 75 million bottles to just 85 million bottles, modest growth of just 13%. Over the same period, Australia's sparkling imports almost doubled. Most revealing of all is the explosion in champagne imports over this time, more than doubling by a phenomenal 223%.

Australia's best cuvées run rings around cheap champagne

Australians are drinking more fizz than ever, but their preference is to pop imports, particularly champagne, Italian prosecco, cava and New Zealand sparkling.

Supermarket wine retailers across the country report customers flocking through the doors expressly to buy champagne. You can now snap up a bottle of champagne under \$25 any day of the week. And, frankly, cheap champagne is not worth drinking. Australia's best cuvées at the same price run rings around it. Yet still they buy cheap champagne.

There exists a stark and gaping disparity in the minds of Australian and global consumers between the perceived calibre of Australian sparkling wines and the true standard of the finest cuvées, evidenced more than ever this year by an incredible wine show trophy haul.



The biggest and most comprehensive report I have ever compiled on Australian sparkling

Last year I launched my inaugural *Australian Sparkling Report 2016* to highlight the very finest Australian sparkling wines worthy of your attention. The response was overwhelming and has prompted a substantially expanded sequel – the biggest and most comprehensive report I have ever compiled on Australian sparkling.

In 2016 I singled out some 100 cuvées spanning all sparkling categories of méthode traditionnelle, charmat method, transfer method, blanc de blancs, rosés, proseccos, sparkling reds and moscatos. This year I tasted 500 cuvées for this report and have featured my notes on every one of them.

Sparkling wines are the most complex of all to grow and make, with more variables in the production process to define the house style than any other wine. For this reason, I have gone to greater lengths than ever this year and called on the assistance of my two helpers Jody and Felicity to research and collate more background detail on each cuvée than I have ever compiled on Australian sparkling wines before. The result is the inclusion for the first time this year of all of the background we could unearth on the sourcing, blending, production, ageing and disgorgement of each and every cuvée.

Each of these wines were tasted in the midst of assessing 800 cuvées for *The Champagne Guide 2018-2019*. I judge everything on the same scale, providing a fair basis for comparison between the two countries. Throwing Australian sparkling wine into the arena of the global benchmark of sparkling is both sobering and revealing.

More discernment than ever is called for in your choice of Australian sparkling wines this year

More discernment than ever is called for in your choice of Australian sparkling wines this year. I've singled out 136 cuvées worthy of your attention, many of which represent fantastic value for money. However, almost three-quarters of the wines I tasted rated lower than what I would consider a good wine (90 points).

Here are my top tips for getting the most out of Australian sparkling this year:

SPEND UP

Truly great sparkling wine under \$20 doesn't exist any more. Sorry. It's more labour-intensive, time-consuming and expensive to make a bottle of great fizz than any other wine style. In Australia this is exacerbated because our labour costs are higher than most other wine-producing countries. The result is that the only way to make cheap sparkling is through a litany of short cuts and compromises. And it shows. Always. There are therefore more gains to be made by spending a bit more on sparkling wine than any other wine style.

Last year I awarded a Best Sparkling Wine of the Year under \$20 and a Best Moscato of the Year. This year I've decided not to award either, because no wines came forward above 89 points.

But there is good news. My Best Sparkling Wine of the Year under \$30 is currently on the shelves under \$22. That's money very well spent.

REGION COUNTS

Most parts of Australia are warmer and sunnier than northern Europe and consequently not well suited to producing truly great sparkling white or rosé. Climate change is only serving to exacerbate this situation.

The reaction for wine growers is logically to harvest earlier, so as to capture the grapes at moderate levels of sugar ripeness with sufficiently elevated acid levels to produce elegant base wines. The challenge in this response for Australian sparkling winemakers is that a shorter ripening period all too often produces hard, underripe acidity, making for astringent sparkling wines of assertive structure. And even, at times, an underripe, grassy flavour spectrum.

The natural response is to counter this challenging acidity with sweetness by increasing the dosage. But rather than producing a seamlessly balanced and palatable sparkling wine, this instead typically renders a wine not only hard, astringent and underripe, but sweet at the same time, producing a 'sweet and sour' effect. The only truly fool-proof answer is that there is no substitute for grapes to enjoy long 'hang time' (as winemakers call it) in a cool climate, producing ripe acidity, elegant flavours and moderate sugar.

In judging any wine, the finish reveals the most. The finish of the finest sparkling wines display very subtle phenolic structure. Phenolics are grape compounds, particularly rich in stems, seeds and skins, responsible for astringency and bitterness in the back palate. This year in my tastings I have noted that firm phenolics have marred many Australian sparkling wines. Our warmer and sunnier climate builds thicker grape skins which impart more phenolic grip into our wines. It calls for the coolest regions and the most deft touch to prevent these phenolics from dominating.

To showcase the places that get this right, this year I have again highlighted Australia's top-performing sparkling regions (see page 19).

STICK WITH THE SPECIALISTS

The expertise, experience and fanatical focus of those estates that specialise in sparkling production really shines again this year. I have showcased the best of the best in my Hall of Honour (page 16).

Making a lone sparkling wine on the side is like making a helicopter on the side. This is the most technical and complex wine style of all to get right. Too many estates perfectly adept at still winemaking insist on a sparkling foray. It's expensive and time-consuming to produce, invariably overpriced, and more often than not an embarrassment.

Of my seven best sparkling wines of the year, four hail from large producers and three from small. All are specialists with deep experience in sparkling wine production.

DISCOVER SPARKLING REDS

Australia has a long and proud history in sparkling red production. This year of 67 sparkling reds in my tastings, an incredible 26 (almost 40%) were worthy of 90 or more points. This is more than double the strike rate of sparkling whites, rosés, proseccos and moscatos put together.

This year I awarded a sparkling red the highest score I have ever given an Australian sparkling wine. It hails from an estate with more than 120 years of sparkling red heritage. Don't miss it.



USING THIS REPORT

Points are a quick way to highlight the best sparkling wines in each category. Readers of my *Champagne Guide* and my reviews in the *Australian Wine Companion* will be familiar with my 100 point scores. I assess Australian sparkling wines using exactly the same scale.

There has been much controversy surrounding wine scores in recent years. It is of course a travesty to reduce the grand complexities of wine to a single number, but I persist in doing so because many readers find this useful. As always, my descriptions are infinitely more informative than scores.

There has been something of a slanging match between otherwise respectable Australian wine commentators in recent years regarding the high-pointing of wines. I have vigorously avoided this discussion. My scores are as they stand and those who look for scores understand what they mean. Other reviewers can point as they wish and I have always encouraged my readers to follow those whose tastes align with their own.

Publications, retailers and winemakers themselves would have us score everything over 90 points, but it is not for them that I award scores. It is for the consumer, and for this reason I do not hesitate to bless wines with high scores when they are worthy, and award controversially low scores when they are faulty. Close to two-thirds of the wines in this report fall below 90 points. Not by design. I simply assess every wine independently on its own merits.

The shortcomings of the international 100 point system have been well noted. I persevere, not because I endorse it, but simply because it is universally understood. Broadly, anything less than 85 is faulty, less than 90 is sound but unexciting, and 91 is where the real fun begins. A 94 point wine has impeccable purity and immaculate balance – a gold medal in a wine show. Beyond, it's not greater concentration of flavour, more obvious fruit or more clever winemaking tricks that set it apart. True greatness is declared by something more profound: the inimitable stamp of place – 'terroir' to the French, articulated most eloquently in length of finish and palate texture. Persistence of aftertaste and depth of mineral character distinguish the very finest sparkling wines.

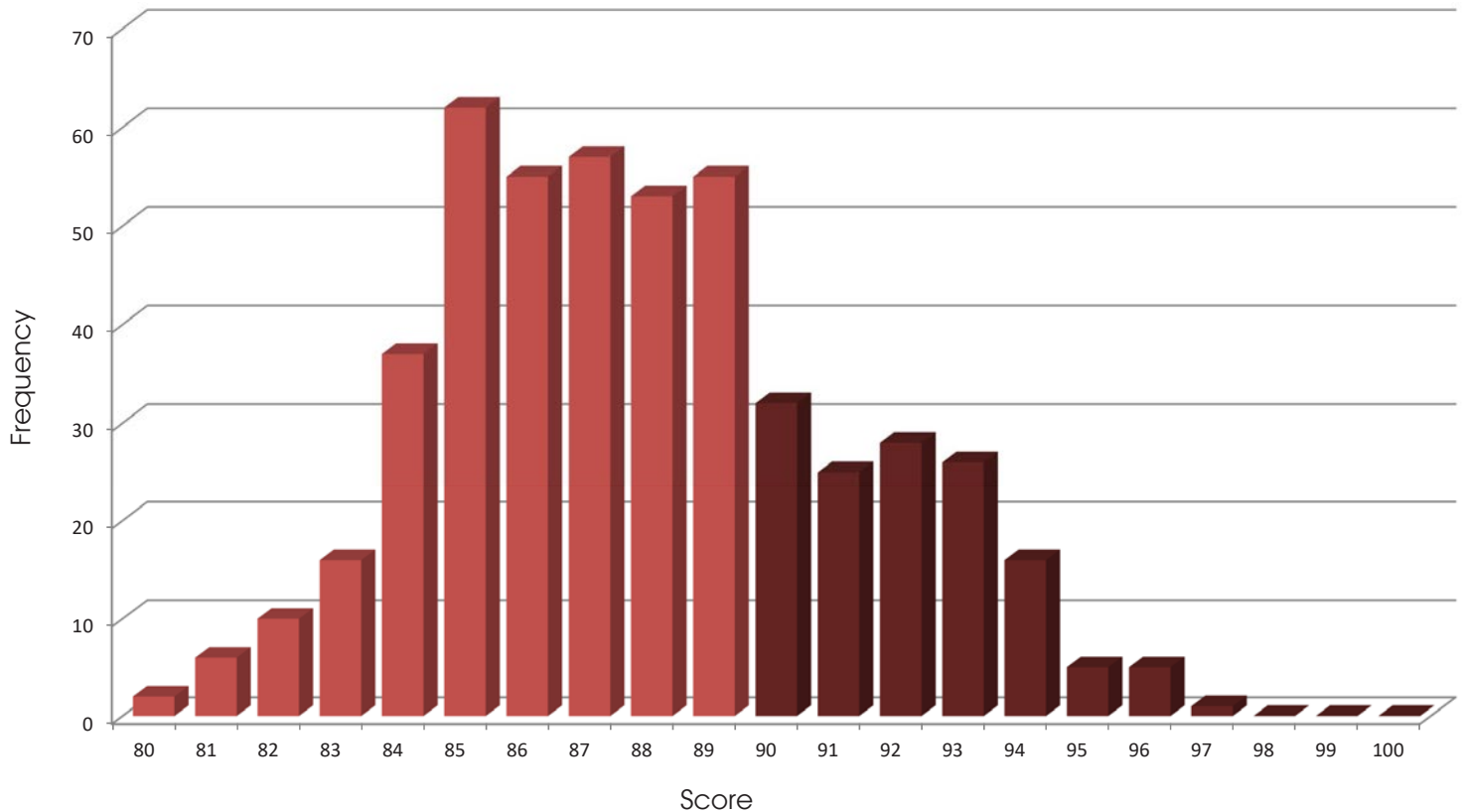
WHAT DO MY SCORES MEAN?

- 100 The pinnacle of character, balance and persistence. I am yet to score an Australian sparkling wine 100 points.
- 99 Almost perfection (20 on the 20 point scale). I am yet to score an Australian sparkling wine 99 points.
- 98 An exceedingly rare calibre of world-class distinction. I am yet to score an Australian sparkling wine 98 points.
- 97 More than exceptional. I scored my very first Australian sparkling wine 97 points this year. Don't miss it.
- 96 Exceptional. Top gold or trophy standard in a wine show (19/20); 1% of Australian sparkling wines tasted this year. Three Tasmanian sparkling whites and two South Australian sparkling reds. Look out for one cuvée at \$45.
- 95 Offering an edge that pushes beyond excellent; 1% of Australian sparkling wines tasted this year. Four Tasmanian cuvées and one Great Western sparkling red at \$35.
- 94 Excellent champagne that I love. Gold medal in a wine show (18.5/20). 3% of Australian sparkling wines tasted this year. Nine sparkling whites, three sparkling rosés and three sparkling reds, including three under \$35.
- 93 Almost excellent; 5% of Australian sparkling wines tasted this year. Look out for three sparkling reds under \$30.
- 92 A very good wine that characterises its place and variety; 6% of Australian sparkling wines tasted this year.
- 91 Better than good, offering an edge of distinction. Silver medal (17/20); 5% of Australian sparkling wines tasted this year, including the best proseccos of the year.
- 90 A good wine that I like; 7% of Australian sparkling wines tasted this year.
- 89 Better than sound and almost good; 11% of Australian sparkling wines tasted this year.
- 88 Sound. Worth buying if it's cheap. Bronze medal standard (15.5/20); 11% of Australian sparkling wines tasted this year.
- 87 Almost sound; 12% of Australian sparkling wines tasted this year.
- 86 Simple and ordinary; 11% of Australian sparkling wines tasted this year.
- 85 Ordinary and boring, though without notable faults (14/20); 13% of Australian sparkling wines tasted this year.
- 84 Borderline faulty. 8% of Australian sparkling wines tasted this year.
- 83 Faulty. Caution! 3% of Australian sparkling wines tasted this year.
- 82 Distinctly faulty (12/20). 2% of Australian sparkling wines tasted this year.
- 81 Exceedingly faulty. Stand well clear. 1% of Australian sparkling wines tasted this year.
- 80 Horrid. You've been warned. Less than 0.5% of Australian sparkling wines tasted this year.

THE SPREAD OF MY SCORES THIS YEAR

In the past I have largely not published reviews of wines scoring less than 90 points, leading some readers to draw the mistaken assumption that my scores are universally high. The following chart illustrates the distribution of my Australian sparkling wine scores this year. Less than 30% of the cuvées I tasted scored 90 points or more. These wines comprise the highlights of this report.

Australian Sparkling Wine Scores 2017



Good
"buying ^ wine has never been easier"

CALL 1300 MYCELLARS OR SHOP ONLINE

HALL OF HONOUR

TYSON STELZER'S AUSTRALIAN SPARKLING REPORT 2017

My *Australian Sparkling Report 2017 Hall of Honour* acknowledges the finest sparkling wine producers of the year. A brand is only as worthy as its current cuvées, so its rating is based exclusively on the quality of all of its sparkling wines in the market this year, not on past performance or museum wines. History and reputation count for nothing if the wines you can buy don't live up to expectation.

Readers of my *Champagne Guide* will be familiar with my champagne house ratings out of ten. My ratings for Australian sparkling estates are calculated using exactly the same scale. Roughly, to qualify for seven stars, an estate must produce prestige sparkling wine typically scoring around 96 points, vintage wines around 94 points and non-vintage wines around 93 points. To attain two stars, these drop to 91, 90 and 88 respectively.

There is by necessity some subjectivity in this process and it is of course meaningless to attempt to compare Brown Brother's portfolio of 11 sparkling wines with Rockford's single sparkling shiraz.

These ratings are by their nature highly controversial. The vast diversity of Australian sparkling wines, from méthode traditionnelle, charmat method, transfer method, blanc de blancs, rosés, proseccos, sparkling reds and moscatos makes it an immense challenge to reduce their grand complexities to a single number. I encourage you to use these only as a guide to quickly home in on the very best houses and to then focus your attention on my commentary on each of their cuvées.

This year I tasted wines from 277 Australian sparkling producers. My *Hall of Honour* acknowledges just the top 35% of these. It must be emphasised that even my one star rating is a strong endorsement, ahead of 65% of Australian sparkling producers.

SEVEN STARS

House of Arras
Seppelt

SIX STARS

Clover Hill
Deviation Road

FIVE STARS

Jansz
Josef Chromy
Kreglinger
Swift

FOUR STARS

Apogee
Ashton Hills
Barringwood
Best's
Chandon
Coldstream Hills
Frogmore Creek
Heemskerk
Henschke
Hollydene
Majella
Petaluma

Primo
Rockford
Sittella
Stefano Lubiana
Taltarni
The Lane
Yarrabank

THREE STARS

Barfold
Bay of Fires
Campbell's
Curly Flat
Dal Zotto
Daosa
Delamere
Freycinet
Ghost Rock
Glenwillow
Hanging Rock
Hentley Farm
Meadowbank
Mountadam
Ninth Island
Nocton Vineyard
Pirie
Relbia
Riversdale
Teusner

TWO STARS

2 Mates
Boat O'Craigo
Bream Creek
Bremerton
Brown Brothers
Churchview
Devil's Corner
Gembrook Hill
Gemtree
Goaty Hill
Grant Burge
Hungerford Hill
Hunter-Gatherer
Lambrook
Mount Avoca
Mt Lofty Ranges
Pepperjack
Pipers Brook
Shingleback
Spinifex
Symphonia
Tomich
Turkey Flat

ONE STAR

Ad Hoc
Bass River
Beresford
Blue Pyrenees
Brown Magpie
Christmont
Coombe Farm
Costanzo & Sons
Dowie Doole
Eddie McDougall
Feathertop
Forbes & Forbes
Fox Creek
Leeuwin
Magpie
Mandala
Mia Valley
O'Leary Walker
Paul Conti
Preveli
Punt Road
Santa & D'Sas
Sidewood
Stonier
The Black Chook
Yarra Burn
Yellowglen

TYSON STELZER'S AUSTRALIAN SPARKLING WINES OF THE YEAR 2017

THE SPARKLING WINE OF THE YEAR

SEPPELT SHOW SPARKLING LIMITED RELEASE SHIRAZ 2007, \$100 (PAGE 94)

THE SPARKLING WINE OF THE YEAR UNDER \$30

SEPPELT SALINGER HENTY VINTAGE CUVÉE MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE 2013, \$30 (PAGE 35)

THE SPARKLING WINE OF THE YEAR UNDER \$50

FROGMORE CREEK MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE CUVÉE 2010, \$40 (PAGE 47)

THE SPARKLING WINE OF THE YEAR OVER \$50

HOUSE OF ARRAS MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE GRAND VINTAGE 2007, \$70 (PAGE 63)

THE BLANC DE BLANCS OF THE YEAR

CLOVER HILL CUVÉE PRESTIGE LATE DISGORGED BLANC DE BLANCS 2005, \$150 (PAGE 68)

THE SPARKLING ROSÉ OF THE YEAR

DEVIATION ROAD ALTAIR BRUT ROSÉ NV, \$30 (PAGE 79)

THE PROSECCO OF THE YEAR

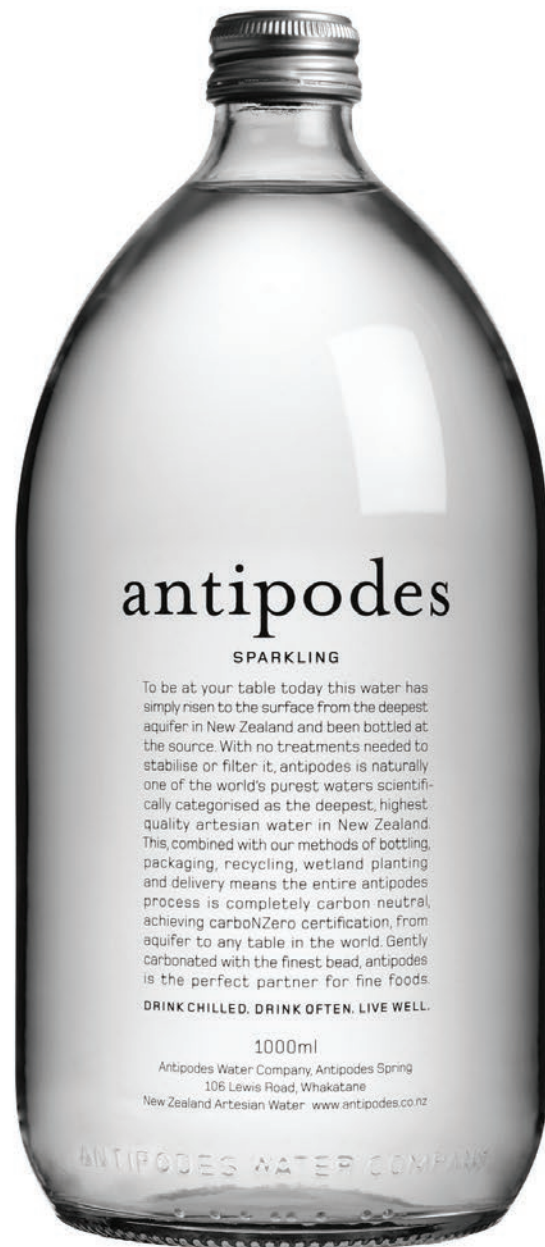
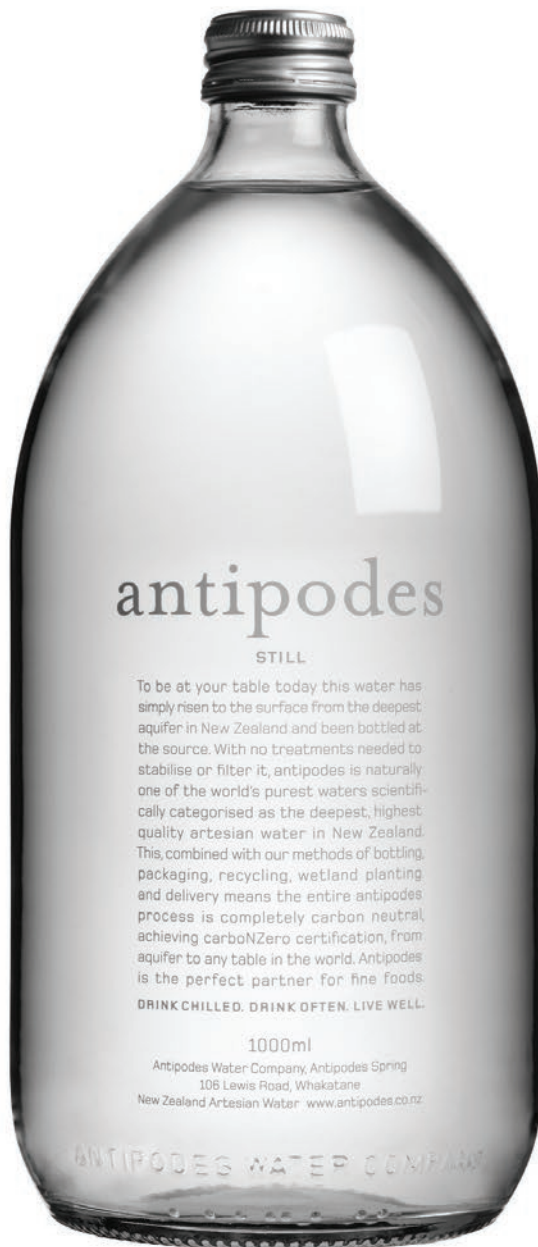
DAL ZOTTO PUCINO PROSECCO 2016, \$23 (PAGE 88)

THE SPARKLING RED OF THE YEAR

SEPPELT SHOW SPARKLING LIMITED RELEASE SHIRAZ 2007, \$100 (PAGE 94)

ANTIPODES

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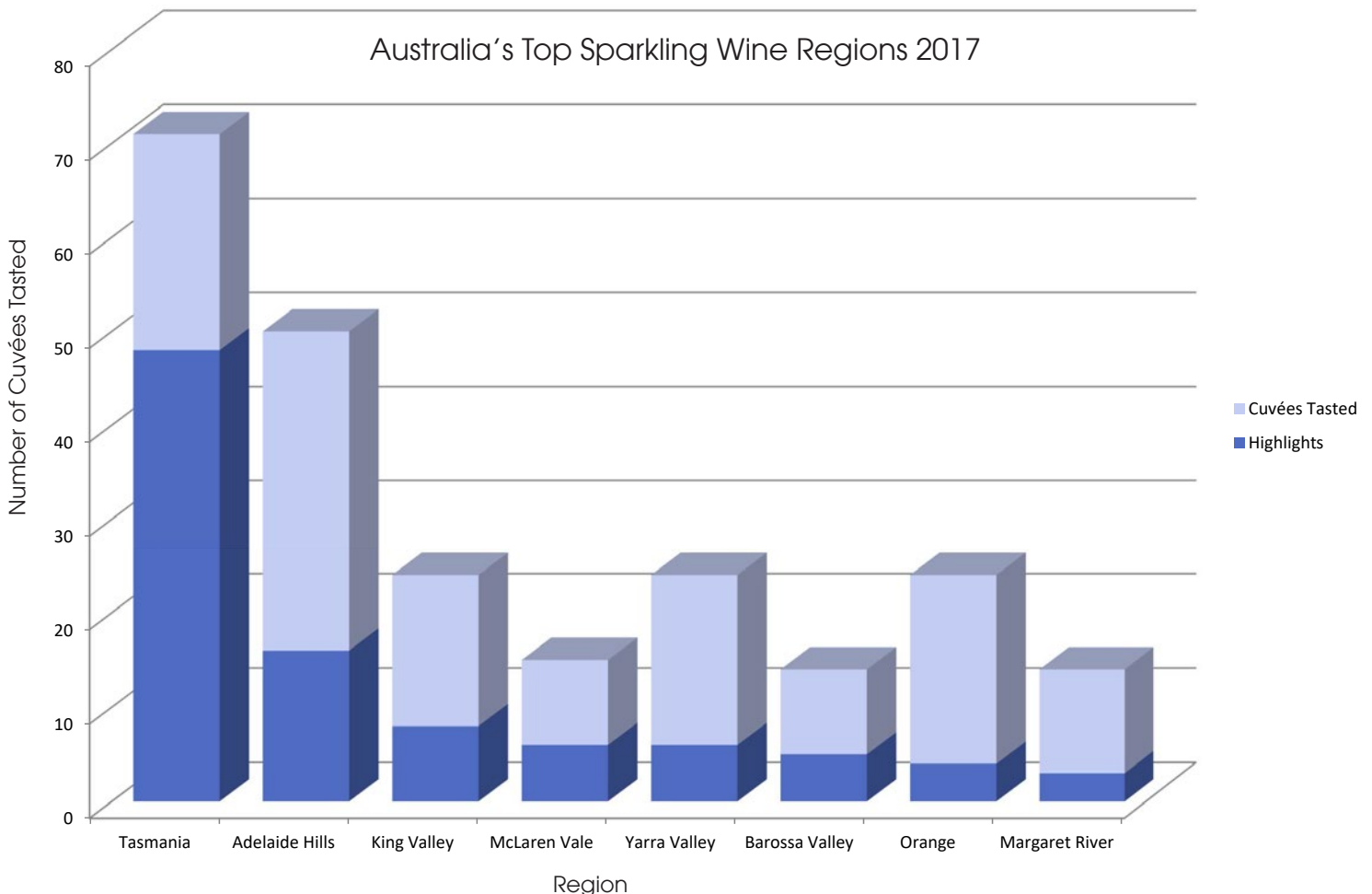
REGIONAL HEROES

The simple rule in buying top sparkling wines is to stick with the coolest regions. In my tastings for this report I assessed sparkling wines from 58 of Australia's 63 wine regions.

Last year I singled out Tasmania as Australia's hero sparkling state. It has led the country again in my tastings this year, and production is buoyant in response. The best estimates put Tasmanian sparkling production at a record of more than 4.5 million bottles in the 2016 vintage, more than one-third of all Tasmanian wine production, with an estimated value of close to \$13M. This represents phenomenal growth of more than 70% on 2015, and more than 140% on 2014.

This year Australia's top ten sparkling regions are:

1. **TASMANIA** topped the charts this year on every measure: number of cuvées tasted (71) and number of highlight cuvées shortlisted among my highlights at 90 points and above (48, representing more than two-thirds of cuvées tasted). Tasmania confidently holds its place as Australia's sparkling capital.
2. **ADELAIDE HILLS** far outranked last year's performance to jump to second place, with 16 highlights out of 50 wines reviewed (32%).
3. **KING VALLEY** ranked third this year (with one-third, 8 out of 24 highlights), largely for its performance with prosecco (20 out of 24 cuvées tasted). King Valley retains its position as king of this style.
4. **MCLAREN VALE** is this year's surprise performer (who would have guessed McLaren Vale would outrank the Yarra Valley for top fizz?!). The answer, of course, is sparkling red, and of the 15 McLaren Vale cuvées I tasted this year, five of the six highlights were red.
5. **YARRA VALLEY** ranked fifth again this year (with one-quarter, 6 out of 24 highlights).
6. **BAROSSA VALLEY** came in a confident sixth place, testimony again to the strength of sparkling reds this year, and more than one-third, all five highlights of the 14 wines I tasted, were red.
7. **ORANGE** joins the ranks this year, with one estate producing, all four highlights from the 24 produced in the region (one-sixth).
8. **MARGARET RIVER** is the final surprise, with more than one-fifth, three of 14 cuvées shortlisted.
9. Blends from across **SOUTH-EASTERN AUSTRALIA** (three out of 20, or 15%) also performed well.
10. Blends from across **VICTORIA** (two out of 20, or 10%) were also strong.





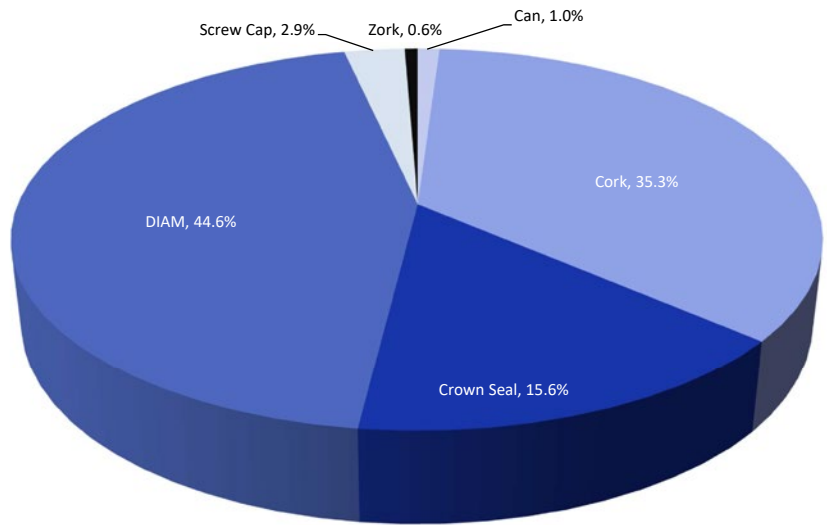
SPARKLING CLOSURES

I am delighted to report that after thirteen years of banging on about the abominable influence of corks on wine bottles, my tastings this year affirm the positive announcements I made a year ago.

Across my tastings, natural cork represents little more than one-third of Australia's sparkling wine labels. DIAM now accounts for more than 40% (in total number of sparkling bottles in Australia, DIAM now represents 20 million, close to one-quarter), crown seal more than 15% and screw cap close to 3% (mostly on moscato), all encouraging trends. I have not encountered any bottle variation in my tastings of sparkling wines sealed with DIAM, crown seal or screw cap this year.

The level of cork taint in my tastings of Australian sparkling wines is but a fraction of what it was six years ago. This year, of the 172 Australian sparkling wines I tasted under natural cork, just two were cork tainted (1.2%). This figure is still too high, but it is the best I have encountered yet, and consistent with my champagne tastings this year.

Australian Sparkling Wine Closures by Number of Labels



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"we might all be able to sit back, glass in hand, forget about closures, and simply enjoy the subtlety, the soul and passion of the wine."

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MAKING SPARKLING WINE

Sparkling winemaking is among the most complex, labour-intensive and time-consuming winemaking processes of all. It begins with careful, selective harvesting and immediate, gentle pressing, capable of extracting white juice even from dark-skinned pinot noir and meunier grapes. The *coeur de la cuvée*, the heart or middle of the pressing, yields the purest juice. The *tailles* is the coarser, inferior juice that flows last from the press.

To create the finest sparkling wine, the juice is settled prior to fermentation to allow the solids and impurities to fall from the must (pressed grape juice), allowing clear juice to be drawn off from the top. This process is called *débourbage* in French and the most fanatical champagne houses perform it twice to achieve particularly exquisite and fresh *cuvées* (blends).

Following the first fermentation, sparkling wines from the coolest regions typically undergo *malolactic fermentation* to convert tart *malic* (green apple) acidity into softer *lactic* (dairy) acidity. With the advent of warmer vintages in the wake of global warming, an increasing number of sparkling winemakers are experimenting with blocking malolactic.

Sparkling wine is blended following its first fermentation, and perhaps a period of ageing on lees in tanks or barrels. Non-vintage wines are a blend of a base (youngest) vintage with *reserve* wines, older vintages aged in the cellar in tanks and sometimes barrels or bottles. Prior to bottling, a *liqueur de tirage* of sugar and wine is added so as to induce a secondary fermentation in the bottle, known as the *prise de mousse*. Held under pressure by a crown seal or cork, the second fermentation produces carbon dioxide which remains dissolved in the wine, creating sparkling wine.

Following the second fermentation, sparkling wines mature in contact with the lees (dead yeast cells) to mellow, soften and build complexity, mouth feel and texture, a process called *autolysis*. In Champagne, the mandatory minimum is 15 months for non-vintage and three years for vintage wines, but reputable houses always far exceed these minima.

Méthode traditionnelle is the ultimate sparkling winemaking process, mandatory in Champagne, and the standard for all of Australia's top sparkling wines, in which the second fermentation to produce the bubbles occurs in the bottle in which the wine is sold.

This process is often simplified in other sparkling wine producing regions in the *transfer method*, in which the wine is transferred to a vat and filtered after the second fermentation, invariably losing some gas. The *charmat* or *tank* method is a further simplification in which the second fermentation occurs in large tanks under pressure. *Carbonation* is the cheapest method of creating sparkling wine, by injecting the wine with carbon dioxide, in the same manner as lemonade.

Each of these simplifications tactically avoids the most labour-intensive stages of *méthode traditionnelle*: *riddling* and *disgorgement*. Second fermentation in bottle creates sediment of lees which must be removed without losing bubbles. *Riddling* is the process of



moving this sediment into the neck of the bottle, traditionally achieved on a riddling rack called a *pupitre* by giving each bottle a quarter-rotation every day and slowly tilting it from horizontal to upside down. A good riddler can turn some 60,000 bottles a day, but this is a dying art. In modern times, riddling has been largely taken over by *gyropalettes*, giant robotic arms that slowly rotate large cages of bottles.

After riddling, the sediment is settled on the inside of the cork or crown cap. The neck of the bottle is then frozen, the cap released, and the plug of sediment shot out, leaving perfectly clear wine behind. This process is called *disgorgement*.

To replace the volume lost through disgorgement, the bottle is topped up with sweetened wine called *liqueur d'expédition* and a new cork is inserted. The sweetness of the finished wine is determined by the level of sweetness of the liqueur. *Zero dosage* sparkling wines are topped up with dry wine. In Champagne, *brut nature* or *brut zero* denote a wine of less than 3g/L of sugar, *extra brut* (extra dry) less than 6g/L, *brut* (dry) less than 12g/L, *extra dry* or *extra sec* less than 17g/L, *sec* (dryish) less than 32g/L, *demi-sec* (half dry) less than 50g/L and *doux* (sweet) more than 50g/L.

Sparkling rosé is made in the same manner as white sparkling, with colour achieved in one of three ways. *Rosé d'assemblage* is a blending method, the most common means of making rosé, in which a tiny quantity of pinot noir or meunier made as table wine is added to the white base wine. The *saignée* method adds free-run juice from just-crushed red grapes, while a *limited maceration* method produces darker, heavier wines through a quick soak on red grape skins.

Sparkling red wines begin their life in the same manner as still reds, fermented on skins to extract colour, flavour and tannin. The finest are then privileged to *méthode traditionnelle*, though transfer, charmat or carbonation simplifications are used for cheaper labels.

UNDERSTANDING DOSAGE

Throughout this report I've noted the dosage level for each *cuvée* wherever I can, measured in grams per litre of sugar. As a reference point, 16g/L is the same as one teaspoon of sugar in your cup of coffee.

12g/L dosage used to be typical in champagne and sparkling wine. These days, the trend is toward lower dosage and 6-9g/L is common. But don't read too much into the numbers. In high acid vintages in cool regions, sparkling wines can swallow high levels of dosage and appear almost dry.

The drying effect of tannin in sparkling reds can handle surprising levels of dosage, and some of the best this year boast more than 20g/L.



CELLARING SPARKLING WINE

My drinking windows throughout this report offer an insight into the endurance of Australian sparkling wines, with Tasmania's top cuvées demonstrating the potential to live for up to thirty years, and the best sparkling reds at least as long.

Most Australian sparkling wines have little to gain from further ageing, and more than two-thirds of the cuvées I tasted this year are already at their peak, with a further ten percent at their best over the next eighteen months. Just ten percent stand to benefit from further time before drinking.

Sparkling wines are among the most sensitive of all wine styles to adverse storage conditions, so never keep a bottle in the rack above the fridge or even in the light.

Méthode traditionnelle sparkling wines spend the first years of their life under dark, humid, stable and cold conditions, so they will get a rude shock if they're thrust into a warm environment. Unless you live somewhere particularly cold, if you don't have a climate-controlled cellar, err on the side of caution and drink your sparkling wines within a few years.

Fizz in clear glass bottles is remarkably light sensitive, so keep it in the dark at all times. If it comes in a box, bag or cellophane wrap, keep it covered until you serve it.



SERVING SPARKLING WINE

SPARKLING WINE GLASSES

Using decent glassware is essential for fully appreciating wine, and all the more for sparkling wine. The more I visit and taste with the Champenois, the more I appreciate the way a large glass draws a sparkling wine out of itself. Sparkling wine holds its bead longest in an elongated glass, but don't select one so narrow that you can't get your nose in to appreciate the bouquet.

The Champenois prefer slightly wider glasses than typical champagne flutes, to allow their finest cuvées sufficient space to open out. Think halfway between a flute and a fine white wine glass.

All good glasses curve in slightly at the top. The finer the glass, the better they look at the table, and the less the wine will warm up when you pour it. Cut, engraved or coloured glasses make it harder to appreciate the wine's appearance.

The glass I use for all of my sparkling wine tastings is the Riedel Vinum XL Champagne. This is the largest glass I've found, with a bowl of white wine glass proportions that draws down into the stem sufficiently to produce a focused stream of bubbles.

My second-favourite glass is one-fifth of the price. The Luigi Bormioli Magnifico Flute is very nearly as large as the Riedel and just a little heavier. If you can't find these, grab a medium-sized white wine glass over a champagne flute for any serious bottle of fizz.

It's paramount that there is not the slightest residue of detergent in the glass, as this will instantly destroy the mousse (bubbles) and the taste. Riedel recommends washing under warm water without detergent, and polishing with microfibre towels. Never dry a glass by holding the base and twisting the bowl, as this may snap the stem.

SERVING TEMPERATURE

Sparkling wine is often served much too cold. Poured at fridge temperature, it will taste flavourless and acidic. The only exceptions are particularly sweet styles (moscato!), which are best toned down with a stern chill. In general, the finer the wine, the warmer I tend to serve it. The Champenois suggest 8–10°C for non-vintage and rosé styles, and 10–12°C for vintage and prestige wines. I prefer Australian sparkling reds a little warmer again, say 15–17°C.

If you're pulling a bottle out of a climate-controlled cellar, it will need to be cooled a little further, so pop it in the fridge for half an hour. If it's at room temperature to start with, 3–4 hours in the fridge or 15 minutes in an ice bucket might be in order. On a warm day, serve sparkling wine a touch cooler, as it will soon warm up.

Always hold a glass by its base or stem, to avoid warming the wine in your hand. This will also reduce the likelihood of any aromas on your hands interfering with its delicate bouquet.



OPENING SPARKLING WINE

Opening a sparkling bottle is pretty easy, but some people make such a fuss about it that they end up stuffing it up altogether. There are a few basic points to grasp before spraying your friends with fizz.

First, ensure that nobody has shaken the bottle before you get hold of it (not funny!). Always have a target glass nearby to pour the first gush into, but not too close (I once inadvertently shot the bowl clean off one of those expensive Riedels with a stray cork!). Check the firing range for chandeliers and unsuspecting passers-by and re-aim if necessary.

Remove the capsule using the pull-tab, if it has one. Hold the bottle at 45 degrees and remove the cage with six half-turns of the wire, keeping your thumb firmly over the end of the cork, in case it attempts to fire out of the bottle. I prefer to loosen the cage and leave it on the cork, which can assist with grip.

Twist the bottle (not the cork) slowly and ease the cork out gently. If you encounter a stubborn, young cork, use a clean tea towel to improve your grip. When the cork is almost out, tilt it sideways to release the gas slowly. It should make a gentle hiss, not an ostentatious pop. This is important, as it maintains the maximum bead (bubbles) in the wine and reduces the risk of a dramatic gush.

POURING SPARKLING WINE

Check that the wine tastes right, then pour half a glass for each drinker, topping them up after the 'mousse' has subsided. You can choose to tilt the glass to minimise frothing – I do. Sparkling wine is the only style where you can break the rule of never more than half-filling a glass, but do leave sufficient room for your nose so you can appreciate the bouquet!



THE BEST SPARKLING WINES OF THE YEAR UNDER \$20

As tempting as it is to lead out with the most expensive sparkling wines of the year, it's at the affordable end of the market that you must be most discerning in your effervescent purchases. Sparkling wines are among the most complex, labour-intensive, time-consuming and hence expensive of all wine styles to produce, and it takes an outfit of considerable expertise to pull this off with any level of finesse at this price.

The bottom shelf is dominated by variously coarse, hard, sweet and characterless sparkling wines, and there is a lot to be said for spending a few more dollars. This year I've decided not to award a Best Sparkling Wine of the Year under \$20, because no wines came forward above 89 points.

Economies of scale play heavily into this equation, so no surprise that my list of Sparkling Wines of the Year under \$20 is led by the big players of Brown Brothers, Yarra Burn and Yellowglen with large, multi-region blends. It's great to see the little Adelaide Hills estate of Tomich playing in this company, too.

This year I reviewed 40 Australian sparkling wines under \$20 (excluding blanc de blancs, rosés, sparkling reds, proseccos and moscatos — see below for reviews under these categories — taking all of these styles into consideration, the total musbrooms to more than 130) with a median score of 86 points. This equates to an ocean of bo-hum fizz, so buy carefully, and may the force be with you.

TYSON STELZER'S SPARKLING WINES OF THE YEAR UNDER \$20

TOMICH M CHARDONNAY PINOT NV

\$18 | ADELAIDE HILLS | CORK | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 89 POINTS

A distinct blush copper hue heralds a complex sparkling that upholds primary fruit character of apple, pear and mandarin amidst biscuity, spicy complexity. Cool Adelaide Hills acidity glides through the finish, slightly dominated by honeyed dosage.

BROWN BROTHERS NV CUVÉE PREMIUM SPARKLING BRUT CHARDONNAY PINOT NOIR NV

\$18.90 | SOUTH-EASTERN AUSTRALIA | CORK | 11.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 89 POINTS

Chardonnay Pinot Noir; 2015 base vintage; charmat method; 15g/L dosage

There's value in this clean apple and pear flavoured blend, with sufficient cool climate acidity on board to handle a high dosage of 15g/L. It's well crafted, finishing honeyed yet refreshing.

YARRA BURN PREMIUM CUVÉE BRUT NV

\$20 | VICTORIA | CORK | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 89 POINTS

Base vintage 2015; Pinot Noir 58.5%, Chardonnay 39.4%; bottle fermented; disgorged November 2016; average time on lees 12 months; winemaker Ed Carr

A great value Victorian blend currently based on the 2015 vintage, uniting the crunchy red apple and lemon vibrancy of pinot noir and chardonnay with the gentle biscuit and ginger cake complexity of lees age. It concludes with a touch more dosage than it needs, though hardly out of place at this price.

OTHER SPARKLING WINES UNDER \$20

YELLOWGLEN YELLOW LIMITED EDITION BY SAMANTHA WILLS NV

\$12.99 | SOUTH-EASTERN AUSTRALIA | CORK | 11% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 88 POINTS

A powerful, rich and fruity style of baked apple, clove and nutmeg, with sweetness, acidity and phenolic structure finding harmony on the finish.

EDENMAE VINTAGE CUVÉE TRIO 2016

\$18 | EDEN VALLEY | CORK | 13% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 88 POINTS

60% chardonnay, 20% pinot noir, 20% riesling; charmat method

A small proportion of pinot noir is sufficient to infuse a pretty, subtle salmon hue to this young, fruity style. Crunchy nashi pear and star fruit denote a dry style with firm phenolic grip.

MOJO FIZZ CHARDONNAY PINOT NOIR BRUT CUVÉE NV

\$18.99 | ADELAIDE HILLS | CORK | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 88 POINTS

65% Chardonnay 35% Pinot Noir; matured 14 months in 33% new European oak and 66% one and two year old French oak; 7.1g/L dosage; Charmat method

This is a complex recipe and a compelling wine for the price, contrasting the bright, tangy fruit of the Adelaide Hills with the well-managed complexity of oak fermentation (one-third new, but you wouldn't pick it). A pretty blush hue and low dosage make for a fun party style. Tank fermentation deprives it of texture and carry on the finish, but you can't have everything at this price.

PAUL CONTI LORENZA SPARKLING CHENIN BLANC NV

\$20 | WESTERN AUSTRALIA | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 88 POINTS

Dosage 3 g/L; Base vintage 2013

A toasty and mature sparkling chenin made according to the traditional method, with notes of struck flint reduction. Tropical fruit notes contrast bitter lemon zest. It concludes with balanced fruit sweetness.

WINE MEN OF GOTHAM BRUT CUVÉE NV

\$10 | SOUTH AUSTRALIA | CROWN SEAL | 13% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 87 POINTS

Base vintage 2013; Verdelho/Chardonnay; 7.5g/L dosage

Apple and lemon fruit in a fresh and primary style, with a simple and short finish of firm phenolic presence.

DI GIORGIO FAMILY LUCINDALE PINOT NOIR CHARDONNAY NV

\$18 | COONAWARRA | CORK | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 87 POINTS

Boasting a pretty, pale salmon hue, this is an elegant Coonawarra rosé of strawberry and guava character and more candied dosage than it needs.

COFIELD CHARDONNAY PINOT NOIR NV

\$20 | ALPINE VALLEYS | CROWN SEAL | 10.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 87 POINTS

95% Chardonnay 5% Pinot Noir

A primary, fruity and simple style of stone fruits and citrus, with dosage making for a sweet and honeyed finish.

TAYLORS PINOT NOIR CHARDONNAY BRUT CUVÉE NV

\$20 | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 87 POINTS

Bottle fermented; 2016 bottling

A soft, simple, fruity and sweet style of red apple and lemon character, with some phenolic grip on a short finish of balanced dosage.

HOGGIES ESTATE COONAWARRA SPARKLING CHARDONNAY PINOT NOIR NV

\$12.50 | COONAWARRA | CORK | 11% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 86 POINTS

Aged 6 months on yeast lees

A young and fruity style that encapsulates the crisp mood of Coonawarra chardonnay and pinot noir in crunchy apple and lemon fruit, tickled with a touch of lees age (6 months) and candied dosage.

JACOB'S CREEK TRILOGY CUVÉE BRUT NV

\$16.99 | SOUTH AUSTRALIA | CORK | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 86 POINTS

50% Pinot Noir, 45% Chardonnay, 5% Meunier; 2016 base vintage; 13g/L dosage

A touch of gold denotes a richer style of clean stone fruits and baked apple, with a full dosage of 13g/L, more than its soft acidity calls for.

BARRISTERS BLOCK POETIC JUSTICE BLUSH PINOT NOIR 2015

\$17 | ADELAIDE HILLS | CORK | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 86 POINTS

Tropical and sweet, with a hollow mid-palate and short finish.

LECONFIELD SYN CUVÉE BLANC NV

\$18 | CORK | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 86 POINTS

A sweet and tropical style of candied fruits and prominent dosage contrasting firm acidity on a short finish of clean fruit character.

RILEYS OF EDEN VALLEY HARE 'N' ROO SPARKLING WINE 2016

\$19.99 | EDEN VALLEY | CORK | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 86 POINTS

62% Pinot Noir estate grown 38% Chardonnay grown elsewhere is Eden Valley; tank fermented; 7 months on lees; 420 dozen

A young and fruity style of red apple and grapefruit with a hint of mandarin exoticism, finishing short and simple.

T'GALLANT CHARDONNAY PINOT NOIR NV

\$19.99 | AUSTRALIA | CORK | 11% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 86 POINTS

70% Chard, 30% Pinot Noir Base vintage 2016 Dosage 15 g/L

Fresh, fruity and youthful, this is a simple, clean sparkling built on a majority of chardonnay from the 2016 vintage and bolstered with a sweet dosage of 15g/L.

PRIMO ESTATE PRIMO SECCO NV

\$20 | ADELAIDE | CORK | 11.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 86 POINTS

100% Colombard. Base vintage 2016; Dosage 5 g/L; tank fermented

Colombard lends its varietal distinctiveness of dried hay, grapefruit and fleshy white nectarine notes to this young and fruity style. A soft finish is defined more by phenolic grip and fruit sweetness than a low dosage of 5g/L.

ROBERT CHANNON VERDELHO BUBBLES NV

\$20 | GRANITE BELT | CROWN SEAL | 13% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 86 POINTS

A sweet and tropical style of candied fruit and soft structure.

SCOTCHMANS HILL SWAN BAY VINTAGE BRUT 2016

\$20 | BELLARINE PENINSULA | CORK | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 86 POINTS

51% Chardonnay, 49% Pinot Noir; 8g/L dosage; Charmat method

With a faint blush tint, this is an elegantly fruity and clean charmat method sparkling of stone fruit and citrus character. It finishes short, sweet and simple.

DE BORTOLI LORIMER CHARDONNAY PINOT NOIR NV

\$20 | AUSTRALIA | DIAM | 11.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 86 POINTS

A sweet, primary and simple style of clean citrus, red apple and peach fruit with a short finish.

HARDYS SIR JAMES BRUT DE BRUT PINOT CHARDONNAY NV

\$13 | SOUTH-EASTERN AUSTRALIA | CORK | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

A complex style in which the toasty, biscuity, honeyed influence of secondary development take the lead over subtle red apple primary fruit, finishing firm and sweet.

JACOB'S CREEK COOL HARVEST SPARKLING SAUVIGNON BLANC NV

\$14.99 | SOUTH AUSTRALIA | DIAM | 10.3% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

100% Sauvignon Blanc; 2016 base vintage; 20g/L dosage

Pungent gooseberries and passionfruit spell out distinctive sauvignon character, culminating in a sweet finish of a high 20g/L dosage. A sweet and fruity style.

TRENTHAM ESTATE CHARDONNAY PINOT NOIR BRUT NV

\$16 | AUSTRALIA | CORK | 11.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

Charmat method; 10g/L sugar; 53% chardonnay 43% pinot noir 4% other; 2016 base vintage with 2015 and 2012 reserves; 30% aged for 12 months in old French oak puncheons

Tropical fruits and boiled sweets accent a sweet style of simple fruit and a short finish.

ANGOVE ORGANIC CUVÉE BRUT NV

\$16 | SOUTH AUSTRALIA | DIAM | 11% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

A firm style of ripe stone fruits and grassy notes, with dry phenolic grip that contrasts honeyed dosage.

WISE THE BEAD CHARDONNAY PINOT NOIR NV

\$16 | PEMBERTON | DIAM | 13.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

Chardonnay Pinot Noir

Notes of stone fruits and tropical fruits define a sweet, fruity and simple style. A ripe sparkling that will appeal to those looking for sweetness.

BARRISTERS BLOCK POETIC JUSTICE SPARKLING LEGALLY BLONDE 2015

\$17 | ADELAIDE HILLS | CORK | 13% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

A tropical and candied style that contrasts bitter grapefruit structure with sweet dosage.

JACOB'S CREEK RESERVE CHARDONNAY PINOT NOIR VINTAGE 2015

\$19.99 | SOUTH AUSTRALIA | DIAM | 11.8% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

85% Chardonnay 15% Pinot Noir; 13g/L dosage

Ripe stone fruits and baked apple are bolstered by a full dosage of 13g/L, making for a sweet style with hints of biscuity complexity and a short finish marked by earthy hints.

LONGHOP PREMIER CUVÉE PINOT NOIR CHARDONNAY NV

\$20 | ADELAIDE HILLS | CORK | 13% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

Base vintage 2016; 5g/L dosage

Raspberry and strawberry fruit are hampered by earthy notes and firm phenolic grip.

STEWART & PRENTICE PARADISE GARAGE BRUT MÉTHODE CHAMPENOISE NV

\$20 | AUSTRALIA | DIAM | 11.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

50% Chardonnay 25% Pinot Meunier 25% Pinot Noir

A full yellow hue with a gold tint, this is a cuvée of firm phenolic grip and a dry finish, devoid of fruit lift, freshness and definition.

HARDYS SIR JAMES CUVÉE BRUT PINOT CHARDONNAY NV

\$13 | SOUTH-EASTERN AUSTRALIA | CORK | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 84 POINTS

The high dosage version of Brut de Brut is loaded with 15g/L dosage, which dominates in candied overtones to an otherwise soft and toasty style of biscuity, honeyed complexity.

JACOB'S CREEK CHARDONNAY PINOT NOIR BRUT CUVÉE NV

\$14.99 | SOUTH AUSTRALIA | CORK | 11.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 84 POINTS

2016 base vintage; 11.5g/L dosage

Gentle apple, pear and grapefruit character is marked by an earthy yeastiness, finishing short and lacking coherence.

AZAHARA SPARKLING CHARDONNAY PINOT NOIR NV

\$15 | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 84 POINTS

82% Chardonnay 18% Pinot Noir; 70% 1 y.o., 15% 2 y.o., 5% 3 y.o., 5% 4 y.o., balance up to 12 y.o.; Charmat method; 6 g/L; 10% of current vintage fermented in second hand oak; aged on lees for 24 months

A savoury style of yeasty, earthy complexity and simple stone fruit and citrus character, finishing short with firm phenolic grip.

BIMBADGEN SPARKLING HUNTER VALLEY SEMILLON NV

\$16 | HUNTER VALLEY | CORK | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 84 POINTS

A charmat method sparkling Hunter semillon of grassy and green capsicum flavours, hit with a full dosage of 12g/L.

KIES BAROSSA VALLEY SPARKLING GABRIELLA 2016

\$20 | BAROSSA VALLEY | CROWN SEAL | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 84 POINTS

Don't be deceived by the pink label and foil: this sparkling semillon has no suggestion of blush to its hue. It's sweet and candied, with dried hay notes and no distinctive fruit character.

DE BORTOLI SACRED HILL BRUT CUVÉE NV

\$6 | AUSTRALIA | DIAM | 11% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 83 POINTS

Cut grass and lantana lend a weedy note to citrus and stone fruits, finishing sweet and astringent.

YERINGA ESTATE TAYLOR FERGUSON PREMIUM BRUT CUVÉE NV

\$15 | SOUTH-EASTERN AUSTRALIA | DIAM | 13% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 83 POINTS

Astringent, earthy, grassy and underripe yet overtly sweet.

BAROKES BUBBLY CHARDONNAY SEMILLON NV

\$4.50 | SOUTH-EASTERN AUSTRALIA | CAN | 13% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 82 POINTS

51% Chardonnay, 40% Semillon

Earth, coarse, metallic and devoid of grace and fruit definition.

MR MICK GELA CUVÉE BRUT NV

\$17 | CLARE VALLEY | CORK | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 82 POINTS

A simple style of metallic structure and earthy character, finishing firm and short.

QUEEN ADELAIDE BRUT NV

\$9 | SOUTH-EASTERN AUSTRALIA | CORK | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 81 POINTS

Candied, tropical, firm, hard, short, simple and oh so, so sweet.

THE BEST SPARKLING WINES OF THE YEAR UNDER \$30

The \$20 to \$30 category is a hot spot in the Australian sparkling offering, representing a big step up from entry sub-\$20 cuvées. Your investment here buys into serious cuvées from top cool climate regions including Tasmania, Henty, High Eden, King Valley, Adelaide Hills and Mornington Peninsula. These are the sparkling wines I buy when budget and occasion don't call for champagne.

This year I reviewed 77 Australian sparkling wines between \$20 and \$30 (excluding blanc de blancs, rosés, sparkling reds, proseccos and moscatos — see below for reviews under these categories) with a median score of 87 points.

TYSON STELZER'S SPARKLING WINE OF THE YEAR UNDER \$30

SEPPELT SALINGER HENTY VINTAGE CUVÉE MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE 2013

\$29.99 | HENTY | CORK | 11.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2018 | 94 POINTS

48% Pinot, 37% Chardonnay, 14% Meunier; Disgorged November 2015; Dosage 10 g/L; No oak

Crafting affordable fizz of this calibre on mainland Australia calls for every bit of the long-trialled wizardry of this 150 year old winery. There is a confident, effortless poise to this cuvée as enduring as the grand old estate itself. Two years on lees has done nothing to diminish the purity of its bright, medium straw hue and energetic cut of red apple, beurre bosc pear and fresh lemon fruit. Time in the drives has layered subtle nougat and vanilla intrigue and furnished a creamy, finely textured, lingering finish. A benchmark vintage and the best value sparkling on the shelves this year.

THE RUNNERS-UP

MOUNTADAM PINOT CHARDONNAY NV

\$27 | HIGH EDEN | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2018 | 92 POINTS

51% Pinot Noir and 49% Chardonnay from the original 1972 Mountadam plantings; Base Vintage: 2012 Disgorged 6 September 2016 (bottle fermented) Dosage: 9 g/L Base wine portion fermented in very old oak (10 years +) and stored for 12 months

The tension and focus of this cool, high site sings in lemon, apple and crunchy pear fruit of good concentration and mid-palate depth, well toned by the creamy texture and almond meal complexity of three years lees age. A pale straw hue reflects its restraint, with a long finish carried by fine acidity and toasty complexity. A highlight in Eden Valley sparkling

RELZIA ESTATE MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE NV

\$29 | TASMANIA | CORK | 12.3% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2018-2019 | 92 POINTS

57.11% Pinot Noir, 41.8% Chardonnay, 1.09% Pinot Meunier; 25% blend in neutral older oak; Dosage 8.56 g/L; aged one year on lees; Disgorged 10.10.16; Base vintage 2015

A tense and fresh young style built on classy fruit from Relbia, just south of Launceston in the Tamar Valley. It's a fruity and tangy cuvée in which pinot noir takes a confident lead in a faint blush hue and lively strawberry, red cherry and pink grapefruit character. Cool northern Tasmanian acidity makes for a tense finish that would appreciate longer lees age to soften, integrate and build complexity.

NINTH ISLAND TASMANIA NV

\$30 | TASMANIA | CORK | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2018 | 92 POINTS

55% chardonnay, 37% pinot, 8% meunier; 2014 base vintage with 2013 and 2012 reserves; all estate fruit, sourced from five sites in Piper's River and one in the Tamar Valley; Méthode Traditionnelle; 9.5g/L dosage; 17-18,000 cases; disgorged September 2016

Depth and presence of red apple fruit contrasts with crunchy lemon zest and grapefruit crunch, making for a bright and refreshing style of pale straw hue, with the subtle almond meal notes of lees age. Dosage is well matched, there is subtle lees-derived texture, and it carries excellent line and length, making for a compelling and value-for-money sparkling.

SITTELLA CHENIN BLANC MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE NV

\$22 | SWAN VALLEY | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 91 POINTS

From 20-45 year old Swan Valley vines; aged on lees 16 months; Majority 2015 and 2014 vintages; Dosage 8g/L

With a pale hue and a crunchy palate of pear, grapefruit and just the right amount of creamy custard apple, this is a beautifully expressive sparkling chenin blanc that tactically uses subtle lees age to build texture rather than diminishing its purity and definition of fruit expression. Inspired by the great sparkling cheniens of the Loire Valley. The French would be proud. Impeccably executed.

SEPPELT SALINGER PREMIUM CUVÉE NV

\$24.99 | SOUTH-EASTERN AUSTRALIA | CORK | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 91 POINTS

60% Pinot, 32% Chard, 8% Meunier; Base Vintage 2013 Disgorged 11/2015 Dosage 10g/L

There is no hint of its credential on the label, but the recipe is impressive, almost two-thirds pinot noir from the Adelaide Hills, Tumbarumba, Henty and the Yarra, based on the 2013 harvest and aged on lees for two years. It upholds a crunchy mood of lemon and baked apple fruit, filled with the spicy, toasty character of lees age. A boost of fruit intensity lends fruit mince spice notes, making for a style of confidence and personality. Fine acidity and well-integrated dosage mark out a long finish. Value.

HOUSE OF ARRAS A BY ARRAS PREMIUM CUVÉE NV

\$25 | TASMANIA | CORK | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 91 POINTS

2014 base vintage; 37% reserve (2008-2013); Tasmania (Pipers River, Derwent Valley, Tamar Valley); Pinot Noir 48.8%, Chardonnay 44.3%, Pinot Meunier 6.5%; disgorged Sept 2016; 11.0 g/L dosage

A by Arras remains one of the most complex and engaging cuvées anywhere under \$25, a grand accord between deep complexity and the stamina and focus of cool Tasmanian fruit. Two years on lees coupled with a generous inclusion of more than one-third reserves of up to nine years of age make for layers of roast hazelnuts, vanilla cream and butter. Firm, fine phenolic grip is countered by a full dosage of 11g/L to compelling effect.

BROWN BROTHERS PINOT NOIR CHARDONNAY & PINOT MEUNIER MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE NV

\$26.99 | KING VALLEY | CORK | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2018 | 91 POINTS

Pinot noir, chardonnay, meunier; 2014 base vintage; old oak in reserve wine; disgorged October 2016; 10g/L dosage

Long one of my favourite go-tos of mainland bargain fizz, this is a cuvée that presents the tension of upper King Valley fruit, the texture of respectable lees age and the harmony of finely poised acidity and well-integrated dosage. There's a hint of earthiness at the moment, but at this price, who's counting?

LAMBROOK SPARK 2016

\$24.99 | ADELAIDE HILLS | CORK | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 90 POINTS

100% Pinot Noir; Residual Sugar 9 g/L; Charmat

A fresh and young charmat method sparkling pinot noir of ultra pale salmon hue, accented with tangy strawberry and elegant red apple fruit. Lively acidity and well-integrated dosage cover for a little phenolic grip on the finish, but at this price, who's counting? It's clean, refreshing and vibrant.

YELLOWGLEN PERLE VINTAGE 2012

\$24.99 | PICCADILLY VALLEY | CORK | 11.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2018 | 90 POINTS

Pinot Noir 56% Chardonnay 38% Pinot Meunier 6%; Disgorged 10/2014 Dosage 8g/L

With a couple of years of maturity on lees and a couple off, this is a toasty, spicy and honeyed style that upholds the crunchy apple and bright lemon character of a strong season in the Adelaide Hills. It finishes long and accurate, with a low, well-integrated dosage of 8g/L.

GEMTREE APRIL'S DANCE SPARKLING NV

\$30 | MCLAREN VALE | CROWN SEAL | 10.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 90 POINTS

Savagnin and Chardonnay; traditional method

Plucked at the perfect instant of ripeness, the crunchy nashi pear, lemon and apple fruit of McLaren Vale savagnin and chardonnay make for a refreshingly compellingly sparkling of bright acidity, creamy bead and well-toned dosage. A happy summer quaffer of fruity vivacity.

MAJELLA MINUET BY MAJELLA NV

\$30 | COONAWARRA | CROWN SEAL | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2019 | 90 POINTS

100% Estate grown riesling; 70% 2014, 16% 2013, 14% 2012; secondary ferment in bottle; aged 16 months on lees; disgorged 16 October 2015; Dosage 5.1g/L

A sparkling riesling of finesse and focus, built on the zest and apple crunch of 2014, bolstered by the subtle toasty, nutty complexity of one-third reserves and integrated thanks to the gently textural effect of 16 months on lees. It retains brightness, varietal definition and integrity.

MIA VALLEY ESTATE ODE TO MAESTRO SPARKLING RIESLING 2016

\$30 | HEATHCOTE | CROWN SEAL | 11.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2018 | 90 POINTS

Estate grown, produced, bottle fermented and hand disgorged

A sparkling riesling of character, complexity and richness, tactically deploying the apricot, spice and ginger notes of botrytis to build body and interest. There is depth to its baked apple fruit and tension and cut to its citrus accents, culminating in a long finish of generous fruit expression and supple sweetness. It's more Germanic than Australian in style, and all the better for it.

STONIER CHARDONNAY PINOT NOIR VINTAGE 2014

\$30 | MORNINGTON PENINSULA | DIAM | 13.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2020 | 90 POINTS

75% Chardonnay, 25% Pinot Noir

The complexity of brioche, toast and nougat forms a compelling contrast to the tart lemon and crunchy pear fruit of the Mornington Peninsula, making for a vintage with the character to engage and the structure to live some years longer.

OTHER SPARKLING WINES UNDER \$30

PUNT ROAD AIRLIE BANK SPARKLING NV

\$22 | YARRA VALLEY | CORK | 13% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 89 POINTS

90% Chardonnay; 10% Pinot Noir; 2% use of Oak; 90% 2016 10% 2015; Dosage 11g/L

Yarra Valley chardonnay (90%) provides zest and lemon freshness while pinot noir supports with fed apple and strawberry fruit, backed by subtle toasty, honeyed complexity, good acid line and slightly candied dosage of 11g/L.

DEVIL'S CORNER SPARKLING NV

\$22.99 | TASMANIA | CORK | 11.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 89 POINTS

Chardonnay/Pinot Noir; charmat method; 12g/L dosage

Clean, fresh and fruity, Devil's Corner is a celebration of the dynamic, zesty and harmonious fruit of Tasmania at a bargain price. The citrus of chardonnay and strawberries and the red apples of pinot noir are well balanced by cool acidity and just a touch more candied dosage than it really calls for. Nonetheless, great value party fizz.

DE BORTOLI LA BOHÈME CUVÉE BLANC NV

\$24 | YARRA VALLEY | DIAM | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 89 POINTS

93% chardonnay, 7% pinot noir; 56% 2015, 10% 2014 and 34% reserves from 2007 to 2016; fermented and aged in tanks and casks; 8.5g/L dosage; inaugural release

This pale, fresh and crunchy new release inspired by the De Bortoli ladies captures the bright expression of Yarra chardonnay in lemon, grapefruit and nashi pear character, finishing with tense acidity.

HOWARD VINEYARD CLOVER PINOT NOIR CHARDONNAY 2016

\$24 | ADELAIDE HILLS | CORK | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 89 POINTS

60% pinot noir, 40% chardonnay; 100% estate, single vineyard

With a pretty, pale salmon hue, this is a young and fresh cuvée that celebrates the rose petal, strawberry and cassis of Adelaide Hills pinot noir and cuts it with the lemon tension of chardonnay, culminating in a fresh and dry finish with some phenolic grip.

PETALUMA CROSER NV

\$25 | ADELAIDE HILLS | DIAM | 13.2% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 89 POINTS

7.5g/L dosage

This is a fleshy blend that presents the expansive mood of Adelaide Hills pinot noir, bolstered by toasty, biscuity complexity and more dosage than its proportions call for. It concludes long, full and sweet.

SIDEWOOD ESTATE CHLOE CUVÉE MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE 2013

\$28 | ADELAIDE HILLS | DIAM | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 89 POINTS

40% Pinot Noir 60% Chardonnay; 24 months on lees; 4.5g/L dosage;

A faint blush tint and flavours of strawberries and raspberries proclaim Adelaide Hills pinot noir, backed with the structure of 60% chardonnay. Two years on lees has contributed notes of raw almonds. It finishes with balanced dosage and firm phenolic grip.

HARDYS SIR JAMES PINOT NOIR CHARDONNAY 2009

\$28 | SOUTH-EASTERN AUSTRALIA | CORK | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 89 POINTS

Cool climate Tumbarumba and Yarra Valley fruit unites in a complex and mature blend that takes full advantage of a tiny touch of oak and five-and-a-half-years on lees to build texture and toasty, honeyed complexity. Full dosage makes for a sweeter finish than this soft style calls for, and is no longer the wine it was a year ago.

MOORILLA PRAXIS SERIES SPARKLING RIESLING 2016

\$29 | TASMANIA | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2018-2021 | 89 POINTS

The spice, baked apple and marmalade intensity of Tasmania riesling contrasts the high-tensile lime juice cut of searing acidity, making for a tense and firm style of grand complexity.

STONIER CHARDONNAY PINOT NOIR VINTAGE 2015

\$30 | MORNINGTON PENINSULA | DIAM | 13% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 89 POINTS

70% Chardonnay 30% Pinot Noir; Dosage 5g/L; 9 months on lees before bottling and 12 months after; Disgorged Dec 2016;

An even and engaging sparkling that unites the strawberry and raspberry of Mornington pinot noir with the lemon and apple of chardonnay. Lees age has integrated acidity without yet contributing secondary complexity. It finishes full and sweet, more from fruit ripeness than dosage.

YELLOWGLEN ALESSANDRIA PINOT NOIR CHARDONNAY VINTAGE 2015

\$21.99 | SOUTH-EASTERN AUSTRALIA | CORK | 11.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 88 POINTS

Pinot Noir 79% Chardonnay 15% Other 6% No oak

A happy and easy-going blend built on the succulence of more than three-quarters pinot noir, making for a fruity style of peach, yellow plum and lemon zest, with slightly heightened dosage necessary to tone a touch of phenolic bitterness.

BLUE PYRENEES ESTATE LUNA MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE NV

\$22 | PYRENEES | DIAM | 12.3% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2018 | 88 POINTS

74% Chardonnay 22% Pinot Noir; No oak; Dosage 8g/L; 64% 2013 23% 2014 13% 2012

A pale salmon hue and strawberry and red apple fruit declare pinot noir more boldly than its small inclusion might suggest. It's a fresh, fragrant and fruit-focused style of well-composed presence, fine-tuned acidity, well balanced dosage and a touch of phenolic bitterness.

HELEN'S HILL EN VIE BLANC DE NOIR 2016

\$25 | YARRA VALLEY | CORK | 11.7% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 88 POINTS

Single vineyard; 100% pinot noir; Dosage 11g/L

Intensity of berry compote, mixed spice, even sarsaparilla, make for a powerfully intense, youthful celebration of Yarra Valley pinot noir, bolstered with full dosage. It's flamboyant, extroverted and simple

CLAYMORE THIS IS ANFIELD ADELAIDE HILLS PINOT NOIR CHARDONNAY 2013

\$25 | ADELAIDE HILLS | CORK | 11.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2018 | 88 POINTS

65% Pinot Noir 35% Chardonnay; disgorged Aug 2016; no oak; Dosage 6.5g/L

Contrasting the toasty, honeyed, ginger complexity of three years of lees age with the tension of taut Adelaide Hills acidity, this is an affordable sparkling with a firm finish.

CAPITAL THE SPEAKER 2012

\$25 | CANBERRA | CROWN SEAL | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2020 | 88 POINTS

84% Chardonnay, 16% Pinot Noir; 4 years on lees.

Blessed with a cool year in Canberra, this is a style that sings with the tension of chardonnay, accented by struck flint and gunpowder reductive nuances and a hint of cut grass. Four years on yeast lees has infused toasty complexity. It concludes with well-integrated dosage and tense, raw acidity.

TALTARNI BRUT 2012

\$26 | SOUTH-EASTERN AUSTRALIA | DIAM | 12.8% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2018 | 88 POINTS

Méthode Traditionnelle; 64% chardonnay, 32% pinot, 4% meunier; 57% Pyrenees, 27% Tasmania, 16% Adelaide Hills; at least 30 months on lees; disgorged April 2016; 8g/L dosage

Predominant Pyrenees fruit sourcing lends body and flesh to a blend that belies its almost two-thirds chardonnay lead. At least 2.5 years on lees have built finely structured texture, though there is a touch of phenolic bitterness on the finish.

GRANT BURGE BRUT PINOT NOIR CHARDONNAY NV

\$27 | AUSTRALIA | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 88 POINTS

Adelaide Hills, Alpine Valleys, and Eden Valley; Méthode traditionnelle; aged on lees 28 months; 6g/L dosage

Ripe nectarine and strawberry fruit unites in a smooth and creamy style of soft acidity. 28 months on lees contributes honeyed, biscuity complexity. Phenolic grip as much as acidity balances its fruit sweetness on the finish.

PUNT ROAD NAPOLEONE VINEYARD 2012

\$27.50 | YARRA VALLEY | DIAM | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 88 POINTS

90% Chardonnay; 10% Pinot Noir; Dosage 12g/L; Disgorged Dec 2016

Red apple presence and tense lemon juice acidity meet roast hazelnut complexity, with a finish of candied dosage and subtle phenolic grip.

CHANDON S ORANGE BITTERS NV

\$29 | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 88 POINTS

A new cocktail-style sparkling concept from Chandon, blending hand-crafted orange bitters with chardonnay and pinot noir. While the concept is not for sparkling wine purists, it has been well executed, with orange bitters and spices uniting with the wine rather than competing with it. Dosage is well-tuned to the bitter notes on the finish.

ESTATE 807 SPARKLING PINOT NOIR 2014

\$29 | DENMARK | DIAM | 12.9% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2018-2020 | 88 POINTS

Aged 18 months on lees; Disgorged 20/9/16; Dosage 2g/L; 100% Pinot Noir; fermented 10 days on skins

Ten days fermentation on skins has infused a full, impenetrable crimson hue to this sparkling pinot noir. Flavours of plums and cherries are backed by notes of cocoa and coffee bean - though there is no oak here. Firm, fine tannins define a firm and dry finish.

FROGMORE CREEK FORTY-TWO DEGREES SOUTH PREMIER CUVÉE NV

\$29 | TASMANIA | DIAM | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 88 POINTS

Chardonnay pinot noir

The body and strawberry fruit depth of pinot noir meet the citrus cut and cool acid tension of chardonnay, tinted with the savoury complexity of lees age in subtle earthy, charcuterie notes. Acid and dosage find a comfortable synergy on the finish.

TYRRELL'S PINOT NOIR CHARDONNAY BRUT 2012

\$30 | HUNTER VALLEY | CORK | 11.8% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2022-2027 | 88 POINTS

96.8% Pinot Noir 3.2% Chardonnay; Disgorged Aug 15 to Nov 2016

The biscuity, bready complexity of lees age provides dimension and complexity to this tense and dry style, with firm acidity accentuated by less than 2g/L of residual sweetness, making for a hard finish. It holds good persistence and great potential to age.

YARRA BURN YARRA VALLEY VINTAGE PINOT NOIR CHARDONNAY PINOT MEUNIER 2015

\$30 | VICTORIA | CORK | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 88 POINTS

Victoria (60% Yarra Valley); Pinot noir 58%, Chardonnay 34%, Pinot Meunier 8%; WINEMAKER: Ed Carr 12.0g/L dosage; disgorged October 2016

This is a crunchy and zesty vintage for Yarra Burn, accenting apple and grapefruit characters of primary fruit with biscuit, brioche and almond notes of lees age. Some phenolic grip and bitter grapefruit pith sensation on the finish is countered by full dosage.

DUKE'S VINEYARD MAGPIE HILL RESERVE SPARKLING RIESLING 2014

\$30 | PORONGURUP | DIAM | 12.1% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 88 POINTS

Dosage 2.5g/L; disgorged May 2016

A spicy sparkling riesling of primary lime, lime drops and pink lady apple characters. It concludes with fruit sweetness and firm phenolic grip.

BENT CREEK VINEYARDS ADELADY SPARKLING PINOT NOIR NV

\$25 | ADELAIDE HILLS | DIAM | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 87 POINTS

100% Pinot Noir; single vineyard Piccadilly Valley

A savoury style of beetroot and red apple fruit, lacking in fragrance and finishing with sweet dosage and notes of candied strawberries.

BUNKERS SPARKLING NV

\$25 | MARGARET RIVER | CORK | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 87 POINTS

Chenin Blanc

There's no suggestion on the bottle that this is a sparkling chenin blanc, but it's clear in the glass, articulating the crunchy, primary, vibrant nashi pear and grapefruit personality of the variety in a simple and tangy style.

GRAMPIANS ESTATE KELLY'S WELCOME CUVÉE 2012

\$25 | GRAMPIANS | CROWN SEAL | 11.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2018 | 87 POINTS

50% Chardonnay, 50% Pinot Noir; Dosage 7g/L; Disgorged May 2016

Red apple, grapefruit and strawberry hull of tangy tension expresses the cool mood of the Grampians with hard acid and the biscuity complexity of close to four years of lees age.

NOVA VITA FIREBIRD NV

\$25 | ADELAIDE HILLS | DIAM | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 87 POINTS

95% 2016 Chardonnay 5% 2015 Pinot. Charmat method; 2016 chardonnay spent 6 months on yeast lees in tank; 2015 Pinot blush and stored in old French oak barrels. Estate grown.

An almost blanc de blancs is bolstered with a dribble of barrel-aged pinot noir. It's a tense contrast of grassy chardonnay with ripe melon notes, with firm acidity countered by ripe fruit sweetness.

FOX CREEK ARCTIC FOX GRAND CUVÉE NV

\$27 | MCLAREN VALE | CORK | 12.8% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 87 POINTS

46% Vermentino 31% Verdelho 23% Sauvignon Blanc; Dosage 8 g/L; nil oak; Charmat

An eclectic and unusual blend that meets the savoury restraint and crunchy apple characters of vermentino and verdelho with the passionfruit and mandarin exuberance of sauvignon blanc, finishing with sweet fruit presence.

HENTLEY FARM BLANC DE NOIR 2016

\$27.50 | BAROSSA | DIAM | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 87 POINTS

A small portion fermented in barrel; Charmat method (tank fermentation); Dosage 10g/L

A young, fruity, tank-fermented style of pretty pale salmon hue. Flavours of red apple, strawberries and cream are marred by firm phenolic grip. It lacks the grace and integration of time on lees.

QUEALY SECCO SPLENDIDO METODO ANCESTRALE 2016

\$30 | MORNINGTON PENINSULA | CROWN SEAL | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 87 POINTS

Muscat Blanc a Petits Grains; zero dosage

Ripe muscat boldly announces its presence in notes of apricot jam, musk and ginger, loaded with fruit sweetness and lacking the acid line of chardonnay or pinot. The result is a simple, fruity and sweet style. Packed with fruit sweetness, it needs no dosage.

DELAMERE VINEYARDS NON VINTAGE CUVÉE NV

\$30 | TASMANIA | CORK | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 87 POINTS

70% pinot noir, 30% chardonnay; 2015 base vintage; 25% reserves from 2014, 2013 & some older chardonnay; aged on lees 12 months; Dosage 6g/L

A spicy and savoury style that leads out with the charcuterie notes of fermentation, with crunchy red apple fruit, structured with some phenolic grip. It concludes with good acid line and well-balanced dosage.

PHILIP SHAW EDINBURGH PALACE NV

\$30 | ORANGE | CROWN SEAL | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 87 POINTS

83% chardonnay, 17% pinot noir; 2013 base vintage; fermented in old oak barriques; disgorged August 2016; 6g/L dosage

Old barrique fermentation lends a toasty and savoury charcuterie and mushroom complexity to the stone fruits and citrus of high altitude Orange chardonnay (mostly) and pinot noir. The result is textural and persistent, finishing with fruit sweetness.

THORN-CLARKE PINOT NOIR CHARDONNAY NV

\$21.99 | EDEN VALLEY | DIAM | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 86 POINTS

Base vintage 2015; Dosage 9g/L

A simple, young style of grapefruit and red apple fruit, with fruit sweetness, fine acidity and some phenolic bitterness tussling on the finish.

CHAIN OF PONDS DIVA ADELAIDE HILLS CHARDONNAY PINOT NOIR NV

\$22 | ADELAIDE HILLS | CORK | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 86 POINTS

87% Chardonnay 13% Pinot Noir; Charmat method; 9.1g/L dosage

A fruity and ripe style of orange and tropical fruit character, backed with grapefruit zest and crunch, finishing short and simple.

LEURA PARK ESTATE VINTAGE CUVÉE PINOT CHARDONNAY 2016

\$22 | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 86 POINTS

80% Pinot Noir 20% Chardonnay; Some fermented in new and used oak; On lees 4-6 months then prepared for Charmat; 9.5g/L dosage

A medium salmon hue declares a rosé style of ripe, candied strawberry and raspberry fruit, contrasting the savoury complexity of partial barrel fermentation. It's a young, simple and short style created in the charmat method, with candied dosage completing the finish.

FOWLES WINE STONE DWELLERS SPARKLING PINOT NOIR NV

\$22 | STRATHBOGIE RANGES | CROWN SEAL | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 86 POINTS

10g/L dosage

With a salmon copper hue and flavours of tangy strawberries, tomatoes and sage, this is a rosé of herbal complexity, sour acidity and a touch of phenolic bitterness.

SIDEWOOD ESTATE SPARKLING PINOT NOIR CHARDONNAY NV

\$25 | ADELAIDE HILLS | DIAM | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 86 POINTS

60% Pinot Noir 40% Chardonnay; partial malolactic fermentation

Red apple and strawberry fruit is prominent on this tangy style, with bubblegum complexity, finishing short and simple.

CHERRY TREE HILL SPARKLING WHITE 2016

\$25 | SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS | CORK | 13% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 86 POINTS

Sauvignon Blanc

A fruity and sweet sparkling sauvignon blanc of firm phenolic grip that contrasts grassy characters and tropical fruit ripeness.

O'LEARY WALKER HURTLE ADELAIDE HILLS PINOT NOIR CHARDONNAY 2011

\$28 | ADELAIDE HILLS | DIAM | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2019-2021 | 86 POINTS

75% pinot noir, 25% chardonnay; single vineyard Oakbank; full malolactic; some oak fermentation; minimum 2 years on lees

The cool 2011 season has given birth to a savoury and tense style that upholds bracing acidity even at six years of age. Partial oak fermentation lends subtle charcuterie notes, but that firm acidity is hard to get past.

COFIELD PINOT NOIR CHARDONNAY 2014

\$28 | ALPINE VALLEYS | CORK | 11.8% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 86 POINTS

78% King Valley Pinot Noir; 22% Alpine Valley Chardonnay; 12% aged in older oak; disgorged September 2016

A full straw hue announces a more than three-quarters pinot noir lead. The tension of the King and Alpine Valleys contrasts the palate breadth of pinot, finishing spicy, savoury and lacking fruit lift and definition. One bottle tasted was oxidised.

CENTENNIAL VINEYARDS PINOT NOIR CHARDONNAY PINOT MEUNIER NV

\$30 | SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2019-2020 | 86 POINTS

60% Pinot Noir, 37% Chardonnay, 3% Meunier; 2012 mainly, plus 2011; 10% wild fermented in old oak, 3.5 years on lees. Disgorged July 2016;

Dosage 9g/L

Stone fruit and tropical fruit ripeness contrasts the grip of grapefruit and lemon in searing acidity and firm phenolic grip, with the toasty, biscuity influence of 3.5 years of lees age.

DE IULIIS CHARDONNAY PINOT 2011

\$30 | HUNTER VALLEY | CROWN SEAL | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 86 POINTS

97% Chardonnay 3% Pinot Noir; Dosage 4g/L

A funky and complex style that projects the prominent bubblegum and yeast complexity of fermentation and lees age with tutti fruity character, culminating in notes of phenolic bitterness.

PAULETTS TRILLIANS SPARKLING BRUT NV

\$22 | POLISH HILL RIVER/CLARE VALLEY | ZORK | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

Riesling; Base vintage 2015; Dosage 16 g/L; Charmat method

Some grubby, rubbery reductive notes ride over an otherwise fruity style of apple and lime fruit, with tropical accents and sweet dosage.

OAKDENE SPARKLING CHARDONNAY PINOT NOIR NV

\$23 | GEELONG | CORK | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

60% Chardonnay 40% Pinot Noir; dosage 12 g/L; Charmat; Base wine 2015/2016 vintage

A bright, pale salmon pink hue declares a rosé, though this is not disclosed on the bottle. It's a sweet, short and simple style that lacks fruit definition, with a structure defined more by phenolic grip than acid line.

DELL'UVA SPARKLING PINOT 2015

\$24 | BAROSSA VALLEY | CORK | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

Pinot Noir and Pinot Blanc

An extroverted sparkling pink of poached strawberry, raspberry and pink pepper flavours, with a sweet finish covering phenolic bitterness.

KOONARA THE GUARDIAN ANGEL 2016

\$24.95 | MOUNT GAMBIER | DIAM | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

Single vineyard Chardonnay and Pinot Noir 2g/L dosage

A sweet and tropical sparkling of firm acidity and lifted musk notes. It concludes short and simple.

DUDLEY LIMITED RELEASE DUDLEY BUBBLY NV

\$25 | KANGAROO ISLAND | CORK | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

Chardonnay

An earthy and yeasty style that lacks fruit brightness and finishes overtly sweet.

KARRIBINDI CHARDONNAY PINOT 2013

\$25 | MARGARET RIVER | DIAM | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

A sweet and ripe style of tropical fruit flavours and soft acidity, finishing candied, with some biscuity complexity from lees maturity.

SWINGS AND ROUNDABOUTS SPARKLING NV

\$26 | MARGARET RIVER | CROWN SEAL | 12.4% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

78% Chenin, 20% Sauvignon Blanc, 2% Semillon; Base vintage 2015; Dosage 11.2g/L

An unlikely blend of chenin, sauvignon and semillon, this is a fruity and youthful style of apple and pear flavours, with both fruit sweetness and full dosage accentuated by soft acidity.

DISTANT SOUTH TASMANIA CHARDONNAY PINOT NOIR NV

\$30 | TASMANIA | CORK | 11% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

Heavy and earthy, lacking freshness, vibrancy and fruit definition.

RED HILL ESTATE MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE 2012

\$30 | VICTORIA | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

Chardonnay, Pinot Noir & Pinot Meunier

Red apple and grapefruit are structured with firm, astringent acidity and hints of grassy underripeness, concluding sweet and firm.

SYMPHONY HILL GRAND VINTAGE MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE PINOT NOIR CHARDONNAY 2015

\$30 | GRANITE BELT | DIAM | 13% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

Pinot Noir/Chardonnay

The flesh of pinot noir and citrus zest of chardonnay are accented by earthy, leesy complexity and notes of orange rind, finishing with fruit sweetness that contrasts some phenolic bitterness.

HORNER ESTELLE LITTLE JACK ORGANIC SPARKLING 2016

\$23.99 | COWRA | CORK | 11.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 84 POINTS

Tropical fruits are marked by savoury game and charcuterie notes that detract from purity and focus, finishing with phenolic grip.

TENAFEATE CREEK SPARKLING PINOT GRIGIO 2015

\$25 | EDEN VALLEY | CORK | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 84 POINTS

100% Pinot Grigio; Charmat method; 400 dozen

With a pale salmon copper hue, this is a simple and short style. Released in May 2015, it has now shed any primary fruit vibrancy that might have once endeared it.

TRENTHAM ESTATE FAMILY RESERVE PINOT NOIR CHARDONNAY NV

\$26 | TASMANIA | DIAM | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 84 POINTS

52% Pinot Noir 48% Chardonnay; 2012 base vintage with reserves from 2011 and 2010; 12 months on lees; 10g/L sugar; 10% of blend aged in old French puncheons for 24 months

A funky and gamey style of boiled sausage character; a 10% portion aged in old French oak puncheons for 24 months detracting from the fruit purity of the blend. It culminates in citrus fruit character, cool Tasmanian acidity and a sweet dosage.

HOLLY'S GARDEN UBERBRUT #5B NV

\$28 | VICTORIA | DIAM | 11.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 84 POINTS

33% Solera back to 2007 stored in 500 litre puncheons; 30% 2013 30% 2014 5% 2012; Fromenteau 5% Chardonnay 2015; Tiraged 06/15; Disgorged 10/16; Dosage 0.125 g/L

From the 750m heights of the Whitlands plateau, this is a tense style of grapefruit and fennel marked by the impure charcuterie and boiled sausage notes of a solera back to 2007 stored in 500 litre puncheons. It concludes dry and austere.

KATNOOK ESTATE FOUNDER'S BLOCK CHARDONNAY PINOT NOIR NV

\$23 | COONAWARRA | DIAM | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 83 POINTS

60% Chardonnay 40% Pinot Noir; 35% 2015, 25% 2014, 25% 2012, and older vintages; dosage 10 g/L; Charmat method; partially matured in older oak.

A pale orange hue introduced a cuvée of bruised apple character, forward in its development and lacking fruit vibrancy, concluding with firm phenolic structure.

ART WINE COCO NV

\$30 | CORK | 11.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 83 POINTS

A pale copper hue announces a cuvée of tired, dry, oxidative development, lacking vibrancy and integrity.

BUNNAMAGOO ESTATE PINOT NOIR/CHARDONNAY 2013

\$30 | NSW | DIAM | 12.9% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 83 POINTS

Disgorged 9/12/16 Dosage: 6g/L; Pinot Noir 58%, Chardonnay 42%; Orange 37% (Pinot Noir) Mudgee 63% (Chardonnay/Pinot Noir)

Subtle apple and grapefruit are overwhelmed by firm acidity and coarse phenolics on an astringent finish.

KINGSLEY GROVE ESTATE TINGLE SPARKLING BRUT CHARDONNAY PINOT GRIGIO 2016

\$24 | SOUTH BURNETT | CORK | 11.1% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 82 POINTS

Chardonnay and Pinot Grigio

Grassy, nutty and hard with bitter phenolic grip and a sweet finish.

MICHELINI PINOT CHARDONNAY CUVÉE NV

\$25 | VICTORIA | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 81 POINTS

50% Chardonnay 50% Pinot Noir; Dosage 15g/L; 2010 Pinot Chardonnay base wine

A high dosage makes for a sweet style of earthy, mushroomy character and phenolic grip.

NEW ENGLAND KURRAJONG DOWNS SPARKLING PINOT CHARDONNAY BRUT 2015

\$25 | TENTERFIELD | DIAM | 12.4% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 80 POINTS

77% Pinot Noir 23% Chardonnay; traditional method

Hard, astringent, stripped of fruit expression and callow.

HERBERT VINEYARD MOUNT GAMBIER BLANC DE NOIR 2014

\$27 | MT GAMBIER | DIAM | 12.1% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 80 POINTS

Pinot Noir; wild fermented in French oak barrels; Zero dosage

Both bottles tasted were completely destroyed by vinegary oxidation.

THE BEST SPARKLING WINES OF THE YEAR UNDER \$50

The \$30-\$50 category represents the most exciting chapter of Australian sparkling wine at the moment. If there is one place where your investment pays the greatest returns in sheer drinking pleasure, this is it.

Why? Because, apart from the rare exceptions listed above, the high cost of sparkling winemaking in cool regions almost universally rules out truly great fizz under \$30. And because spending more than \$50 can land you a serious bottle of champagne.

Testimony to Tasmania's lead in the premium sparkling stakes, my top three wines in this category hail from the island state.

This year I reviewed 94 Australian sparkling wines between \$30 and \$50 (excluding blanc de blancs, rosés, sparkling reds, pccos and moscatos — see below for reviews under these categories) with a median score of 89 points.

TYSON STELZER'S SPARKLING WINE OF THE YEAR UNDER \$50

FROGMORE CREEK MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE CUVÉE 2010

\$39.50 | TASMANIA | DIAM | 12.2% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2020 | 95 POINTS

88% pinot noir, 12% chardonnay

New name, same incredible wine. Last year's winner of my Sparkling Wine of the Year under \$50 has returned for an encore in the next vintage. Pinot noir declares its grand 88% presence in a full straw yellow hue and dramatic brush strokes of deep red cherry and mirabelle plum fruit. Seven years of age has built captivating layers of butterscotch, brioche, vanilla and glacé fig. Yet for all of its complexity and succulent richness, it pulls seamlessly into a vibrant and honed tail of bright southern Tasmanian acidity, perfectly balanced by intimately integrated dosage. It exudes persistence, stamina and sheer jubilation.

THE RUNNERS-UP

BARRINGWOOD CLASSIC CUVÉE TASMANIA 2013

\$45 | TASMANIA | DIAM | 11.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2021 | 94 POINTS

Traditional method; 41% pinot noir, 39% chardonnay and 20% meunier; 2/3 malolactic fermentation; disgorged June 2016; 8g/L dosage

A cuvée of poise and integrity, seamlessly uniting the strawberry and red cherry fruits of pinot with the citrus cut of chardonnay and the vibrancy of Tasmanian acidity (one-third malic). Three years on lees has built softness, creamy texture and hints of almond milk, without disrupting the flow and freshness of vibrant Tasmanian fruit. It lingers with length, line and enticing appeal.

JOSEF CHROMY VINTAGE SPARKLING 2011

\$45 | TASMANIA | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2018 | 94 POINTS

60% Pinot Noir 40% Chardonnay; Dosage 9g/L; No malolactic fermentation; Disgorged 5/10/16; Time on lees 5 years

The depth and power of Relbia estate pinot noir is bolstered by the richness of five years of lees age to produce a particularly intense and characterful Chromy Vintage. White peach, fig and mirabelle plum fruit of succulent ripeness and commanding presence linger very long and full, toned by the vibrant yet ripe acid flow of the cool 2011 season. A creamy texture and grand layers of ginger nut biscuits, chocolate and coffee proclaim lees maturity. A sparkling of main course proportions, yet holding its composure and poise at every moment, this is a great release for Chromy and a credit to winemaker Jeremy Dineen.

COFIELD RESERVE RELEASE PINOT NOIR CHARDONNAY 2006

\$45 | TUMBARUMBA | CORK | 11.6% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2018 | 94 POINTS

Pinot Noir and Chardonnay; aged almost nine years on lees; disgorged May 2015

A full straw hue retains brightness after more than a decade, a sure prelude to the integrity that this cuvée has upheld. Fresh butter, roast almonds, ginger, wild honey, crème brûlée and all manner of spice are the blessings of almost nine years on lees, supporting dried peach fruit. It's very long, seamless and silky, with beautifully defined and mouth-filling texture.

APOGEE DELUXE VINTAGE BRUT 2014

\$50 | TASMANIA | DIAM | 12.0% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2021 | 92 POINTS

46% pinot, 46% chardonnay, 8% meunier; 25% fermented in old oak casks; aged 26 months on lees; 8.5g/L dosage; disgorged 2 March 2017

Presence, depth and character meet the cool tension of Piper's River in a cuvée of detail and personality. Pinot noir takes the lead in spicy red apple fruit, backed by the citrus crunch of chardonnay. Partial fermentation in old oak heightens spicy complexity and texture, while the lingering, cool acid line of northern Tasmania defines a long finish.

NOCTON VINEYARD NON VINTAGE SPARKLING TASMANIA NV

\$32 | TASMANIA | DIAM | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 93 POINTS

This Coal River Valley vineyard captures fruit expression, cool climate tension and southern Tasmanian structure with poise and accomplishment. The blend is not declared, but strawberry, red apple and red cherry fruit are the unmistakable fingerprints of pinot noir, while the acid cut and citrus expression of chardonnay tone a well-honed finish. It's young and fruit-focused, with fine texture, lingering acid line and a touch of sweet dosage on the finish.

HOLLYDENE ESTATE BLANC DE NOIRS 2008

\$35 | MORNINGTON PENINSULA | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2019 | 93 POINTS

Pinot noir and meunier unite in a powerful yet energetic style. A full straw hue with a copper tint announces intensity, upholding the glorious, primary black cherry and strawberry fruits of pinot, even at almost a decade of age. A tense line of well-focused acidity keeps everything on track, with some fine phenolic texture not out of place on a long finish. Impressively crafted.

SITTELLA MARIE CHRISTIEN LUGTEN GRAND VINTAGE MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE 2012

\$35 | PEMBERTON | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2019 | 93 POINTS

60% Chardonnay 40% Pinot Noir; Dosage 5.5g/L; 50 months on lees; 10% matured in 5 year old French oak barrels for 4 months; Disgorged 29/8/16

An impeccably assembled cuvée that sets a benchmark for the West, preserving the pale hue and crunchy definition of Pemberton chardonnay and pinot noir, which filling it out with well-articulated layers of nougat, toast, brioche and spice built slowly and assuredly over more than four years on lees. Beautifully complete texture, finely integrated acidity and low dosage meld seamlessly on a long and silky finish, with just a touch of phenolic grip on the close.

BOAT O'CRAIGO MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE 2012

\$36 | YARRA VALLEY | DIAM | 11.7% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2020-2022 | 93 POINTS

55% Pinot Noir 45% Chardonnay

A pale, bright straw hue heralds a lively and tense style that celebrates cool Yarra pinot and chardonnay. A touch of struck flint reduction and subtle notes of toasted almonds are enticing, but the core theme here is elegant focus of lemon, tangy strawberry hull and crunchy red apple fruit and a well-composed structure of fine, tense acidity and gentle, mouth-filling, lees-derived texture. It upholds excellent line and length. Patience.

PETALUMA CROSER VINTAGE 2012

\$38 | ADELAIDE HILLS | DIAM | 13% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2020 | 93 POINTS

60% Pinot Noir 40% Chardonnay; 7.4g/L dosage; vinified and aged for 8 weeks in old French oak barriques; aged 3 years on lees; Disgorged 1/5/16

The great 2012 season in the Adelaide Hills has given birth to an well composed Croser Vintage. Pinot noir takes the lead with all of its red cherry and strawberry presence, backed by the citrus cut of chardonnay. Three years of lees age has built biscuity, nougat complexity, while upholding the primary focus of its fruit. A long finish is defined by excellent acid line, promising short-term potential.

PIPERS BROOK LATE DISGORGED VINTAGE CUVÉE 2007

\$42.50 | TASMANIA | CORK | DRINK 2017 | 93 POINTS

Late disgorged Pipers Brook for the first time. Around 600 dozen production. I tasted the first bottle disgorged, two days after disgorgement, under crown seal. Warm drought year hence powerful fruit of inherent richness.

A sparkling of powerful intensity, reflecting a warm drought year of low yields and lower acidities. Grand complexity of fig, golden fruit cake, dried plum and poached pear well up in exotic proportions, a glorious and succulent Pipers Brook structured with finely textured phenolic grip and concluding with nicely toning acid line and great persistence.

DEVIATION ROAD LOFTIA VINTAGE BRUT 2014

\$45 | ADELAIDE HILLS | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2024 | 93 POINTS

50% Chardonnay 50% Pinot Noir; aged at least 2 years on lees

Kate and Hamish Laurie have created one of the finest sparkling outfits in the country, completely unrivalled by all other boutique estates. They continue to craft the most elegant and pristine sparklings in South Australia, capturing the tension of the cool heights of the Adelaide Hills with character and enticing appeal. The apple and lemon fruits of an even blend of chardonnay and pinot noir are backed by the subtle biscuity complexity of two years of lees age. Acidity is lively, taut and enduring, promising great potential, yet possessing of a harmony and impeccable ripeness that make it immediately enticing.

BROWN BROTHERS PATRICIA PINOT NOIR CHARDONNAY 2011

\$47.15 | KING VALLEY | CORK | 12.9% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2018 | 93 POINTS

Pinot Noir (80%) Chardonnay (20%); disgorged December 2015; 10g/L dosage; old oak in reserve wine

The cool 2011 season presented a heyday opportunity for mainland sparkling producers and this cuvée has been blessed with a profound contrast between concentration and tension. Apple, citrus and stone fruit flavours of almost tropical proportions are overlaid with the exotic spice of six years of age, yet for all its exuberance it pulls resolutely into a finely-honed tail of cool vintage, high altitude acidity that draws out a finish of immense length and grand dimension. No subtle vintage, this is a main course-ready cuvée of heightened proportions.

GHOST ROCK CATHERINE CUVÉE EXCEPTIONNELLE MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE 2013

\$49 | TASMANIA | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2019-2023 | 93 POINTS

60% chardonnay, 40% pinot noir; aged 3 years on lees

The tension and focus of estate vineyards in the precise centre of the cool north of Tasmania is compacted into this pure, pristine and impeccable sparkling of bright, pale straw hue. It's young, primary and zesty, with three years on lees coaxing out little more than subtle almond meal complexity and gentle texture. Understated apple and lemon fruit is the theme, underwritten by taut yet harmonious acidity. It would have appreciated longer still on lees, and will continue to improve for years yet.

GRANT BURGE HELENE GRANDE CUVÉE BRUT 2006

\$50 | TASMANIA | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2018 | 93 POINTS

55% Pinot Noir, 43% Chardonnay, 2% Pinot Meunier; 'house reserve' liqueur was added prior to bottling; 6.48g/L dosage

There is no substitute for a decade on lees to furnish layers of gloriously nutty, buttery, creamy silky allure, even nuances of vanilla custard. This cuvée has it all, all the while upholding the integrity and presence of white peach and grapefruit. It concludes silky and soft, with fine acidity and gentle phenolic grip delicately entwined.

PIRIE SPARKLING NV

\$31.99 | TASMANIA | CORK | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2019 | 92 POINTS

Chardonnay/Pinot Noir; 2012 base vintage; disgorged November 2016; 10g/L dosage; reserve wine in old oak

With a pale, bright straw hue and a refreshing profile of tangy lemons and crunchy red apples, this is another great release of one of the value sparklings of Tasmania. It retains youthful poise even after an incredible four years of lees age (how do they make money on this?), infusing beautifully fine texture and subtle almond meal and nougat complexity. A long finish is defined by lingering, vibrant acidity and perfectly integrated dosage. Yes please!

COLDSTREAM HILLS PINOT NOIR CHARDONNAY 2013

\$34.99 | YARRA VALLEY | CORK | 11.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 92 POINTS

51% Pinot, 49% Chard; Disgorged 07/2016; dosage 7 g/L

A refreshing, crunchy, young Upper Yarra blend of almost equal parts pinot and chardonnay, impeccably assembled to celebrate the best of both varieties, blessed with the fine texture and subtle nougat and almond complexity of close to three years on lees. Tangy strawberry and raspberry fruit of pinot impeccably contrasts the lemon and apple tension of chardonnay, lingering on a long finish energised by cool acidity and perfectly integrated dosage. A great vintage for Coldstream Hills and an excellent value apéritif.

RIVERSDALE ESTATE CRUX TASMANIA NV

\$38 | TASMANIA | CORK | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 92 POINTS

76% Chardonnay, 23% Pinot Noir, 1% Pinot Meunier; aged 10 months on lees; Disgorged Aug 2016;

The toasty, roast nut complexity of bottle maturity contrasts the bright tension of citrus-accented Tasmanian fruit and the flinty notes of reductive character. Acidity and dosage find a compelling harmony amidst the fine, creamy texture of lees age and the subtle grip of Coal River Valley fruit. The result is well-composed, enticingly crafted and ready to drink.

SWIFT CUVÉE BRUT NV

\$40 | ORANGE | DIAM | DRINK 2016-2020 | 92 POINTS

2011 base. Single vineyard in the south-east corner of Orange at 1000m elevation. 5% reserves from 2010. Disgorged September 2016. Almost five years on lees. 5g/L dosage.

Such is the precision of this cuvée that it retains impressive primary integrity and vitality of vibrant citrus zest and red apple fruit, even after almost five years of lees age. Time has built subtle almond meal and honey complexity, while building the lovely silky mouth feel of long lees age. Backward, lively and ageing impressively, this is a triumph for a first release.

MT LOFTY RANGES VINEYARD MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE PINOT NOIR CHARDONNAY 2013

\$40 | LENSWOOD | CORK | 11.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2018 | 92 POINTS

60% Pinot Noir 40% Chardonnay; Dosage 7 g/L; 24 months on lees

The strawberry and red cherry fruit of 60% pinot noir meets the apple and lemon crunch of 40% chardonnay, confidently overlaid with the spicy, toasty, buttery, nutty character and the creamy texture of two years lees age. The accord is compelling, charged by cool Lenswood acidity, with a long finish set off with a well-integrated, low dosage of 7g/L. A little phenolic grip is true to the Adelaide Hills.

SITTELLA “LATE DISGORGED” VINTAGE PINOT NOIR CHARDONNAY MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE 2008

\$40 | PEMBERTON | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 92 POINTS

52% Chardonnay, 48% Pinot Noir; aged 100 months on lees; Disgorged 25/10/16

After more than eight years on lees, this toasty, spicy, honeyed cuvée has amassed grand complexity of ginger, golden fruit cake, candied orange rind even a hint of pipe smoke. Enticingly fine texture carries through a long palate, though it's just starting to dry out on the finish, suggesting it has reached its twilight hours.

CURLY FLAT MACEDON NV

\$45 | MACEDON | DIAM | 13% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 92 POINTS

Projecting a full yellow hue with a copper tint, this is a cuvée of profound contrast, juxtaposing the tension of cool climate malic acidity with the rumbling depths of grand maturity in layers of ginger nut biscuit, grilled pineapple, fig and mixed spice. It's beginning to show some burnt orange development, suggesting that it was at its prime last year, though upholds great persistence and grand dimension.

LAMBROOK EMERSON 2012

\$49.99 | ADELAIDE HILLS | DIAM | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2019 | 92 POINTS

90% Pinot Noir 10% Chardonnay; Dosage 6g/L; Disgorgement 31 August 2016

Adelaide Hills pinot noir declares its depth and presence in red apple and subtle strawberry fruit, layered with the toasty, roast nut complexity of four years of lees age. A noble effort for a first release, upholding the focus and restraint of cool climate acidity, carrying the finish long and restrained, well matched to a low dosage. A little phenolic grip on the end is characteristic of the Adelaide Hills.

JANSZ PREMIUM CUVÉE NV

\$31 | TASMANIA | CORK | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 91 POINTS

This is a cuvée of contrasts, juxtaposing crunchy citrus rind with the generous flesh of peach and mirabelle plums, the freshness of ripe fruit with the toasty, nutty, biscuity complexity of age, and the cut of cool Tasmanian acidity with the sweetness of dosage. A little bitter phenolic grip provides bite to the finish.

ABEL'S TEMPEST BY HEEMSKERK CHARDONNAY PINOT NOIR NV

\$31.99 | TASMANIA | CORK | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2019 | 91 POINTS

67% Chard, 33% pinot Noir Dosage 9g/L

Chardonnay takes a confident lead in this zesty and vibrant Tasmanian cuvée with the energy and poise to hold its own for some years yet.

HOUSE OF ARRAS MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE BRUT ELITE CUVÉE NO 1301 NV

\$40 | TASMANIA | CORK | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2019 | 91 POINTS

2013 base vintage; Tasmania (Coal River Valley, Derwent Valley, Huon Estuary); Pinot Noir 48%, Chardonnay 46%, Pinot Meunier 6%; 7.4 g/L dosage; disgorged October 2016

A pristine, bright, pale straw hue heralds a focused cuvée built on struck flint reduction and the subtle almond meal complexity of three years on lees. Cool southern Tasmanian vineyards infuse a tense core of grapefruit, lemon and red apple, finishing with firm phenolics of bitter grapefruit pith texture.

GOATY HILL MAIA 2012

\$42 | TASMANIA | DIAM | 12.1% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2018 | 91 POINTS

Chardonnay and Pinot Noir

Expressive, estate Tamar Valley fruit leaps from the glass in notes of wild strawberries, succulent white nectarine and musk, underlined by the brioche and meringue complexity of bottle age. Tense acidity contrasts fruit sweetness, dosage and a touch of phenolic grip on the finish. A powerful and tense sparkling with lingering persistence.

BREAM CREEK VINEYARD VINTAGE CUVÉE TRADITIONNELLE 2010

\$42 | TASMANIA | DIAM | 12.8% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2018 | 91 POINTS

58% chardonnay, 42% pinot noir; disgorged 14/1/16; Dosage 8g/L; 80% of base wines aged for 4 months in 5+ year old oak barrels; aged more than 5 years on lees; 536 dozen

Fred Peacock praises the 2010 season for its natural acidity, and blended a higher proportion of chardonnay to create a tighter style. More than five years on lees has created a creamy bead and nougat and meringue notes to its crunchy grapefruit, strawberry and white peach character. It concludes even and harmonious.

SWIFT VINTAGE BRUT 2011

\$50 | ORANGE | DIAM | DRINK 2017-2021 | 91 POINTS

September 2016 disgorgement after nearly five years on lees. 4.5g/L dosage.

Upholding a wonderfully pale straw hue and pure, precise definition of lemon zest, red apple and grapefruit, this is a vintage in which focused acidity and gentle, fine phenolic structure unite to produce a textural style of grip and tension. Bottle age has brought subtle almond meal complexity and fine, silky mouth feel, finishing with cool season acidity and intricately integrated dosage.

DELAMERE VINEYARDS CUVÉE 2013

\$50 | TASMANIA | CORK | 13% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 91 POINTS

Warmer vintage; 70% chardonnay, 30% pinot noir; dosage 4g/L

A warmer vintage has given birth to a rich style for the cool Delamere vineyard, proclaiming a more than two-thirds chardonnay lead in layers of white peach and golden delicious apple, with the strawberry and red cherry fruit of pinot noir sitting just behind. Maturity has brought biscuity, honeyed complexity that lingers long through a creamy finish supported by just the right level of low dosage (4g/L).

SPRING VALE FAMILY SELECTION REPOSÉ EXTRA BRUT 2009

\$50 | TASMANIA | DIAM | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2019 | 91 POINTS

68% Pinot Noir 29% Chardonnay 3% Pinot Meunier; 5 years on lees

The strawberry fruits of pinot meet the tense citrus of chardonnay, layered with bubblegum notes of fermentation and the candied almond complexity of five years of lees age. Acidity remains tense and firm, contrasting sweet dosage on a long finish.

JOSEF CHROMY TASMANIAN CUVÉE MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE NV

\$32 | TASMANIA | DIAM | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 90 POINTS

62% Pinot Noir 38% Chardonnay; 12g/L dosage; 100% 2015 vintage; no malolactic fermentation; aged 18 months on lees; Disgorged 21/11/16

Sourced from Chromy's Relbia estate just out of Launceston, this is a style that captures the cool citrus rind and red apple crunch of the Tamar Valley, with the strawberry and red cherry depth of pinot noir. Subtle biscuity complexity is the product of 18 months on lees. It concludes with focused acidity and a note of candied dosage.

CLOVER HILL TASMANIAN CUVÉE NV

\$34 | TASMANIA | DIAM | 11.7% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2018 | 90 POINTS

50% chardonnay, 42% pinot, 8% meunier; base vintage 2014 partial malolactic; disgorged October 2016; 8.5g/L dosage

Harmony and character are married in an even blend of the citrus cut of chardonnay, the delicate red fruits of pinot and the toasty, biscuity complexity of lees age. It concludes with some grip and phenolic bitterness, yet carries with good line and well-balanced acid and dosage.

PREVELI BLANC DE NOIR MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE 2010

\$34.95 | MARGARET RIVER | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2018 | 90 POINTS

100% Pinot Noir; 5.0g/L dosage; aged 4 years on lees; Disgorged 29/01/2016

There is elegance here not always apparent in Margaret River pinot, with subtle red apple and strawberry notes. Four years on lees has built texture and integration, while contributing biscuity complexity and some savoury, gamey nuances. A creamy texture carries through a long and even finish.

LEEWIN ESTATE PINOT CHARDONNAY BRUT 2013

\$35 | MARGARET RIVER | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2019 | 90 POINTS

Pinot Noir and Chardonnay; 30 months on lees; traditional techniques

Leeuwin Estate has achieved elegance and finesse in a region in which such virtues are rare in sparkling. Crunchy apple and pear fruit is structured with firm acidity and finished with refreshingly dry dosage. Two-and-a-half years on lees has built texture and almond meal complexity without disrupting fruit purity and drive.

HEEMSKERK GEORG JENSEN HALLMARK CUVÉE NV

\$39.99 | MULTI-REGIONAL | CROWN SEAL | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 90 POINTS

Chardonnay 68% Pinot Noir 30% other 2%

This is a bright cuvée of medium straw hue, projecting the crunch and vibrancy of apple, pear and lemon fruit, elegantly underscored by almond meal complexity of lees age. Some phenolic presence lends grip to the finish, though acid line and dosage are well poised.

COSTANZO & SONS BLANC DE NOIR MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE 2014

\$40 | STRATHBOGIE RANGES | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2019 | 90 POINTS

Hand picked 100% estate grown; 2 years on lees; disgorged March 2016; 6g/L dosage; 500 dozen

A pale straw blush hue declares a contrast between elegance and fruit depth in this young blanc de noirs. Understated red apple, watermelon and tangy strawberry hull notes make for an elegant entry, though longer on lees could help to build more back palate persistence and complexity. It's been well crafted, with carefully handled phenolics, acidity and dosage, and demonstrates potential.

BASS RIVER VINTAGE BRUT CHARDONNAY PINOT NOIR 1835 2012

\$40 | GIPPSLAND | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2022 | 90 POINTS

50% Chardonnay, 50% Pinot Noir, single vineyard; Méthode traditionnelle; disgorged December 2015

Endearing restraint and poise allow the subtle red apple fruit of pinot noir to meet the lemon of chardonnay, set against a backdrop of subtle, biscuity, bottle age complexity. It's a steely style of low dosage and grainy lees texture. A cuvée for sparkling fanatics, not big crowds.

OTHER SPARKLING WINES UNDER \$50

KYNETON RIDGE ESTATE MACEDON PINOT NOIR CHARDONNAY 2012

\$32 | MACEDON RANGES | DIAM | 13.2% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2020 | 89 POINTS

60% Pinot Noir 40% Chardonnay; 100% French oak

The tension of cool Macedon fruit meets the texture and complexity of full French oak fermentation, interrupting fruit purity with savoury, charcuterie and boiled sausage notes. Lees age has built good mouth feel and persistence.

MEADOWBANK CHARDONNAY PINOT NOIR NV

\$32 | TASMANIA | CROWN SEAL | 11.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 89 POINTS

55% Chardonnay, 45% saignée Pinot Noir; No vintage stated but 100% 2016, bottled 2016

A deep, vibrant, crimson pink hue comes as a surprise for a cuvée with no hint of rosé aspirations on its label. A collaboration between vigneron Gerald Ellis and winemaker Peter Dredge, this youthful wine presents a contrast between primary raspberry and strawberry fruit, the tension of cool Derwent Valley acidity and the grip of firm, fine tannin structure. It finishes short, bone dry and tense.

BARRINGWOOD ESTATE TASMANIAN CUVÉE MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE NV

\$32 | TASMANIA | DIAM | 13.4% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 89 POINTS

Barringwood has made a bold entry into the NV sparkling world with this inaugural release. A pretty pale salmon hue and a fragrant bouquet announce all the grand expectation of pinot noir. It's a sweet and fruity style, brimming with musk sticks, raspberries and strawberries aplenty, with more dosage than it needs.

BAY OF FIRES TASMANIAN CUVÉE BRUT PINOT NOIR CHARDONNAY NV

\$32 | TASMANIA | CORK | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 89 POINTS

Pipers River, Coal River, Tamar Valley, Derwent Valley; Pinot Noir, Chardonnay; 12.2g/L dosage

A pretty medium straw hue announces a style that contrasts the grip and tension of apple skin and grapefruit with the biscuity complexity of lees age, with firm, coarse phenolic grip tussling with honeyed dosage on a long finish.

WINES BY GEOFF HARDY K1 SPARKLING NV

\$35 | ADELAIDE HILLS | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 89 POINTS

80% Pinot Noir 20% Chardonnay. Base vintage 2016; Dosage 8.8 g/L; Oak 15% barrel fermentation

A pretty pale salmon hue, rose petal aromas and red cherry and strawberry flavours proclaim the 80% pinot noir lead of this young and fresh sparkling based on the 2016 vintage. Fine, bright Adelaide Hills acid line is well matched by a low dosage of 8.8g/L though the finish is marked by firm phenolic structure.

CHURCHVIEW ESTATE ST JOHNS LIMITED RELEASE VINTAGE BRUT 2013

\$35 | MARGARET RIVER | DIAM | 11% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 89 POINTS

100% Chenin Blanc hand picked; 15% reserves from 2012, 2011, 2010 and 2009; 100% wild fermented; 50% barrel fermented; 24 months on lees; disgorged 2015; Dosage 2 g/L

Apple, pear and pineapple unite in this complex sparkling chenin. Barrel fermentation, reserves back to the 2009 vintage and lees age bring texture and subtle nutty complexity while a tiny dosage of 2g/L is all that is needed to balance sweet fruit.

STONEHURST MÉTHODE CHAMPENOISE VINTAGE 2010

\$35 | CEDAR CREEK NSW | CORK | 11.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2020 | 89 POINTS

Chardonnay and Semillon

The creamy, biscuity, toasty complexity of lees age lends compelling complexity and texture to the bright, crunchy lemon, apple, pear and cut grass of chardonnay and semillon fruit with a wisp of struck flint reduction. There's some skill in the execution here, with texture, acidity and dosage uniting in a harmonious finish.

MICELI MICHAEL BRUT 2007

\$35 | MORNINGTON PENINSULA | DIAM | 11.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2019 | 89 POINTS

45% Pinot Noir 35% Chardonnay 20% Pinot Gris. Disgorged 6/12/16; Dosage 7.5g/L; Hand picked and whole bunch pressed

Mornington Peninsula pinot noir (predominantly), chardonnay and pinot gris build a powerful style of bubblegum complexity that has amassed considerable toasty character over the past decade. Tense, heightened acidity rises to the challenge, keeping the finish focused and honed if not searing.

TEMPUS TWO PEWTER SPARKLING PINOT CHARDONNAY 2012

\$35 | ADELAIDE HILLS | CORK | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 89 POINTS

More secondary than primary, this is a toasty, nutty, spicy, honeyed style, quite advanced at five years of age, though displaying soft, creamy appeal that lingers through a long finish.

WINES FOR JOANIE VINTAGE SPARKLING 2014

\$38 | TASMANIA | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 89 POINTS

60% Chardonnay 40% Pinot Noir; Co-fermented base wine; Méthode traditionnelle; 6 months on lees, a further 6 months bottle age

Pale straw with a blush tint, this is a young and fruity cuvée that expresses the strawberry fruit of pinot noir and the lemon and apple of chardonnay, set against an earthy/yeasty backdrop that interrupts fruit purity. Subtle yet coarse phenolic grip is countered by sweet dosage. It concludes with good persistence.

YARRABANK CUVÉE 2011

\$38 | YARRA VALLEY | DIAM | 13% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 89 POINTS

53% Chardonnay 47% Pinot Noir; 15% of reserves aged in 5,500L foudre; no malolactic fermentation; time on lees 4 years; 3.5g/L dosage

Intensity and concentration meet the tension of the cool 2011 season in a cuvée already a full straw hue, with layers of toasty, nutty complexity over secondary red apple, lemon and white peach fruit, concluding with tight malic acid line and some phenolic coarseness.

SINCLAIR'S GULLY SUSANNE JOY 2014

\$40 | ADELAIDE HILLS | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 89 POINTS

Pinot Meunier and Pinot Noir; Disgorged 15/12/16; Dosage 10g/L; barrel aged in new French Oak;

This soft and creamy Adelaide Hills blanc de noirs has a distinct copper tint to its medium salmon hue. New French oak maturation has built creamy texture without oak flavour. Gentle red apple fruits and savoury spice mark out a well-balanced finish of fruit sweetness, albeit without the primary fruit lift and perfume that would be expected at this young age.

MITCHELL HARRIS SABRE VINTAGE 2012

\$42 | MACEDON & PYRENEES RANGES | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2018 | 89 POINTS

Chardonnay and Pinot Noir; Dosage 5g/L; Aged more than 3 years on lees; Disgorged Nov 2015

Ripe nectarine and lemon fruit is underlined by the toasty, ginger nut and honey complexity of three years of lees age. The cool tension of Macedon and Pyrenees acidity provides structure to a long and creamy finish. Sweetness is contributed more by fruit ripeness than dosage.

BANGOR MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE VINTAGE 2011

\$45 | TASMANIA | DIAM | 12.8% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2018 | 89 POINTS

60% Chardonnay 40% Pinot Noir; Méthode traditionnelle; Hand picked; single vineyard; aged on lees more than 5 years

A tense Coal River Valley sparkling of lemon and crunchy apple fruit, with a hint of capsicum suggesting some underripe fruit. Acidity is nonetheless ripe, and five years on lees has built a wonderfully creamy structure and drawn out great persistence.

CLOVER HILL VINTAGE BRUT 2012

\$50 | TASMANIA | DIAM | 11.9% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2018 | 89 POINTS

65% chardonnay, 29% pinot, 6% meunier; Piper's River; part aged in small French oak foudres and barriques; 3 years on lees; disgorged June 2016; 7.5g/L dosage

An almost two-thirds chardonnay lead in concert with partial malolactic upholds energy and definition in cool climate northern Tasmanian fruit, while part ageing in small French oak foudres and barriques lends some funky wet wood and game nuances which disrupt purity.

DOVETAIL YARRA VALLEY CHARDONNAY PINOT NOIR 2013

\$33 | YARRA VALLEY | CORK | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2018 | 88 POINTS

A sweet cuvée that contrasts tangy citrus and stone fruits, buttery complexity, fine lees texture and then threatens to topple an otherwise compelling accord with heavy-handed dosage.

MCGLASHAN'S WALLINGTON ESTATE CHARDONNAY PINOT NOIR SPARKLING 2016

\$35 | BELLARINE PENINSULA | CORK | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 88 POINTS

50% Chardonnay 50% Pinot Noir; Charmat

A compelling contrast between fleshy white peach and ripe pear and the crunch of lemon, in a primary and youthful style with a simple, fruity finish.

SPRING VALE “SALUTE” SPARKLING 2014

\$35 | TASMANIA | DIAM | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 88 POINTS

72% Pinot Noir 23% Chardonnay 5% Pinot Meunier; Traditional method

Musk and strawberry fruit announce the predominance of pinot noir in this savoury style of yeast notes and phenolic firmness, lacking in fruit definition, lift and brightness.

PIERREPOINT SPARKLING PINOT GRIS 2015

\$35.50 | HENTY | DIAM | 12.1% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 88 POINTS

Dosage 10g/L

A gently spicy sparkling pinot gris that encapsulates the nectarine and pear personality of the variety, with soft structure and honeyed dosage. A little age has contributed toasty complexity.

STEFANO LUBIANA BRUT RESERVE TASMANIA NV

\$38 | TASMANIA | CORK | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 88 POINTS

Méthode Traditionnelle

Rejoicing in the tension of Tasmanian fruit, this is a tight and firm style of pink pepper, watermelon and pomegranate fruit. Firm phenolic grip makes for a more austere finish than usual for this cuvée.

MONTALTO CUVÉE ONE SPARKLING 2012

\$40 | MORNINGTON PENINSULA | DIAM | 12.4% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2019 | 88 POINTS

Chardonnay; Pinot Noir and Pinot Meunier

With a medium straw hue and crunchy grapefruit, lemon and nashi pear flavours, this is a primary, dry and tense cuvée marked by a bitter phenolic finish.

VOYAGER ESTATE PROJECT SPARKLING 2015

\$40 | MARGARET RIVER | CROWN SEAL | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2018 | 88 POINTS

Chenin Blanc

The earthy, leesy complexity of fermentation defines a textural style, more about winemaking character than the understated fruit expression of chenin blanc. It's well composed, with invisible dosage, friendly acid tone and nicely balanced lees texture uniting on a long finish.

CHANDON CUVÉE RICHE EXTRA DOSAGE MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE NV

\$40.99 | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 88 POINTS

This is a very sweet style of golden hue and baked apple and boiled sweets flavours backed with toasty and even smoky complexity. Chandon tactically uses some 'bolder, more tannic base wines to give the wine enough structure to balance the sweetness,' a philosophy that works better for this fine-tuned outfit than it does for most. If you're chasing a sweet style, this is a good choice, but do give it a strong chill.

CHANDON BRUT MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE NV

\$31.99 | VICTORIA | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 87 POINTS

2014 base vintage with 40% reserves of up to ten years of age

Bright citrus and rich, ripe stone fruit flavours are backed by the toasty complexity of lees age and a generous 40% of reserves of up to ten years of age. There is bubblegum complexity of fermentation and a candied effect to the dosage on the finish, countering a touch of phenolic grip.

THE LONGVIEW SPARKLING WINE SOCIETY W. WAGTAIL PINOT NOIR CHARDONNAY 2015

\$32 | MACCLESFIELD | DIAM | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 87 POINTS

75% Pinot Noir 25% Chardonnay; no malolactic; 12 months lees age; Disgorged August 2016

Pinot noir announces its presence in a full straw hue and flamboyant flavours of ripe strawberries, musk sticks and raspberries. It's a young, fruity and sweet style, yet finishes lively, with some phenolic grip.

HARMANS ESTATE RESERVE PINOT NOIR MÉTHODE CHAMPENOISE 2013

\$35 | PEMBERTON | DIAM | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 87 POINTS

Pinot Noir; 10 hours skin contact; 3 years on lees; traditional method; hand riddled; dosage 10 year old brandy and sugar from raisins

A ten hour saignée has built a full crimson hue and layers of smoky Campari complexity over a core of candied strawberry fruit. Fine tannins provide grip to a finish of good acid line and sweet dosage.

EDENMAE INDI MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE RIESLING 2013

\$38 | EDEN VALLEY | DIAM | 11.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 87 POINTS

Estate dry grown; 3 years on lees; 50% of the estate riesling harvest

If you love the toasty, nutty, buttery, kerosene-accented complexity of mature riesling, you'll appreciate the lees complexity in this sparkling style. Some reductive character lends hints of sweet corn and cabbage. It upholds good length.

HOWARD PARK GRAND JETE 2012

\$40 | MT BARKER | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2022-2027 | 87 POINTS

94% Chardonnay 6% Pinot Noir; Dosage 6.5g/L; Fermented in older oak; Disgorged Sept 2016

Tense apple and lemon fruit is underscored by hard acidity, with four years of lees age lending finely textured structure. It needs time for its searing acidity to tone.

SITTELLA SPARKLING PINOT CHARDONNAY MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE 2009

\$40 | PEMBERTON | DIAM | 13% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 87 POINTS

55% Pinot Noir, 45% Chardonnay; Dosage 5g/L; partial malolactic fermentation; 6 years on lees; Disgorged 6/7/15

A toasty and mature cuvée layered with ginger and spice, though concluding with some burnt orange oxidation notes that render the finish astringent, suggesting it has passed its finest days.

RIESLINGFREAK NO. 9 REVERENCE OF RIESLING SEKT CLARE VALLEY 2014

\$42 | CLARE VALLEY | CROWN SEAL | 11% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2020 | 87 POINTS

2 years on lees: disgorged June 2016; 2.5g/L dosage

Kerosene, toast, apricot and ginger notes mark the beginning of maturity in this crunchy and dry riesling of classic Clare Valley lime and granny smith apple fruit. Hints of tropical fruits and mixed spice make for a complex style with a dry and firm finish.

MOORILLA EXTRA BRUT MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE TASMANIA 2011

\$49 | TASMANIA | CORK | 11.6% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2021-2031 | 87 POINTS

59% chardonnay, 41% pinot; 20% wild yeast in stainless steel for more generosity; corks for the first time not DIAMs, for more development and richness; Disgorged late 2015; 4 years 7 months on lees

For its very pale straw hue, this is a cuvée of generosity and savoury complexity, with all the personality of wild yeast and some nutty notes from natural cork. Such character stands in stark contrast to the searing impact of tense malic acidity which screams out for decades to soften.

EMINENCE 'THE ASSEMBLY' SINGLE VINEYARD SPARKLING 2012

\$50 | KING VALLEY | CROWN SEAL | 11.9% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2022 | 87 POINTS

Chardonnay 60%, Pinot Noir 30%, Meunier 10%; 100% barrel fermented with wild yeast; Approximately 15% malolactic; Left on lees in barrel prior to bottling; Aged 42 months on lees in bottle; Disgorged 27 May 2016; 5g/L dosage; 220 dozen produced

The tension of the high Whitlands vineyard in the King Valley, heightened by only 15% malolactic fermentation and a low 5g/L dosage, is softened by full wild barrel fermentation and 42 months on lees in bottle. The result is a stark contrast of tight lemon, firm acid and the savoury and charcuterie notes of full barrel work.

HOWARD PARK JETE BRUT BLANC NV

\$34 | MT BARKER | DIAM | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 86 POINTS

91% Chardonnay 9% Pinot Noir; Base vintage 2013; Dosage 6g/L; Disgorged Oct 2016; Oak Nil

A cuvée of bready complexity over a tangy core of citrus and stone fruits. Firm acidity clashes with hard phenolic grip on the finish.

LOGAN VINTAGE 'M' CUVÉE 2013

\$35 | ORANGE | CORK | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 86 POINTS

64% Chardonnay 20% Pinot Noir 16% Pinot Meunier; Dosage 3 g/L; Disgorged May 2016; 14% fermented in French oak barrels; traditional bottle ferment; On lees in bottle 32 months

With a copper hue, this is a savoury, textural and complex sparkling that speaks more of secondary character, texture and grip than it does of fruit expression. Acid line and low dosage define a finish of finesse.

OAKDENE MATILDA SINGLE VINEYARD BLANC DE NOIRS 2012

\$35 | MACEDON RANGES | DIAM | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 86 POINTS

100% Pinot Noir; Disgorged April 2016; Dosage 4 g/L; 3.3 years on Lees

A full straw hue with a subtle blush tint announces a savoury style of earthy, yeasty complexity that lacks perfume and fruit definition. Firm phenolic grip denotes a dry and coarse palate.

HUNTER-GATHERER PINOT CHARDONNAY 2010

\$35 | MACEDON BALLARAT | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 86 POINTS

50% Pinot Noir 50% Chardonnay; Traditional methods; 5 plus years on lees; disgorged Feb 2016; Dosage 1g/L

A full yellow hue announces a rich sparkling that unites the depth of toast and butter of five years of lees age with ripe fruit. It finishes callow and short, accented by firm phenolic grip.

KATE HILL SPARKLING 2011

\$42 | SOUTHERN TASMANIA | DIAM | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2021 | 86 POINTS

Disgorged Dec 2016; 4 years on yeast lees; approx 5g/L sugar

The earthy, grubby notes of fruit in imperfect condition, wearing the battle scars of a cool and wet season, with a shard of searing, cold acidity.

TROFEO ESTATE VINTAGE MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE 2013

\$48 | MORNINGTON PENINSULA | DIAM | 12.4% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 86 POINTS

A full yellow hue with a copper tint heralds a rich style of baked apple fruit and roast nut complexity, finishing truncated and firm, lacking fruit integrity and brightness.

LAMBLOCH ESTATE THE LOCH SPARKLING SEMILLON 2015

\$32 | HUNTER VALLEY | CORK | 11% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

A dry sparkling semillon of preserved lemon and lanolin character, lacking zest and lift, finishing short and savoury.

ROS RITCHIE CUVÉE 2012

\$34 | UPPER GOULBURN | CORK | 12.7% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2018 | 85 POINTS

Pinot Noir, Pinot Meunier, Chardonnay

The toast and hazelnut notes of lees age provide complexity to a tense core of citrus fruit with some stone fruit depth, marked by earthy notes that disrupt purity.

CARGO ROAD SPARKLING SAUVIGNON BLANC 2016

\$34 | ORANGE | CROWN SEAL | 11% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

From a lofty 860m on the slopes of Mount Canobolas, this is a perfumed, tropical, sweet and primary sauvignon blanc.

PARACOMBE ADELAIDE HILLS PINOT NOIR CHARDONNAY 2016

\$35 | ADELAIDE HILLS | CROWN SEAL | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

50% Chardonnay, 50% Pinot Noir; Base vintage 2016; not bottle fermented; no oak; blended with partial bottle fermented back vintages up to 25 years old

A young, simple and primary style of red apple fruit and firm phenolic grip, without the finesse or texture of lees age.

SWINGS AND ROUNDABOUTS BACKYARD STORIES PINOT NOIR CHARDONNAY NV

\$39 | MARGARET RIVER | CROWN SEAL | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

85% Pinot 15% Chardonnay; 2013 base vintage; 2012 reserves Matured in older oak; Dosage 10g/L; aged 12-18 months on lees

Notes of lantana, cut grass and hard acidity are the tell tale signs of unripe fruit, which 12-18 months on lees and 2012 reserves matured in older oak are helpless to remedy.

GILBERT BY SIMON GILBERT MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE 2010

\$42 | ORANGE | DIAM | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

38% Pinot Meunier, 37% Pinot Noir, 25% Chardonnay from a 1000m altitude vineyard; Dosage 3.95 g/L; Disgorgement 2015

With a full orange copper hue, this cuvée dramatically contrasts the tension of 1000m altitude acidity with the toasty richness of bottle development. It's secondary, dry and finishes firm and short.

OLIVER'S TARANGA THE HUNT FOR MRS OLIVER MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE FIANO 2016

\$45 | MCLAREN VALE | DIAM | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

100% Fiano planted 2010. Reductive handling. Liqueur made with 2016 Fiano wine, barrel fermented in old French oak and lees stirred for 6 months. 10g/L dosage. Disgorging planned for April 2017.

The grassy, zesty character of fiano contrasts blackcurrant bud character and a candied, boiled sweets like note, jostling with fine phenolic grip.

HUNGERFORD HILL DALLIANCE MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE 2015

\$45 | TUMBARUMBA | CORK | 11.6% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2019 | 85 POINTS

Chardonnay, Pinot Noir & Pinot Meunier

Grassy lemon, lime and apple fruit with ripe tropical nuances makes for a young and primary style of tense acidity.

LOWE GENTLEMAN'S DAUGHTER ORANGE PINOT NOIR CHARDONNAY 2013

\$45 | ORANGE | DIAM | 11.9% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

Pinot Noir Chardonnay

A tropical and candied style of ripe fruit, musk and sweet dosage, contrasting the tense acidity of Orange.

MCADAMS LANE WHITLANDS MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE NV

\$35 | KING VALLEY | CROWN SEAL | 11% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 84 POINTS

100% Pinot Noir; Dosage 8g/L

At a high altitude of 750m on the Whitlands plateau, this 100% chardonnay displays surprising advancement in a full copper hue and notes of orange rind and stale biscuit, lacking freshness and vitality.

SIRROMET SIGNATURE COLLECTION CHARDONNAY PINOT NOIR MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE 2010

\$35 | GRANITE BELT | DIAM | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 84 POINTS

56% Chardonnay 44% Pinot Noir; Dosage 2.8g/L; Disgorged 31 Oct 2016;

A full yellow gold hue is a prelude to a cuvée of advanced development, with notes of burnt orange and a callow and astringent palate of bitter phenolic grip.

MILTON LAURA TASMANIA VINTAGE 2013

\$35 | TASMANIA | DIAM | 12.1% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 84 POINTS

Strawberries and cream and musk sticks with a distinct barnyard note that creates an impure and awkward style.

MILTON TASMANIA CHARDONNAY PINOT NOIR VINTAGE 2010

\$39 | TASMANIA | DIAM | 12.1% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 84 POINTS

More than five years maturation on lees.

A creamy and rich style with distinct mushroom notes, lacking cleanliness and purity.

SCOTCHMANS HILL JACK & JILL CHARDONNAY PINOT NOIR VINTAGE BRUT 2016

\$40 | BELLARINE PENINSULA | CORK | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 84 POINTS

A simple, on-premise only style of apple fruit, biscuity complexity and a dry, callow finish, lacking presence, definition and freshness.

TERINDAH ESTATE MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE 2014

\$40 | VICTORIA | DIAM | 13.1% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 84 POINTS

60% Pinot Noir 40% Chardonnay; 2g/L dosage; disgorged January 2015

With a full yellow-copper hue, this is a pinot-led style of biscuity complexity, with a contracted finish that looks tired, developed and lacking fruit vitality

THE LAKE HOUSE DENMARK MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE SPARKLING WHITE 2013

\$45 | GREAT SOUTHERN | DIAM | 13% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 83 POINTS

Chardonnay and Pinot Noir

A distinct copper hue denotes a savoury and advanced style that lacks fruit freshness and character, finishing short, stale and oxidised. Two bottles tasted were identical.

HAZYBLUR L'ECLAT KANGAROO ISLAND VINTAGE BLANC DE NOIRS 2013

\$49.99 | KANGAROO ISLAND | CORK | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 83 POINTS

100% pinot noir; 300 dozen

Funky, earthy impurity clashes with ripe stone fruit and tense citrus notes, concluding hard, sweet and lacking freshness. Two bottles tasted were identical.

CAPERCAILLIE 'THE SONSE' METHOD TRADITIONAL CHARDONNAY 2012

\$45 | HUNTER VALLEY | CORK | 12.1% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 82 POINTS

Partial barrel fermentation & 6 months maturation in 2 year old French barriques; aged 2 years on lees; disgorged 5 December 2014; Dosage 8.0g/L

Grassy lantana notes, hard acidity and bitter phenolics tell the tale of underripe fruit.

THE BEST SPARKLING WINES OF THE YEAR OVER \$50

The investment of effort and time makes sparkling wine the most costly of all wine styles to produce. Great sparkling wine is intimately dependent upon a cool climate, and cool climate viticulture notoriously entails vagaries in yields and inconsistency in quality from one season to the next. The result is that truly great sparkling wine is never inexpensive.

Sparkling winemakers are faced with a catch-22 in their pricing, unlike any other wine style, thanks to the ever-present question, 'Why buy Australian when I can land champagne for the same price?' Thankfully some Australian sparkling wines have pushed through the glass ceiling of champagne pricing, and this section is dedicated to all those that are worthy of your investment this year.

Those that fly above \$100 do so thanks to miniscule production, and in the case of some late disgorged releases, just a few hundred bottles.

15 sparkling wines between \$50 and \$150 have won my tick of approval. More than half (including the top four) hail from Tasmania, with high altitude mainland sites snaring the remaining places (Yarra Valley, Adelaide Hills, Macedon) and one exception to prove the rule in an unlikely Margaret River sparkling chenin blanc.

This year I reviewed 26 Australian sparkling wines over \$50 (excluding blanc de blancs, rosés, sparkling reds, proseccos and moscatos – see below for reviews under these categories) with a median score of 92 points.

TYSON STELZER'S SPARKLING WINE OF THE YEAR OVER \$50

HOUSE OF ARRAS MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE GRAND VINTAGE 2007

\$70 | TASMANIA | CORK | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2022 | 96 POINTS

Tasmania (Coal River Valley, Derwent Valley, Pipers River); Chardonnay 78%, Pinot 23%; aged on lees 8 years; 6.4 g/L dosage; disgorged May 2016

A history-making wine that will go down in Australian sparkling legend, this is officially the most awarded sparkling in the modern Australian wine show circuit. It impeccably and effortlessly captures the focus and precision of Tasmanian chardonnay (more than three-quarters) and pinot noir in crunchy lemon and apple fruit, backing it with enticing layers of brioche, almond and nougat, thanks to 8 years on lees. Thrilling acidity of grand energy is what really sets this cuvée apart, driving a very long and impeccably focused finish, irresistible now, yet possessing enduring longevity. I recently served this cuvée for a corporate audience and it won the vote of the room over Charles Heidsieck Brut Réserve, one of my favourite champagnes.

THE RUNNERS-UP

HOUSE OF ARRAS MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE EJ CARR LATE DISGORGED 2003

\$130 | TASMANIA | CORK | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2023 | 96 POINTS

Tasmania (Upper Derwent, Pipers River, Lower Derwent, Huon Estuary); Chardonnay 61.1%, Pinot Noir 38.9%; disgorged June 2015; aged 12 years on lees; 6.5 g/L dosage

At a full 14 years of age (12 on lees) this is a showpiece for the grand endurance of Australian sparkling, still showing more energy, vitality and potential than most champagnes from the same vintage. Grapefruit, lemon and apple still abound in this chardonnay-charged style (more than 60%) while maturity has blessed it with delightfully silky structure and captivating layers of nougat, lemon meringue, dried peach, vanilla and mixed spice. A thrilling line of bright, enduring acidity promises the confidence to see out two decades. Marvellous.

STEFANO LUBIANA GRANDE VINTAGE MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE 2008

\$60 | TASMANIA | CORK | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2020 | 95 POINTS

2008 is one of my favourite seasons in Tasmania, possessed of a grace, elegance and endurance rarely encountered outside of Champagne itself. Steve Lubiana has captured the essence of the season in this bright and pale coloured blend. Primary lemon, apple and white peach fruit of great purity and structure are sensitively massaged by the almond meal, nougat and brioche of long lees age. A creamy texture marries seamlessly with bright, cool Tasmanian acidity and intricately integrated dosage on a very long and seamless finish. A touch of phenolic bitterness enhances rather than fighting with its structure.

HOUSE OF ARRAS MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE GRAND VINTAGE 2008

\$70 | TASMANIA | CORK | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2020-2023 | 95 POINTS

Tasmania (Derwent Valley, Mid East Coast, Coal River Valley); Chardonnay 65%, Pinot Noir 35%; aged on lees 7 years; 5.4 g/Litre dosage; disgorged May 2016

2008 is one of my favourite vintages in Tasmania, and this cuvée captures the tension of its mood in a pale, bright straw hue and focused lemon and apple fruit. An almost two-thirds chardonnay dominance is proclaimed in white fruit definition and layers of struck flint reduction. Seven years on lees has built more in texture than flavour, lending just subtle almond meal and charcuterie complexity. The tightly coiled acidity of this enduring season calls for time to unwind. Patience.

YARRABANK LATE DISGORGED TRADITIONAL METHOD 2005

\$55 | YARRA VALLEY/MORNINGTON PENINSULA | DIAM | 13% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2020 | 94 POINTS

61% Chardonnay 39% Pinot Noir; 60% Yarra Valley, 40% Mornington Peninsula; no malolactic fermentation; 15% of reserves aged in 5,500L foudre; Time on lees 8 years

A magnificent contrast of all the wonder of long lees age and the tension of malic acidity, this is a cuvée bursting with grand complexity of dried nectarine, nutmeg, ginger nut biscuits, honey, roast almonds, even tertiary hints of pipe smoke, then pulling dramatically and refreshingly into a taut finish of glittering malic that lingers long and bright. Dosage is intricately integrated. It has the depth and complexity to handle a touch of phenolic bitterness on the finish.

HENSCHKE JOHANNE IDA SELMA BLANC DE NOIR MD

\$60 | LENSWOOD | CROWN SEAL | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2020 | 94 POINTS

100% Pinot Noir from single vineyard at 550m altitude in Lenswood; 7.5 g/L dosage; Multiple vintages from 1997 to 2013 aged on tirage in bottle for up to 16 years and blended in August 2015 under pressure in stainless steel at disgorgement for the final assemblage

A beautifully characterful, expressive and powerful blanc de noirs that masterfully captures the depth of pinot noir and the tension of the heights of Lenswood. Pinot noir speaks in a deep voice of satsuma plums, black cherries and mixed spice, riding a line of focused, finely poised acidity. The method of reserve blending flips the traditional Champagne technique on its head. Instead of ageing reserves in tank to blend with the young base vintage and age in bottle before disgorgement, sixteen vintages of reserves with up to two decades of maturity are aged on tirage in bottle and disgorged before blending in tank under pressure. All the complexity of vintages from 1997 to 2013 unites to build layers of dark fruit cake, ginger nut biscuits and dark chocolate, culminating in a long and full yet impeccably tense finish.

KREGLINGER VINTAGE BRUT 2007

\$55 | TASMANIA | CORK | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2018 | 93 POINTS

More than three months on Cork, maybe five months. Natalie says liqueuring is like mastering an album, making everything seamless together. Partial barrel fermentation, 40-50%.

A complex style that contrasts the savoury complexity of charcuterie with the fleshiness of juicy stone fruits, the character of dried pear and the tension of vibrant citrus. A succulent generosity fills the mid-palate, with the biscuity complexity of barrel fermentation and lees age, culminating in the refreshing tension of Pipers River. It finishes long and full, with the generosity of a warm, dry and low-yielding season.

JANSZ VINTAGE CUVÉE 2011

\$55.95 | TASMANIA | CORK | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2018 | 93 POINTS

Chardonnay and pinot noir; Disgorged October 2016 after more than 4.5 years on lees. Great to see the disgorgement date on back labels now.

Jansz vintage is sourced exclusively from the Jansz vineyard in Piper's River in north-eastern Tasmania, and the cool 2011 vintage represents a surprisingly powerful release. It's more toasty and biscuity than ever, with the theatrics of barrel fermentation (50%) conspiring with 4.5 years lees age to produce layered complexity of ginger cake, biscuits, even notes of fruit mince spice, coffee and chocolate. The cool restraint of Tasmanian fruit triumphs on the finish, with secondary red apple and lemon fruit cool vineyard coasting long and refined through the finish, with just a touch more dosage than this full and complex style calls for.

HEEMSKERK SOUTHERN TASMANIAN CHARDONNAY PINOT NOIR 2011

\$59.99 | TASMANIA | CORK | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2021 | 93 POINTS

70% Chardonnay, 30% Pinot Noir Dosage 8g/L

An impressively pale, bright straw hue heralds a well-crafted cuvée blessed by the cool 2011 season in southern Tasmania. The tension of the season keeps things focused, with the apple and citrus crunch of 70% chardonnay. Biscuity, fresh almond, ginger nut complexity proclaims the gentle influence of lees maturity. It finishes with good length and subtle grapefruit bitterness. A standout vintage for Heemskerk.

HANGING ROCK CUVÉE EIGHT MACEDON LATE DISGORGED NV

\$115 | MACEDON | DIAM | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2022 | 93 POINTS

11 years on yeast lees; Pinot Noir 60% and Chardonnay 40%; 50% 1997 and 50% reserve blend from 1987 to 1996; all components barrel aged on lees for at least two years; Dosage 2g/L;

Eleven years on lees has infused a full yellow gold hue and exuberant layers of grand complexity. Nuances of grilled pineapple and preserved lemon are set magnificently against a sweeping panorama of fruit mince spice, toast, fig, orange cream, dark chocolate and hints of pipe smoke, green olive and antique sofa. For all of its maturity and complexity, the presents the tension of cool Macedon acidity, maintaining focus through a long finish. As idiosyncratic and characterful as ever.

FROGMORE CREEK WINEMAKER'S RESERVE LATE DISGORGED CUVÉE 2004

\$120 | TASMANIA | DIAM | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2018 | 93 POINTS

12 years on lees; 4.6g/L dosage; 1 June 2017 release

For thirteen years of age, a bright medium straw hue declares endurance and energy. The palate follows the same theme, with primary lemon and grapefruit evolving into almond meal and subtle charcuterie complexity. A reductive overtone lends notes of struck flint and grilled toast. The fine texture of 12 years of lees age and a subtle touch of grapefruit pith like phenolic grip define a long finish, with vibrant, southern Tasmanian acidity neatly balanced with a low 4.6g/L dosage.

PETALUMA CROSER LATE DISGORGED 2004

\$55 | ADELAIDE HILLS | DIAM | 13.7% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 92 POINTS

68% Pinot Noir 32% Chardonnay; Tirage Feb 05, Disgorged Aug 16; matured for 8 weeks in old French oak barriques; Bottle ageing 11 years; zero dosage; 1,300 bottles

Thirteen years of maturity (eleven on lees) have constructed a deep and complex style of full straw yellow hue. White peach and lemon zest fruit is well evolved into toasty, buttery, nutty complexity, even notes of golden fruit cake and glacé fig. It finishes dry and a touch bitter with some burnt orange notes suggesting it may have already edged beyond its finest moment. Nonetheless, impressive acid line defines a long finish with no need for dosage. A second bottle was identical.

CHURCHVIEW ESTATE THE BARTONDALE "LAINE" BRUT ZERO 2010

\$55 | MARGARET RIVER | CROWN SEAL | 11% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2018-2022 | 92 POINTS

100% Chenin Blanc hand picked; wild fermented; 50% barrel fermented; 15% 2009; 5 years on lees; zero dosage

This bright, zesty and primary sparkling chenin blanc has a vibrancy, life and purity that belie its age, 100% wild and 50% barrel fermentation. Crunchy pear and apple fruit are underscored by tense grapefruit acidity, with a creamy texture and integration thanks to long lees age. It handles zero dosage effortlessly and has the energy to live many years yet.

CHANDON ALTIUS MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE UPPER YARRA CUVÉE 2012

\$59 | UPPER YARRA | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2018 | 92 POINTS

Hoddles Creek area vineyards around 400m elevation

From the cool Hoddles Creek area of the Upper Yarra at an elevation around 400m, this cellar door only blend of chardonnay and pinot noir captures the graceful elegance of the 2012 season in apple, lemon and white peach fruit of great persistence. Lees age has contributed a creamy, mouth filling texture and layers of brioche, vanilla, nougat and creme brûlée. Cool acidity, low dosage and gentle phenolic grip meld seamlessly through a long finish.

FREYCINET VINEYARD RADENTI CHARDONNAY PINOT NOIR 2011

\$65 | TASMANIA | CORK | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2019 | 92 POINTS

69% Chardonnay, 31% Pinot Noir; more than 4 years on lees; Disgorged Nov 2015; Dosage 8g/L

A complex and reductive sparkling of full flavour and aroma presence, layered with complexity of struck flint and grilled toast, expressing its chardonnay lead in a pale to medium straw hue and tense, crunchy citrus fruit. It's well countered by the succulent stone fruits depth of pinot noir, carrying long on a finish of fine lees texture and elegantly married acidity and dosage.

OTHER SPARKLING WINES OVER \$50

BLUE PYRENEES ESTATE MIDNIGHT CUVÉE 2011

\$90 | PYRENEES | DIAM | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2021-2026 | 89 POINTS

Tasted from magnum; 90% Chardonnay; 9% Pinot Noir 1% Pinot Meunier; Dosage 9g/L; disgorged Nov 2016

A bright straw hue announces a crunchy cuvée that celebrates the cool 2011 season in vibrant lemon, fennel and a hint of green pea. It's held its poise impeccably in magnum, energised by searing, cool vintage acidity that calls for much longer still to soften.

HOWARD VINEYARD BLANC DE NOIR 2014

\$70 | ADELAIDE HILLS | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 88 POINTS

Méthode Traditionnelle; 100% handpicked; 2 years on lees

A medium to full straw hue announces the depth of Adelaide Hills pinot noir. Golden delicious apple and grapefruit meet the custard apple and crème brûlée complexity of two years of lees age. Dry phenolic grip lends coarseness to a contracted finish. Low dosage is integrated and well balanced.

LEVANTINE HILL MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE LATE DISGORGED 2010

\$52 | YARRA VALLEY | CORK | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 87 POINTS

50% pinot noir, 50% chardonnay

Lees age has built themes of butter, roast nuts and spice to the grapefruit and apple character of this 50/50 pinot noir and chardonnay blend. It concludes with bitter, hard phenolic grip.

BLUE PYRENEES ESTATE VINTAGE BRUT MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE 2004

\$70 | PYRENEES | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 87 POINTS

Magnum 80% Chardonnay, 17% Pinot Noir, 3% Pinot Meunier; Dosage 9 g/L; Disgorged July 2016

A savoury style of charcuterie and game notes over a core of ripe stone fruits with more than a decade of maturity building complexity of chocolate and spice. The bottle I tasted had lost much of its bead.

BIRD IN HAND NEST EGG JOY SPARKLING PINOT NOIR 2010

\$75 | ADELAIDE HILLS | DIAM | 13.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2018 | 87 POINTS

5,332 bottles

Pink lady apple and musk speak of elegant Adelaide Hills pinot noir, while bubblegum flavours declare lees maturity. It finishes short and one-dimensional, with some phenolic bitterness.

MOORILLA CLOTH LATE DISGORGED 2006

\$145 | TASMANIA | DRINK 2021-2026 | 86 POINTS

Chardonnay dominant, roughly 60% and 40% pinot. 4.2g/L dosage

Still a pale straw hue even at a decade of age, this is a cuvée of reductive flintiness and some vegetal character around a tense core of lemon and apple fruit. Malic acidity is tense and hard, making for an awkward finish.

DE SALIS LOFTY CUVÉE 2013

\$65 | ORANGE | CORK | 11.8% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

50% Pinot Noir 35% Chardonnay 15% Pinot Meunier; fermented and matured for up to 11 months in old French oak barriques; Disgorged Oct 2016; 38 months on lees; 6g/L dosage

Succulent stone fruits meet the charcuterie notes of barrel fermentation. Ripe fruit sweetness rather than low dosage makes for a sweet finish.

LERIDA ESTATE BRUT RESERVE 2006

\$55 | CANBERRA DISTRICT | CROWN SEAL | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 84 POINTS

10 years on lees; Pinot Noir and Chardonnay

A powerful style that juxtaposes bubblegum and boiled sweets complexity with searing acidity that even a decade on lees has not tamed. It's complex and long.

DE SALIS LOFTY CUVÉE 2012

\$65 | ORANGE | CORK | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 84 POINTS

50% Pinot Noir 35% Chardonnay 15% Pinot Meunier; fermented and matured for up to 11 months in old French oak barriques; 48 months on lees; Disgorged Oct 2016; 4.5g/L dosage

A deep golden hue and prominent biscuity and honey flavours declare advanced development, lacking fruit freshness, integrity and carry.

MORDRELLE SPARKLING 2011

\$85 | ADELAIDE HILLS | CROWN SEAL | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 83 POINTS

The bottle says six months on lees, but six years after vintage it's clearly had more than that. It's also reductive to the point of rubbery.

DE SALIS BLANC DE NOIR 2013

\$65 | ORANGE | CORK | 11.7% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 82 POINTS

75% Pinot. 25% Meunier; fermented and matured for up to 11 months in old French oak barriques; Disgorged October 2016; 38 months on lees

A full golden hue with a blush tint, this is a cuvée of grassy/lantana underripe notes and advanced development that quashes fruit freshness and persistence. One bottle was corked.

THE BEST BLANC DE BLANCS OF THE YEAR

As global tastes edge toward ever more elegant flavours and global warming threatens to drive wine styles in the opposite direction, the rising significance of chardonnay in sparkling blends cannot be overstated. While the Champenois fight over chardonnay allocations, in the warmer climates of Australia, the vital role of blanc de blancs has never been more crucial.

Australia's finest blanc de blancs hail from its coolest regions, with Tasmania again leading the charge this year.

In my tastings this year I reviewed 67 Australian blanc de blancs with a median score of 88 points.

TYSON STELZER'S BLANC DE BLANCS OF THE YEAR

CUVÉE PRESTIGE LATE DISGORGED BLANC DE BLANCS 2005

\$150 | TASMANIA | DIAM | 12.3% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2019 | 96 POINTS

100% Piper's River chardonnay; a blend of four cuvées from the estate vineyard; partial malolactic fermentation; aged on lees more than 10 years; disgorged September 2016; 7.2g/L dosage

Clover Hill is back with a vengeance, not only topping the blanc de blancs category this year, but backing it up with the runner up, too. There is brightness to a medium straw hue even at twelve years of age, and a silky and seamless accord between primary and secondary character. Ripe fruit succulence of grilled pineapple and juicy white peach are cut with fresh citrus definition and the energy of partial malic acidity. More than a decade on lees has blessed it with glorious layers of silky, creamy texture and captivating nuances of butter, glacé pear and vanilla nougat. Masterfully assembled, and at its glorious peak now.

THE RUNNERS-UP

CLOVER HILL CUVÉE EXCEPTIONNELLE BLANC DE BLANCS 2010

\$65 | TASMANIA | DIAM | 12.6% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2022 | 95 POINTS

100% Piper's River chardonnay; partial malolactic fermentation; aged on lees in bottle for 3 years; disgorged May 2016; 5.5g/L dosage

Chardonnay was where it all began for Clover Hill, and there is a tension and definition to this grape that defines the estate's longest-lived wines to this day. At six years of age, this cuvée upholds a bright, medium straw hue. There's intensity of grapefruit, lemon butter and even the exuberance of star fruit, amidst the toast and burnt butter of bottle age. In creamy texture, mouth filling intensity and undeviating line and length, this is a grand release for Clover Hill, with plenty of energy still coiled into its folds.

COLDSTREAM HILLS BLANC DE BLANCS 2011

\$44.99 | YARRA VALLEY | CORK | 11.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2021 | 94 POINTS

87% chardonnay, 13% pinot; Aged 4 years on lees; Disgorged 11/2015; Dosage 7g/L

Both Coldstream Hills' sparklings are sourced from the heights of the Deer Farm Vineyard in the cool Upper Yarra and the cold and wet 2011 season has made for a particularly bright, pale and enduring style. Primary apple and lemon fruit remain the themes, with lees age building complexity of lemon meringue, nougat and vanilla and blessing it with a finely textured mouth feel and dainty bead. It lingers with great confidence and energy, yet ever calm and composed, with plenty of years before it yet.

HOLLYDENE ESTATE SPARKLING BLANC DE BLANCS 2008

\$50 | MORNINGTON PENINSULA | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2020 | 94 POINTS

A beautifully composed sparkling that sets a benchmark for the Mornington, contrasting dynamism, energy and calm. Tangy lemon, crunchy apple and white peach fruit are cut with an electric line of high-velocity acidity, yet never harsh or hard, well toned by the silky, buttery calm of long lees age. Marvellous.

HOUSE OF ARRAS MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE BLANC DE BLANCS 2007

\$80 | TASMANIA | CORK | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2022 | 94 POINTS

Tasmania (Freycinet, Derwent Valley, Coal River, Pipers River); aged on lees 8 years; 3.5g/L dosage

At a full 10 years of age (8 on lees) its bright, pale straw hue is a marvel. Age has blessed it with delightful layers of freshly churned butter, almond nougat, toast and the slightest wisp of wood smoke, yet its focus remains resolutely transfixed on impeccably vibrant lemon, grapefruit and crunchy apple fruit. The focused acidity of Tasmania draws out a long finish of refreshingly miniscule dosage of 3.5g/L and finely played bitter phenolic grip.

SWIFT BLANCS BRUT NO 1 2010

\$85 | ORANGE | DIAM | DRINK 2017-2020 | 93 POINTS

No 1 is the disgorgement number; disgorged September 2016; 3g/L dosage; 1,498 bottles

A wonderful blanc de blancs of medium straw hue that celebrates a captivating contrast between lemon zest and white peach fruit and the buttery, toasty development of almost six years on lees. Nuances of white pepper and fennel show wonderful subtlety of reductive complexity. Fruit, secondary development, dosage and acidity all roll seamlessly through a long finish, with phenolic texture subtle and well integrated.

DAOSA BLANC DE BLANCS 2011

\$55 | PICCADILLY VALLEY | DIAM | 11.9% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2021-2026 | 92 POINTS

Dosage 6g/L; fermented and aged for 8 months in 17 old barrels and one demi-muid; partial malolactic fermentation with 2g/L malic remaining; 43 months on lees in bottle

A characterful and masterfully crafted cuvée that fuses the tense lemon and apple fruit and firm malic acidity of this 500m altitude Adelaide Hills vineyard to all the gamey, charcuterie and fresh mushroom character of old barrel fermentation and ageing. The cool 2011 makes for a taut and austere style that will appreciate another five years to soften and settle. Impressive line and length.

THE LANE VINEYARD CUVÉE HELEN BLANC DE BLANCS 2009

\$55 | ADELAIDE HILLS | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 92 POINTS

Disgorged October 2015; The Lane Vineyard Block 2 and Windsor Avenue Block 4; Fermented & malolactic fermentation in 85% stainless, 15% French oak hogsheads; 9 months in tank/barrel prior to tirage; Disgorged after 6 years with zero dosage

After a dress rehearsal in 2008, this is the vintage in which The Lane Vineyard delivered a Cuvée Helen of grace and poise. A year after release, it's upheld its refreshingly bright, pale straw hue while its mood had deepened to put on layers of honey, ginger cake, baked apple and even fruit mince spice. It's attained its peak, with its dry finish now showing a faint touch of phenolic grip.

KREGLINGER BRUT DE BLANCS 2004

\$65 | TASMANIA | CORK | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 92 POINTS

100% chardonnay, 100% barrel fermented. Single block from single vineyard; high yielding vintage; disgorged late 2016

Barrel work is quite prominent here, in layers of savoury complexity, nutmeg character, and tertiary notes of charcuterie, even a hint of barnyard, yet it pulls into a honed palate of excellent acid tension that lingers very long and accurate. It looks like a mature barrel-fermented Australian chardonnay with bubbles.

FEATHERTOP BLANC DE BLANC 2012

\$40 | ALPINE VALLEY | CROWN SEAL | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2022-2027 | 91 POINTS

Dosage 4g/L; aged 3.5 years on lees; disgorged February 2016; 400 dozen

The cool climes of the Alpine Valley infuse tension and stamina into chardonnay, heightened by low dosage, making for a style of high-tensile acidity. Three-and-a-half years of lees age have built fine texture and subtle almond meal character, but the focus remains resolutely primary with bright lemon and apple fruit that belies its age. Patience.

GEMBROOK HILL VINEYARD BLANC DE BLANCS 2011

\$55 | YARRA VALLEY | DIAM | 11.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2021-2026 | 91 POINTS

2nd disgorgement; 5 years on lees

From chardonnay planted in 1983 in the cool heights far up in the Upper Yarra, this is a cuvée that draws searing structure from the cool, wet 2011 season. Five years on lees has built complexity and texture, but has not yet foiled its razor-sharp acidity or touch of grassy underripeness. Such a battery pack of energy makes for evolution at the pace of a giant sea turtle, upholding pristine, bright, pale straw hue, primary lemon and apple fruit, a hint of struck flint reduction and only the slightest suggestions of biscuit, almond and nougat. All it needs is time.

MANDALA LATE DISGORGED BLANC DE BLANCS 2010

\$70 | YARRA VALLEY | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2022 | 91 POINTS

100% Chardonnay; Disgorged 12/10/2016; Dosage 3 grams; 10% fermented in oak; 78 months lees age; méthode traditionnelle

There's energy and tension here, with a bright straw hue and primary white peach and grapefruit character belying its age. The cut of Yarra Valley chardonnay defines a focused palate of firm acid that promises years of potential yet. Subtle almond meal complexity and fine texture are thanks to 6.5 years on lees.

THE LANE VINEYARD 'LOIS' BLANC DE BLANCS NV

\$23 | ADELAIDE HILLS | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 90 POINTS

Dosage: 8g/L; Fermented in stainless, then matured in a mix of 75% stainless and 25% large old oak (puncheons & foudres); No malolactic fermentation; Non-vintage blend of current vintage with typically 20-30% reserve wines from previous two vintages

The cool heights of The Lane Vineyard bless chardonnay with spicy red apple and crunchy lemon character, well complemented with the toasty, biscuity, honeyed complexity of lees age and a portion of maturation in large old puncheons and foudres. A dosage of 8g/L is well integrated on a long finish. The result is an appealing and value-for-money Adelaide Hills fizz.

TOMICH BLANC DE BLANC ADELAIDE HILLS NV

\$25 | ADELAIDE HILLS | CORK | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 90 POINTS

Single vineyard Woodside; fermented in French oak barrels

A faint blush hue and notes of guava and pink grapefruit come as a surprise in a fresh, young blanc de blancs, though it is none the less for it. Barrel fermentation has been carefully handled to contribute spice and texture without funk, upholding a refreshing fruit focus.

MEADOWBANK BLANC DE BLANCS 2011

\$45 | TASMANIA | DIAM | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2018 | 90 POINTS

Disgorged February 2016; 6 g/L dosage

Meadowbank's tiny estate vineyard now boasts vines of more than 20 years of age, producing depth and intensity of fruit to contrast the bright tension of Derwent Valley acidity in the cool 2011 season. There's rich stone fruit aplenty here, with reductive notes of sweet corn and the biscuity complexity of almost five years of lees age.

TEN MINUTES BY TRACTOR BLANC DE BLANCS 2011

\$68 | MORNINGTON PENINSULA | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2021 | 90 POINTS

Chardonnay and Pinot Noir. Released June 2016; Dosage 6 g/L; wild fermented and aged for 9 months in old French oak; 48 months on lees; partial malolactic (80%)

The apple, pear and grapefruit of Mornington Peninsula chardonnay is brushed with the biscuity complexity of old French oak fermentation followed by four years on lees in bottle. Notes of struck flint reduction accent a tense style, charged with the taut acidity of the cool 2011 season.

OTHER BLANC DE BLANCS

WATERSHED BLANC DE BLANCS 2012

\$25 | MARGARET RIVER | DIAM | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2018 | 89 POINTS

22% French oak barrel fermentation; on lees in barrel and tank for 7 month; on tirage in bottle 4 years; disgorged September 2016; 8g/L dosage

Estate Margaret River chardonnay has been treated to 22% French oak barrel fermentation and seven months barrel age, followed by four years in bottle - a grand recipe at this price. The result collides the powerful fruit presence of Margaret River chardonnay with flinty, reductive complexity. It's a savoury style with fine lees texture, accurate acid line and well-integrated dosage of 8g/L.

TALTARNI BLANC DE BLANCS 2012

\$26 | SOUTH-EASTERN AUSTRALIA | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2019 | 89 POINTS

Méthode Traditionnelle; 77% Pyrenees, 15% Adelaide Hills, 8% Tasmania; at least 35 months on lees; disgorged April 2016; 9g/L dosage

Grapefruit, apple and pear proclaim a style of chardonnay crunch and Pyrenees body, with tangy acidity driving a long finish. A touch of grapefruit bitterness on the finish lends grip and tension.

ROSS HILL BLANC DE BLANCS 2011

\$30 | ORANGE | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2021-2026 | 89 POINTS

Disgorged December 2015

The tension of the cool 2011 season in the heights of Orange makes for a style of searing acid line. Lees maturity has softened its impact, while upholding a pale straw hue and bright apple and lemon fruit accented with hints of mandarin and orange. It will benefit from some more years of development yet.

SITTELLA BLANC DE BLANCS NV

\$32 | PEMBERTON | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2018 | 89 POINTS

100% Chardonnay; 30 months on lees; Dosage 6g/L; Vintage 40% 2013 60% 2012; 8% fermented in oak; no malolactic fermentation; 250-300 dozen

Apple and pear fruit is underlined by the subtle almond meal and biscuity complexity of two and a half years of lees age, with subtle struck flint reduction. Dosage and acidity find even harmony on a finish marked by a touch of phenolic bitterness.

CANNIBAL CREEK SPARKLING BLANC DE BLANCS 2013

\$32 | GIPPSLAND | DIAM | 11% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2018 | 89 POINTS

100% Chardonnay; aged at least three years on lees

Lees age has brought texture and integration to the cool, tangy chardonnay of this Gippsland vineyard. Yeasty bubblegum complexity contrasts ripe peach and lemon fruit, finishing with tart acidity.

BREMERTON WIGGY SPARKLING CHARDONNAY TRADITIONAL METHOD 2011

\$32 | LANGHORNE CREEK | CORK | 11.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 89 POINTS

100% Chardonnay Estate grown; traditional method

Infused with energy and tension thanks to the cool 2011 season, this is a sparkling that draws on the bready, biscuity complexity of lees age while upholding the white nectarine and grapefruit crunch of cool chardonnay. It finishes with balanced dosage, bright acidity and bitter phenolic grip.

ROSS HILL BLANC DE BLANCS 2013

\$35 | ORANGE | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 89 POINTS

100% single vineyard chardonnay; Disgorgement date October 2016; no malolactic fermentation; dosage 2 g/L; No oak

A powerful blanc de blancs that fuses intense apple, pear and lemon fruit with the struck flint and grilled bread of reduction and roast nut bottle maturity. Tense, high altitude malic acidity is well integrated with low dosage, though accentuates a hint of phenolic bitterness on the finish.

AUDREY WILKINSON WINEMAKERS SELECTION BLANC DE BLANC 2013

\$40 | ORANGE | CORK | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 89 POINTS

100% Chardonnay; On lees in the bottle for over 36 months; Disgorged Jan 2016

There's a ripe, candied, tropical feel to this fruit, contrasting with the tension and definition of cool, high altitude Orange acidity and the subtle biscuit and ginger notes of three years of lees maturity, lending lovely texture and persistence.

MALCOLM CREEK THE REGINALD BLANC DE BLANC MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE 2011

\$40 | ADELAIDE HILLS | CORK | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2019 | 89 POINTS

Lees age has delivered soft, creamy texture and nutty, toasty and brioche complexity to the grapefruit, apple and white peach of Adelaide Hills chardonnay. Notes of struck flint bring complexity, while the enduring acid line of the cool 2011 season upholds freshness. A little phenolic bitterness marks a long finish.

OAKRIDGE LOCAL VINEYARD SERIES BLANC DE BLANCS 2012

\$42 | YARRA VALLEY | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2108 | 89 POINTS

Traditional method; aged on lees 44 months; disgorged June 2016

A restrained and reductive blanc de blancs of bright straw hue and struck flint character over a core of lemon and apple fruit. More than three years on lees has built biscuity character, while retaining a note of earthy, yeasty complexity. It finishes dry and savoury with a fine, creamy bead.

STREICKER BLANC DE BLANCS MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE BRUT 2013

\$45 | MARGARET RIVER | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2018-2021 | 89 POINTS

A young, pale blanc de blancs of gunpowder reductive complexity, subtle lees-derived character of toast, almond meal and honey, and a tense core of apple and lemon fruit. There is elegance and tension here, though it concludes short and firm.

DELAMERE VINEYARDS BLANC DE BLANC 2011

\$65 | TASMANIA | CORK | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2019 | 89 POINTS

100% Chardonnay; hand disgorged; Méthode traditionnelle; wild fermented; full malo; 4 years aging on lees; less than 2g/L dosage

Four years on lees has built a full straw hue and notes of game and charcuterie, accented by the funkiness of wild ferment, while upholding the tension and acid grip of this cool site in Piper's River. It carries accurate line and length, finished off neatly with a refreshingly low dosage of 2g/L.

DELAMERE VINEYARDS BLANC DE BLANC 2010

\$65 | TASMANIA | CORK | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 89 POINTS

Aged 5 years on lees; dosage 4g/L

A pale, bright straw hue and racy acid line are testimony to the stamina of the cool Delamere site. Five years on lees has blessed it with finely textured structure and spicy complexity, though its purity is interrupted by savoury complexity reminiscent of charcuterie on the finish.

COOMBE FARM BLANC DE BLANCS NV

\$30 | YARRA VALLEY | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 88 POINTS

Traditional method; 12 months on lees; Dosage 10.5 g/L

A pale straw hue heralds a complex sparkling of savoury, charcuterie ferment character which sits over subtle grapefruit and apple flavours. Dosage contrasts bright acidity on the finish.

MANDALA BLANC DE BLANCS 2014

\$35 | YARRA VALLEY | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2020-2024 | 88 POINTS

100% Chardonnay; Dosage 2g/L; Nil Oak; 18 months on lees; Méthode traditionnelle

The tension of tense Yarra Valley chardonnay acidity contrasts bubblegum fermentation complexity, with a taut finish accentuated by low dosage of just 2g/L. It's a firm and adroit style with good persistence and potential to age.

DI GIORGIO FAMILY BLANC DE BLANC TRADITIONAL METHOD 2012

\$35 | COONAWARRA | DIAM | 11.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 88 POINTS

Bottle fermented

Apple and pear fruit is subtly underlined by the mealy, nutty and faintly smoky complexity of lees age. Acidity and dosage find harmony and balance on a long finish. It lacks fruit freshness and definition, but achieves satisfying structure from lees maturity.

MOSQUITO HILL BRUT BLANC DE BLANCS MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE 2015

\$36 | FLEURIEU PENINSULA | DIAM | 12.3% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 88 POINTS

100% Chardonnay; Méthode Traditionnelle; Dosage 8.5 g/L; Disgorged Dec 2016

This single vineyard Fleurieu cuvée unites the apple and white peach of ripe chardonnay with the subtle biscuity complexity of a year on yeast lees. It's a fleshy and ripe style with a little more dosage than it needs. Nonetheless a wine of character and persistence.

VASSE FELIX BLANC DE BLANCS 2014

\$39 | MARGARET RIVER | DIAM | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 88 POINTS

Dosage 6g/L; 66% fermented in 3-4 year old oak barriques; aged 2 years on lees

Contrasting the lemon and apple tension of Karridale in the cool south of Margaret River with the smoky, toasty, spicy complexity of two-thirds fermentation in 3-4 year old oak barriques, this is a complex and characterful style of creamy bead, fleshy mid palate and tense finish.

FIRETAIL SPARKLING CHARDONNAY 2012

\$39 | WESTERN AUSTRALIA | DIAM | 11.2% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 88 POINTS

100% Chardonnay; traditional method; 42 months on lees; disgorged May 2016; 7g/L dosage

A bright pale straw hue announces a tense blanc de blancs of struck flint reductive character, neutral apple fruit and hints of leesy complexity. More than three years on lees has built fine-grained texture and even persistence, though it lacks the fruit definition and character to really sing.

HELEN'S HILL BLANC DE BLANC ROMA'S GRACE 2012

\$40 | YARRA VALLEY | DIAM | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2018-2022 | 88 POINTS

Dosage 7g/L; Disgorged March 2016

Crunchy pear and tart grapefruit mark out a fresh and tense blanc de blancs with lees age contributing more in softly textural mouth feel than gentle almond meal complexity. Tight acidity conspires with phenolic grip to produce a firm finish.

WILLOW CREEK VINEYARD BRUT 2012

\$45 | MORNINGTON PENINSULA | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 88 POINTS

100% Chardonnay; Disgorged January 2016; Aged 40 months in bottle

With a pale, bright straw hue, this is a finely structured blanc de blancs of bold, ripe expression of tropical fruits and bubble gum, pulled into line by well-focused acidity and nicely textured, lees-derived mouth feel.

BETWEEN THE VINES ALL THAT GLITTERS BLANC DE BLANC 2015

\$25 | ADELAIDE HILLS | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 87 POINTS

Fermented in bottle on lees for 18 months and hand disgorged Dec 2016

Hand made from 30 year old estate vines, this first release vintage is a ripe and full style of fleshy white peach and nectarine and notes of spice and ginger nut biscuits from 18 months lees age, finishing with honeyed dosage.

LLOYD BROTHERS ADELAIDE HILLS BLANC DE BLANCS 2014

\$25 | ADELAIDE HILLS | DIAM | 13% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 87 POINTS

100% Chardonnay; Dosage extra brut; Disgorged Dec 2015;

The tension of Adelaide Hills chardonnay contrasts the biscuity complexity of maturity, marked by subtle bubblegum ferment notes, concluding with notes of fruit sweetness.

3 OCEANS THE ESTATES BLANC DE BLANCS 2013

\$25 | FRANKLAND RIVER | CORK | 11.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 87 POINTS

Chardonnay

Gunpowder notes of reduction blend compellingly with subtle toasty complexity of maturity, over a core of lemon and apple fruit. Acidity is tense and phenolics are firm, making for an astringent finish.

GRANT BURGE BRUT BLANC DE NOIRS MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE NV

\$27 | AUSTRALIA | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 87 POINTS

Adelaide Hills and Alpine Valleys; primary fermentation with yeasts isolated from the Champagne region in France are conducted at low temperatures in stainless steel; base wines are stabilised and put on tirage for secondary fermentation in bottle; mature

A deep and powerful blanc de noirs that unites the blackberries and black plums of ripe pinot noir with the spicy ginger, biscuit and fruit mince spice complexity of three years of lees age. Subtle dankness disrupts purity.

CENTENNIAL VINEYARDS BLANC DE BLANCS NV

\$39 | SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2019-2021 | 87 POINTS

100% Chardonnay; 70% 2012, 30% 2011 and older; 10% wild fermented in old oak 3.5 years on lees; disgorged July 2016; Dosage: 5g/L

The complexity of toast, mixed spice and butter infused by 3.5 years on yeast lees provides complexity and texture to tense grapefruit and lime, concluding with hard, grassy acidity and firm phenolic grip.

GREY-SMITH BLANC DE BLANCS SPARKLING CHARDONNAY NV

\$45 | MOUNT GAMBIER | CROWN SEAL | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 87 POINTS

A secondary and savoury style of bruised apple fruit, notes of charcuterie and firm phenolic grip. With surprising mid-palate depth for chardonnay, it lingers with good persistence.

UMAMU ESTATE SPARKLING CHARDONNAY 2005

\$50.50 | MARGARET RIVER | DIAM | 13.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 87 POINTS

A glorious 12 years of maturity is wrapped into a bright, medium straw yellow hue and deep complexity of toast, dried nectarine, mixed spice, glacé orange and marmalade. It upholds great persistence of powerful Margaret River chardonnay fruit, though notes of oxidation dry and mar the finish.

ROMNEY PARK BLANC DE BLANCS 2009

\$65 | ADELAIDE HILLS | CROWN SEAL | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2018 | 87 POINTS

7 years on lees; Oak fermented and matured for 9 months; disgorged November 2016

A complex and powerful Adelaide Hills sparkling of full straw hue that unites the grapefruit, white peach and even tropical nuances of chardonnay with the toasty, nutty complexity of seven years of lees age. Oak fermentation and maturation lends woody vanilla notes that age has not tamed, still dominating over the fruit.

JACK RABBIT VINEYARD VINTAGE SPARKLING BLANC DE BLANC 2015

\$35 | VICTORIA | DIAM | 12.1% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 86 POINTS

Dosage 16g/L; 15% barrel fermented; Charmat method

Stone fruits and citrus have built toasty, honeyed notes in barrel, with bright, tense acidity clashing with a high dosage of 16g/L.

STEELS GATE BLANC DE BLANCS MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE 2013

\$40 | YARRA VALLEY | DIAM | 11.9% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 86 POINTS

100% Chardonnay; fermented and matured in seasoned French oak barriques of varying ages; Disgorged 27/7/16; Dosage 7g/L

The cool tension of this early 1980s block contrasts all the fanfare of barrel fermentation and maturation in bubblegum and mushroom character, finishing fruity and sweet, more by fruit ripeness than dosage.

MOORE'S HILL BLANC DE BLANCS MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE NV

\$45 | TASMANIA | CORK | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 86 POINTS

100% Tamar Valley Chardonnay; Blend of 2010, 2011 and 2012; dosage 2004 vintage; tiraged 24 - 36 months; 9g/L dosage

A complex sparkling of funky charcuterie and boiled sausage complexity, with a soft mouth feel and some phenolic firmness on the finish.

LOBETHAL ROAD MAJA BLANC DE BLANCS 2014

\$45 | ADELAIDE HILLS | DIAM | 11.6% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2018 | 86 POINTS

100% Chardonnay; Made in the traditional method. On lees 24 months. 5g/L dosage

From a Mount Torrens vineyard at 475m of altitude, there is intensity here of white peach, white nectarine, pear and grapefruit, marred by some grubby, earthy imperfection, perhaps a consequence of heavy February rainfall? Acid and sugar find a seamless balance on a long finish.

BIMBADGEN HUNTER VALLEY BLANC DE BLANCS 2012

\$50 | HUNTER VALLEY | CORK | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2018 | 86 POINTS

Disgorged September 2016; 6g/L dosage

With a pale straw hue, this is a sparkling of bubblegum flavours and phenolic grip, with good length and low dosage well integrated.

MORDRELLE BLANC DE BLANCS 2012

\$60 | ADELAIDE HILLS | CROWN SEAL | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 86 POINTS

30 months on lees

Tense lemon and apple fruit is accented with the bubblegum complexity of fermentation, finishing short and firm.

DE SALIS BLANC DE BLANC 2013

\$65 | ORANGE | CORK | 11.7% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 86 POINTS

100% Chardonnay; Disgorged Oct 2016; no malolactic; fermented & aged 3 months in old French oak barriques; 38 months on lees; 3g/L dosage

The tension of cool, high Orange fruit with no malolactic fermentation and low dosage contrasts the charcuterie and boiled sausage notes of fermentation in old French oak barriques.

MT JAGGED PALE RUSH SPARKLING CHARDONNAY 2015

\$18 | SOUTHERN FLEURIEU | CORK | 11.4% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

100% Chardonnay; 7.2g/L dosage

This is a ripe chardonnay from a single vineyard on the Fleurieu, with stone fruit and tropical flavours and some sweetness on the finish more from fruit ripeness than dosage.

CASSEGRAIN STONE CIRCLE BLANC DE BLANC NV

\$19.95 | NEW SOUTH WALES | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

100% Chardonnay; Base vintage 70% 2016; 23% 2015; 7% 2014; Dosage 12.5g/L Disgorged Nov 2016; No oak

A young blanc de blancs of apple fruit with tropical overtones and a strong dosage of 12.5g/L that makes for a sweet finish.

LEURA PARK ESTATE VINTAGE GRANDE SPARKLING BLANC DE BLANC 2016

\$22 | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

100% Chardonnay; 30% fermented in new and used oak; reserves from old solera; on lees 4 - 6 months then prepared for Charmat; 8.7g/L dosage

Tropical fruits and sweet dosage unite in a soft and simple charmat style that lacks definition and complexity.

3 OCEANS THE ESTATES BLANC DE BLANCS 2014

\$25 | FRANKLAND RIVER | CORK | 11.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

Chardonnay

A firm, young blanc de blancs of cut grass, crab apple and honeydew, with coarse phenolic bitterness and astringent acidity.

JACK RABBIT VINEYARD VINTAGE SPARKLING BLANC DE BLANC 2016

\$35 | VICTORIA | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

Dosage 16g/L; 15% barrel fermented

A young and fruity style of red apple and boiled sweets flavours, with a high dosage of 16g/L making for a sweet yet firm finish.

KRINKLEWOOD VINEYARD BLANC DE BLANC 2012

\$40 | HUNTER VALLEY | DIAM | 11% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

Chardonnay; Traditional method; 3 years on lees; 7.7g/L dosage

Grassy, gooseberry and lantana notes point toward underripe fruit, with firm acidity softened by three years on lees.

SEVILLE ESTATE BLANC DE BLANCS 2014

\$45 | YARRA VALLEY | CROWN SEAL | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2022 | 85 POINTS

Base wine 100% Chardonnay; 100% 2014 vintage; Disgorged 5/12/2016; wild fermented and mature in old French oak barrels for 9 months; 30 months on lees; zero dosage

Tense grapefruit and nashi pear contrasts the funkiness of wild fermentation in old barrels, producing a vegetal effect. This is a young sparkling of hard acidity exacerbated by zero dosage.

MOUNT AVOCA LISA MARIE BLANC DE BLANCS 2012

\$47.50 | PYRENEES | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

Méthode traditionnelle; 24 months on lees; 3.9g/L dosage

A firm, dry and savoury style of grassy fruit astringency with a peanut note that detracts from fruit expression. It carries good acid line and ow, well-poised dosage.

LLOYD BROTHERS SPARKLING CHARDONNAY 2016

\$15 | ADELAIDE HILLS | CORK | DRINK 2017 | 84 POINTS

Tank Ferment; Bottled 30.11.16

Tropical fruits and notes of geranium denote a firm and sweet style that lacks freshness and fruit precision.

PINNAROO ESTATE VINTAGE CUVÉE 2014

\$25 | COWRA | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 84 POINTS

100% Chardonnay; Hand picked; traditional method

Apple and grapefruit flavours are underlined by an underripe grassiness which makes for hard acidity and a firm finish. It concludes with sweet dosage.

SMITHBROOK THE YILGARN BLANC DE BLANCS MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE 2011

\$35 | PEMBERTON | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 84 POINTS

100% estate grown chardonnay; stored on lees in bottle for 36 months;

And earthy and dusty style of neutral apple fruit with biscuity complexity and firm phenolic grip on the finish.

MORDRELLE BLANC DE BLANCS 2013

\$45 | ADELAIDE HILLS | CROWN SEAL | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 84 POINTS

SINGLE VINEYARD. MINIMUM 3 YEARS ON LEES

A firm and bracing style of fennel, cut grass and greengage plums, showing underripeness in both flavour and acid profile.

BAROKES BUBBLY CHARDONNAY NV

\$4.50 | SOUTH-EASTERN AUSTRALIA | CAN | 13% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 82 POINTS

97% Chardonnay

Earthy, metallic, coarse and lacking in finesse and fruit character.

HOUSE OF CARDS QUEEN OF DIAMONDS BLANC DE BLANCS 2014

\$35 | MARGARET RIVER | DIAM | 12.2% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 82 POINTS

36 months on lees; Dosage 4.5g/L

A reductive style of burnt rubber notes, devoid of fruit definition and finishing short and callow.

MINKO BLANC DE BLANCS MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE 2014

\$35 | FLEURIEU PENINSULA | CROWN SEAL | 12.3% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 81 POINTS

100% Chardonnay

A savoury style of gamey barnyard notes that quash fruit purity and render the finish firm and coarse.

THE BEST SPARKLING ROSÉS OF THE YEAR

If trends in the UK and US are anything to go by (and they usually are), sparkling rosé is a category with tremendous potential for growth in Australia. Champagne houses who have registered the strongest growth in Australia in recent years are now targeting rosé as their key focus.

This is a style that Australia can produce extremely well. Our warmer climate can have the effect of accentuating phenolic grip, which tends to disrupt the elegance of white sparkling wines. Rosés are often able to handle this better, thanks to the fruit body and tannin presence of their red wine component.

Cool climate regions naturally dominate this category, with the Adelaide Hills and Tasmania leading the charge.

This year I reviewed 52 Australian sparkling rosés with a median score of 88 points.

TYSON STELZER'S SPARKLING ROSÉ OF THE YEAR

DEVIATION ROAD ALTAIR BRUT ROSÉ NV

\$30 | ADELAIDE HILLS | DIAM | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 94 POINTS

Pinot noir and chardonnay

This is far from the most expensive rosé in this report – in fact it's less than half the price of the other two contenders for my Best Sparkling Rosé of the year. Rosé is a massive growth category globally but Australia lags way behind, in part thanks to over-ambitious pricing. Deviation Road not only delivers a breathtakingly gorgeous rosé, it does so at a delicious price. It's a beautifully elegant cuvée that articulates the character of Adelaide Hills pinot noir and chardonnay with the utmost grace and finesse. Subtle strawberry hull, red cherry, pink grapefruit and lemon define a primary and pristine style, impeccably supported by vibrant Adelaide Hills acidity and invisible dosage. Rarely does South Australia ever come so close to Champagne.

THE RUNNERS-UP

APOGEE DELUXE VINTAGE ROSÉ 2014

\$60 | TASMANIA | DIAM | DRINK 2017-2020 | 94 POINTS

100% pinot noir; 40% fermented in old oak casks; aged 24 months on lees; disgorged 20 April 2017

Piper's River pinot noir is the secret to many of Australia's most refined sparkling rosés and Andrew Pirie knows this as well as anyone. The calibre of this cuvée far exceeds the proportions of his little vineyard. A gorgeous pale salmon hue, it's infused with magnificent red cherry and strawberry fruit, framed in spice and even the most subtle hints of coffee and dark chocolate from partial fermentation in old oak casks. Pinot builds a palate of magnificent body and presence, yet upholds focus and tension, thanks to cool Tasmanian acidity on a finish that lingers long and accurate. Delightful.

KREGLINGER VINTAGE ROSÉ 2006

\$65 | TASMANIA | CORK | DRINK 2017-2018 | 94 POINTS

100% pinot noir, 100% barrel fermented; maceration method; aged nine years on lees; 9.2g/L dosage; a touch of pinot noir liqueur to tweak the colour

Rosé legend Nat Fryar is now at the helm of Kreglinger, and her talent shows even in the finishing touch of mature releases. She describes Piper's River as perfect for rosé, with cloud cover and hence low UV and high humidity producing more elegant pinot noir with thinner skins. The result is a cuvée of elegance, with a medium to full salmon hue, gorgeous fragrance of rose petals, Turkish Delight and cherry liqueur, and characterful presence of structure. Subtle brioche complexity and silky creaminess proclaim nine years on lees, with the finely textural grip of tannin structure. It carries with excellent line and length, concluding with fine-tuned acid tension.

HOUSE OF ARRAS MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE ROSÉ 2006

\$80 | TASMANIA | CORK | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2018 | 94 POINTS

Tasmania (Huon Valley, Coal River Valley, Derwent Valley); Pinot Noir 65.2%, Chardonnay 32.6%; aged on lees 7 years; 6.5 g/L dosage; disgorged June 2014

A pretty, pale salmon copper hue predicts nothing of the grand complexity and character that is packed into this impeccably crafted Tasmanian rosé. Seven years on lees has built a toasty, creamy, spicy style, bolstering the personality and depth of southern Tasmanian pinot noir (two-thirds of the blend). It culminates in a finish of great persistence, enlivened with bright, enduring acidity and bitter yet fine and well-placed phenolic grip.

SWIFT ROSÉ BRUT 2011 NO 1 NV

\$40 | ORANGE | DIAM | DRINK 2017-2018 | 93 POINTS

Same blend as the 2011 non-vintage wine with just a 2% pinot noir red wine blush in the dosage. 5g/L dosage. 6,363 bottles produced.

This cuvée was inspired by the inaugural edition of this report and my predictions on the potential for rosé in Australia. Swift's Cuvée Brut NV is cleverly transformed into rosé on disgorgement. It's a non-vintage cuvée labelled 2011 to denote its 2011 base vintage and bottling. A pretty strawberry hull and red cherry bouquet flows seamlessly through the palate of this ultra pale salmon rosé, with just 2% pinot noir red wine adding a fragrant layer over the wonderfully textured and complex palate of the Swift Cuvée Brut NV. It finishes with bright red berry fruits, vibrant acidity and elegant persistence.

JANSZ VINTAGE ROSÉ 2013

\$52.95 | TASMANIA | CORK | 13% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2018 | 93 POINTS

Disgorged October 2016 after more than 2.5 years on lees. Great to see the disgorgement date on back labels now.

Sealed with DIAM for the first time - yes! This is an intense vintage for Jansz, upholding its gorgeous, pale salmon hue and contrasting this with rumbling depth of fruit power and the complexity of oak fermentation and lees age. The presence of 100% pinot noir from the Jansz vineyard is alive with wild strawberries and red cherries, at once fleshy and yet focused and tense. Barrel fermentation and maturity build a creamy bead and dark chocolate, coffee and ginger nut biscuit complexity which linger long through the finish. Bright Piper's River acidity and low dosage meld seamlessly, with a touch of tannin grip lending gentle bite to the finish.

TALTARNI CUVÉE ROSÉ 2012

\$26 | SOUTH-EASTERN AUSTRALIA | DIAM | 12.1% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 92 POINTS

Méthode Traditionnelle; 59% chardonnay, 35% pinot, 6% meunier; Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania; partial malo in oak with selected chardonnay components; at least 24 months on lees; disgorged October 2016; 9.3g/L dosage

On paper, the recipe looks ominously similar to that of Taché, but a touch of oak ageing lends texture and subtle biscuity complexity, while upholding the elegant red fruits, pink pepper and citrus tang of cool climate fruit. The result is beautifully textured and elegantly refined.

TALTARNI TACHÉ 2012

\$26 | SOUTH-EASTERN AUSTRALIA | CORK | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 92 POINTS

Méthode Traditionnelle; 59% chardonnay, 36% pinot, 5% meunier; Victoria, South Australian and Tasmania; disgorged October 2016; aged pinot noir dosage liqueur; 7.4g/L dosage

Crafted with all the painstaking attention of full méthode traditionnelle, Taché remains a benchmark of bargain rosé. In its elegantly pale salmon hue, it projects its chardonnay lead and pinot support in subtle nuances of pomegranate, strawberry hull and pink grapefruit, coasting through a refined finish of bright acidity and the creamy texture of long lees age. Value.

TALTARNI VINEYARDS CUVÉE ROSÉ MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE 2011

\$26 | AUSTRALIA | DIAM | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 92 POINTS

61% chardonnay, 32% pinot noir, 7% meunier; sourced from Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania; partial malolactic fermentation; a short period of oak maturation; aged on lees 4 years; 6.3g/L dosage

A refreshingly elegant and understated rosé charged with almost two-thirds chardonnay, it's shed its primary red fruits in the years since its release, adopting a more savoury and toasty mood, though still upholding its refreshing style and lively acid line. It concludes tangy and focused, with softly textural mouth feel and perfectly integrated dosage.

DELAMERE VINEYARDS NON VINTAGE ROSÉ NV

\$30 | TASMANIA | CORK | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 92 POINTS

100% pinot noir; 2015 base with 12% reserves from 2014 and 2013; aged 12 months on lees; dosage 5g/L

This 100% pinot noir captures the mood and character of the Delamere vineyard with presence, personality and tension. A medium, bright salmon hue is a prelude to layers of spicy strawberry, red cherry, pomegranate and pink pepper, even notes of cherry liqueur of great definition, coasting very long through a finish of fine-tuned tannin structure and the bright acid line of this cool site. It concludes with a creamy bead and well-integrated dosage of a low 5g/L.

SIDEWOOD ESTATE ISABELLA ROSÉ MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE FIVE YEARS LATE DISGORGED 2011

\$60 | ADELAIDE HILLS | DIAM | 12.1% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 92 POINTS

60% Chardonnay 40% Pinot Noir; 60 months on lees; 4.5g/L dosage;

Isabella Late Disgorged is one year older than current release Isabella and double the price. A medium salmon hue heralds a wonderful expression of red cherry and wild strawberry fruit, slowly becoming spicy and complex. Five years on lees has built fine texture, with a subtle and supportive note of phenolic bitterness providing definition to the finish.

CLOVER HILL BRUT ROSÉ 2013

\$65 | TASMANIA | DIAM | 13% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 92 POINTS

100% Piper's River pinot noir; skin contact; aged on lees at least 32 months; disgorged July 2016; 8.5g/L dosage

Skin contact has infused a medium to full salmon crimson hue and delightful character and depth of red cherry and strawberry fruits. Close to three years on lees has built a creamy texture, while upholding primary red fruits purity amidst subtle nougat development. It finishes rich and fruit sweet, with a long, soft and fleshy finish.

THE LANE VINEYARD 'LOIS' BRUT ROSÉ NV

\$25 | ADELAIDE HILLS | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 91 POINTS

Dosage: 7g/L; Chardonnay and Pinot Noir Fermented in stainless, then matured in a mix of 50% stainless and 50% large old oak (puncheons & foudres); No malolactic fermentation; Non-vintage blend of current vintage with typically 20-30% reserve wines from previous two vintages

Lois has gone pink for the first time in this pretty new rosé. This is the rosé to drink when you don't want to be seen drinking rosé, because the hue is but the faintest blush salmon. Red apple, strawberry and lemon fruit of refreshingly elegant appeal is touched with rose petal nuances and subtle nutty complexity, thanks both to lees age and 50% maturation in large oak puncheons and foudres. Beautifully poised and graceful, this is the new Adelaide Hills sparkling worth discovering this year.

SIDEWOOD ESTATE ISABELLE ROSÉ MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE 2012

\$28 | ADELAIDE HILLS | DIAM | 11.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 91 POINTS

60% Chardonnay 40% Pinot Noir; 9g/L dosage; 24 months on lees

The faintest of salmon tints to the hue makes for a very pale rosé of red cherry, wild strawberry and raspberry fruit, its 40% dose of pinot noir defining the mood more than the majority share of chardonnay. It's elegant fine and fresh, completed neatly with 9g/L dosage.

JANSZ PREMIUM ROSÉ NV

\$31 | TASMANIA | DIAM | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 91 POINTS

Under DIAM for the first time ever (hoorah!), Jansz Rosé retains its gorgeously subtle pale salmon hue. More toasty and biscuity and less perfumed than usual, there are notes of wild strawberries, watermelon and hints of tomato, concluding with cool Tasmanian acidity and gentle phenolic grip. A value-for-money rosé, though it's lost the finesse it enjoyed when Nat Fryar was at the helm of Jansz.

JOSEF CHROMY PEPIK SPARKLING ROSÉ NV

\$32 | TASMANIA | DIAM | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 91 POINTS

94% pinot noir, 6% chardonnay; estate Relbia vineyard; 100% 2015; disgorged November 2016; no malolactic fermentation; 18 month son lees; 12g/L dosage

With a pale salmon hue and crisp, elegant palate of pink pepper, watermelon, grapefruit and red cherries, this is a clean, crisp and consummately crafted rosé at a bargain price. It's a vintage cuvée (2015) and almost blanc de noirs (94%) though not labelled as either. Refreshing, cool, northern Tasmanian pinot noir is the showpiece here, and it is preserved with clarity, purity and refreshing brightness.

BAY OF FIRES TASMANIAN CUVÉE PINOT NOIR CHARDONNAY ROSÉ NV

\$32 | TASMANIA | CORK | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 91 POINTS

Derwent Valley, Pipers River, Coal River, Tamar Valley; Pinot Noir, Chardonnay, Pinot Meunier; 10.3 g/L dosage

With a pretty, medium salmon hue, this is a cuvée that speaks of the supple fruit depth and grand complexity of Tasmanian pinot noir first and foremost. It's a spicy style of wild strawberries, red apples, even a hint of tangelo, framed in creamy lees structure, fine tannins and just the right amount of bitter phenolic grip to provide structure and definition to the finish.

CLOVER HILL TASMANIAN CUVÉE ROSÉ NV

\$34 | TASMANIA | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 91 POINTS

54% chardonnay, 43% pinot, 3% meunier; base vintage 2013; partial malolactic; disgorged November 2015; 7.5g/L dosage

A medium, bright salmon hue heralds a rosé of character and complexity, contrasting succulent strawberries with tangy pink grapefruit and the biscuity complexity of more than two years of lees age. Fine tannins provide some grip and phenolic bitterness to the finish, with bright acidity and well-gauged dosage lingering long and even.

MOORILLA EXTRA BRUT ROSÉ MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE TASMANIA 2011

\$49 | TASMANIA | 11.9% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2021-2031 | 91 POINTS

53% chard, 47% pinot. 5 weeks until release. Pale salmon hue. 20% wild yeast. 4 years 7 months on lees

Precise pink pepper and strawberry hull are energised by tense malic acidity, defining a taut line on a long and focused finish. A precise and age-worthy style.

BLUE PYRENEES ESTATE BRUT ROSÉ MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE NV

\$28 | PYRENEES | DIAM | 12.1% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2018 | 90 POINTS

75% Chardonnay 17% Pinot Noir; 38% 2011; 35% 2010; 18% 2008; Dosage 8g/L; Disgorged September 2016

Based on the enduring 2011 vintage, there is quite some age to this non-vintage rosé, though it retains admirable poise. A pale salmon hue with a subtle copper tint announces a spicy style in which a small inclusion of pinot noir contributes strawberry and red apple fruit. Lees age has built soft, creamy texture, while the acidity of 2011 keeps the finish focused.

BROWN MAGPIE LORETTA BLANC DE NOIR 2013

\$38 | GEELONG | DIAM | 12.9% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 90 POINTS

100% pinot noir; dosage 10g/L; 40 months on lees; disgorged September 2016

With a gorgeous, pale salmon hue, this is a cuvée that celebrates the body and depth of pinot noir, filled with succulent strawberry and red cherry fruit and supported by the fine, creamy structure of more than three years of lees age. It concludes with balanced dosage and subtle phenolic bitterness.

STEFANO LUBIANA BRUT ROSÉ 2011

\$45 | TASMANIA | CORK | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 90 POINTS

Méthode Traditionnelle

A pale salmon hue heralds a vibrant rosé, alive with pink pepper, red apple, tomato and strawberry flavours. Pinot noir fruit depth contrasts its savoury style, with fine phenolic grip and tannin well handled on a long and structured finish.

OTHER SPARKLING ROSÉS

PETALUMA CROSER ROSÉ NV

\$25 | ADELAIDE HILLS | DIAM | 13.4% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 89 POINTS

100% Pinot Noir; 11g/L dosage

With all the presence of 100% Adelaide Hills pinot noir, this medium salmon-copper tinted cuvée juxtaposes the flesh of strawberry and red cherry fruit with the toasty, biscuity, caramel complexity of age. A touch too much dosage leaves a candied feel to the finish.

YARRABANK CRÈME DE CUVÉE NV

\$30 | YARRA VALLEY/MORNINGTON | DIAM | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 89 POINTS

53% Chardonnay, 47% Pinot Noir; 65% Upper Yarra, 35% Mornington; minimum 3 years on lees; 30g/L dosage

With a medium crimson hue, this is a sweet rosé of apple, watermelon and strawberry fruit, and the spicy, nutty complexity and lees texture of three years of bottle age. It culminates in a long and complex yet candied finish. A serious offering for the sweet tooth.

HANGING ROCK ROSÉ BRUT NV

\$35 | MACEDON | DIAM | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 89 POINTS

Pinot Noir/Chardonnay; aged in barrels; aged in bottle at least 2 years

The cool tension of Macedon contrasts the savoury, biscuity complexity of barrel fermentation in a dry style of tomato skin complexity and subtle phenolic grip. Gentle pink grapefruit and strawberry hull fruit lingers. A characterful and distinctive sparkling that will partner confidently with light pink meat dishes.

DE BORTOLI ROCOCO PREMIUM ROSÉ NV

\$20 | YARRA VALLEY | DIAM | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 88 POINTS

Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, Pinot Meunier

An elegant sparkling style that captures the finesse of the Yarra at a bargain price, with understated strawberry, watermelon and guava fruit accented by savoury nuances of tomato and sage. Balanced dosage and a creamy finish complete a friendly style.

COAL VALLEY VINEYARD SPARKLING PINOT NOIR 2013

\$44 | TASMANIA | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2018 | 88 POINTS

100% Coal River Pinot Noir; Traditional method; 3 years on lees; disgorged August 2016

A pale salmon hue would pass as an elegant rosé, indicative of the depth and character of this Coal River pinot noir. It presents primary red apple and strawberry fruit, accented with the subtle almond meal notes and gentle texture of three years lees age. Cool Tasmanian acidity defines a tense finish, marked by bitter, coarse phenolic grip.

WINES BY GEOFF HARDY HAND CRAFTED SPARKLING SALMON NV

\$25 | SOUTH AUSTRALIA | CORK | 11% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 87 POINTS

98% Pinot Noir 2% Chardonnay. Base vintage 2016; Dosage 10.9 g/L

Based on the 2016 vintage, this is a precocious and dynamic rosé of pink salmon hue that leads out with strawberry and musk and finishes abruptly. It's refreshing and tangy.

CENTENNIAL VINEYARDS BRUT ROSÉ NV

\$30 | SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2018-2019 | 87 POINTS

64% Pinot Noir; 34% Chardonnay; 2% Meunier with 4% pinot noir dry red; 2012 mainly, plus 2011. 10% wild barrel fermented in old oak; 3.5 years on lees; Disgorged July 2016; Dosage 9.5g/L

A tiny dribble of 4% pinot noir dry red is sufficient to fix a pale salmon hue. 3.5 years on lees lends toasty, spicy, roast nut complexity to elegant strawberry hull and red apple fruit. It concludes with good persistence, firm acidity, phenolic grip and a touch of candied dosage (9.5g/L).

ROBERT CHANNON SPARKLING PINOT NOIR 2015

\$30 | GRANITE BELT | CORK | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 87 POINTS

100% pinot noir. Méthode traditionnelle. 13 months on lees. Estate vineyard of 950m elevation

There's a pale salmon/copper hue to this 100% pinot noir sparkling wine. A young and simple style with tropical fruit flavours, a sweet finish, gentle lees texture and soft acidity.

CHANDON BRUT ROSÉ MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE NV

\$32 | VICTORIA | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 87 POINTS

Pinot Noir 68.1%; Chardonnay 28.4%; Pinot Meunier 3.2%; Other 0.3%; 6.2g/L dosage; disgorged October 2016

With a pretty pale salmon hue, this is a rosé of earthy, yeasty complexity, more about method than fruit definition, culminating in a finish of phenolic grip.

MOSQUITO HILL BRUT ROSÉ MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE 2013

\$36 | FLEURIEU PENINSULA | DIAM | 12.6% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 87 POINTS

90% Chardonnay 10% Pinot Noir; Nil Oak; Disgorged Aug 2016; Dosage 8g/L

With a medium salmon copper hue, this is a savoury rosé whose primary fruit has evolved to toasty complexity and tomato nuances. It concludes with candied strawberry sweetness and subtle tannin grip.

MITCHELL HARRIS SABRE VINTAGE ROSÉ 2012

\$55 | MACEDON & PYRENEES RANGES | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 87 POINTS

Chardonnay and Pinot Noir Dosage 4g/L; Aged 40 months on lees; Disgorged Jan 2016

Red apple, strawberry and raspberry fruit defines this pretty medium salmon tinted rosé. Biscuity complexity is the blessing of lees age. Earthy notes detract from fruit purity.

JACOB'S CREEK TRILOGY ROSÉ NV

\$16.99 | SOUTH AUSTRALIA | CORK | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 86 POINTS

50% Pinot Noir 45% Chardonnay 5% Pinot Meunier; 2016 base vintage; 13g/L dosage

With a medium salmon hue, this is a simple style of red apple and strawberry fruit, a hint of biscuity complexity and a subtle earthy, yeasty note. It finishes short, with gentle tannin grip balanced by 13g/L dosage.

LANSDOWNE VINEYARD "IT'S NOT MY FAULT I LIKE BUBBLES" SPARKLING PINOT NOIR NV

\$20 | ADELAIDE HILLS | CORK | 13.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 86 POINTS

100% Pinot Noir; 300 case production

With a full, bright crimson pink hue, this is a sweet rosé abounding in fresh strawberry and raspberry fruits. An attractive 'transition' wine for the moscato set. It's short, simple and sweet, yet with sufficient cool Adelaide Hills acidity to tone the finish.

COOMBE FARM BRUT ROSÉ 2016

\$30 | YARRA VALLEY | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 86 POINTS

100% Pinot Noir; Dosage 15g/L

This is a sweet rosé of wild strawberry and raspberry exuberance, concluding fruity, simple, short and sweet.

HAREWOOD ESTATE "FIZZY LIZZIE" TRADITIONAL METHOD 2011

\$45 | GREAT SOUTHERN WESTERN AUSTRALIA | DIAM | 13% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 86 POINTS

100% Pinot Noir; Disgorged 2/2016; Dosage 5g/L; traditional method

A blush tint declares a blanc de noirs of red apple and tomato fruit, in a savoury and developed style, lacking in fruit brightness, finishing with firm phenolic bitterness.

JACOB'S CREEK SPARKLING ROSÉ NV

\$14.99 | SOUTH AUSTRALIA | CORK | 11.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

60% Pinot Noir 40% Chardonnay; 2016 and 2015 vintages; 18g/L dosage

With a pink tint and flavours of watermelon and strawberries, this is a simple and fruity style with gentle tannin structure, dominated by an excessive 18g/L of dosage. There was once a time when I poured this cuvée for large events, but it's sadly too sweet now.

MT JAGGED PINK HEATH SPARKLING PINOT NOIR 2016

\$18 | SOUTHERN FLEURIEU | CORK | 13.7% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

98.5% Pinot Noir 1.5% Shiraz; Dosage 34g/L dosage

Pink it is, in name, in colour, and in flavour, with notes of musk sticks, watermelon and raspberries. It's very sweet at 34g/L dosage, which covers for firm phenolic grip.

TENAFEATE CREEK SPARKLING BLUSH 2015

\$25 | ONE TREE HILL | CORK | 13% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

100% Sangiovese; Charmat method; 400 dozen

Strawberry and raspberry fruit of soft structure is bolstered by sweet dosage of boiled sweets character, finishing short and simple.

BARLEY STACKS SPARKLING ROSÉ MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE NV

\$30 | YORK PENINSULA | CROWN SEAL | 13% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

A savoury rosé of roast tomato and paprika character, boasting a full crimson hue and a dry palate of cranberry fruit, finishing short and simple.

HOWARD PARK SPARKLING ROSÉ NV

\$35 | MT BARKER | DIAM | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

100% Pinot Noir; Dosage 6g/L; Disgorged June 2016

A 100% pinot noir rosé of medium salmon hue, presenting musk stick and candied strawberry notes of ripe fruit character, contrasting searing acidity and coarse phenolic structure.

TYNAN SPARKLING ROSÉ 2013

\$40 | ORANGE | CROWN SEAL | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

50% Chardonnay 50% Pinot Noir; Méthode traditionnelle; progressively hand disgorged

A medium crimson salmon hue introduces a complex blend of tomato, strawberry and raspberry character, with savoury, herbal notes and red fruits uniting in a salty style.

DE SALIS ROSÉ 2013

\$65 | ORANGE | CORK | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

75% Pinot Noir 25% Pinot Meunier; fermented and matured for up to 11 months in old French oak barriques; 38 months on lees; Dosage 6g/L; Disgorged Oct 2016

A full crimson hue with a copper tint, this is a savoury style of tomato and charcuterie complexity, lacking fruit vibrancy, freshness and persistence.

BAROKES BUBBLY ROSÉ NV

\$4.50 | SOUTH-EASTERN AUSTRALIA | CAN | 13% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 84 POINTS

100% Shiraz

A bright crimson hue announces flavours of raspberries and strawberries, with a dry, metallic and astringent finish.

KINGSLEY GROVE ESTATE TICKLE SPARKLING DEMI-SEC ROSÉ 2016

\$22 | SOUTH BURNETT | CORK | 11.8% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 84 POINTS

Sangiovese

A bright raspberry hue, this is a strawberry and sarsaparilla-flavoured sparkling that contrasts firm tannin grip with sweet dosage.

GRAMPIANS ESTATE MUIRHEAD SPARKLING ROSÉ 2011

\$25 | GRAMPIANS | CROWN SEAL | 11% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2021-2024 | 84 POINTS

60% Chardonnay 30% Pinot Noir 10% Pinot Meunier; disgorged August 2015; Dosage 7g/L

A pretty pale salmon hue heralds an elegant rosé of strawberry hull and morello cherry fruit, cut with the searing acidity of the cool, wet 2011 season, which even four years on lees has proved helpless in softening.

TYNAN BLUSHING BRUT 2013

\$40 | ORANGE | CROWN SEAL | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 84 POINTS

60% Chardonnay 40% Pinot Noir; Méthode traditionnelle; progressively hand disgorged

A savoury style of copper hue and tomato and spice flavours, with salty notes on the finish.

BIMBADGEN SPARKLING ROSÉ NV

\$24 | CORK | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 83 POINTS

Shiraz saignée is an unusual recipe for sparkling rosé and no amount of dosage (14g/L here) will rectify grassy flavours and hard phenolic grip.

LERIDA ESTATE BRUT ROSÉ CANBERRA DISTRICT 2012

\$45 | CANBERRA DISTRICT | CROWN SEAL | 12.9% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 83 POINTS

Bottle fermented; Lees aged

With a full salmon hue and aromas of pink pepper, ripe guava and old orange rind, this is a powerful, pinot-led rosé with a volatile finish that lacks freshness.

HOLLY'S GARDEN ROSÉ PETILLANT 2015

\$20 | VICTORIA | DIAM | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 82 POINTS

100% Pinot Noir; on skins for 5 hours; fermented in barriques; transferred to bottle February 2016; Dosage 8g/L

Caramel sweetness clashes with astringent phenolics in a toasty style devoid of freshness and vibrancy.

SUTTON GRANGE WINERY FAIRBANK ANCESTRALE SPARKLING ROSÉ 2016

\$30 | CENTRAL VICTORIA | CROWN SEAL | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 81 POINTS

53% Viognier, 44% Syrah and 3% Merlot; zero dosage and zero additions; disgorged September 2016

A cloudy sparkling of pale orange hue, with neutral apple flavours, yeasty, beer-like character, bitter phenolic grip and a firm, short finish.

THE BEST PROSECCOS OF THE YEAR

By contrast to the complexity, texture and sophistication of méthode traditionnelle sparkling wines of chardonnay, pinot noir and meunier, the glera variety of the Prosecco region of northern Italy typically yields simple, young, fruity fizz. It's refreshing, affordable and immensely popular in these lingering days of GFC-induced conservatism.

The King Valley remains far and away Australia's uncontested king of this category, claiming 6 of the 7 places in my list of highlights.

This year I reviewed 40 Australian proseccos with a median score of 87 points.

TYSON STELZER'S PROSECCO OF THE YEAR

DAL ZOTTO PUCINO PROSECCO 2016

\$23 | KING VALLEY | CROWN SEAL | 10.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 91 POINTS

The tension of the King Valley is captured eloquently in this crunchy and refreshing prosecco. Nashi pear, fennel and lime fruit are accented with notes of white pepper, structured with an impressively defined acid line of vibrant poise, given full voice thanks to delightfully low dosage. This is singly the best buys in Australian prosecco this year.

THE RUNNERS-UP

SYMPHONIA PROSECCO 2016

\$25 | KING VALLEY | CROWN SEAL | 11.2% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 91 POINTS

Enticingly understated, beautifully poised and refreshingly dry, this is a prosecco of accurate fruit expression of lemon, nashi pear and granny smith apple, with low dosage giving freedom to cool King Valley acidity of great persistence and perfectly harmonious integration. A beautifully composed and delicately poised aperitif.

DE BORTOLI PROSECCO NV

\$18 | KING VALLEY | DIAM | 11.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 90 POINTS

A clean, fresh, lively and crunchy prosecco of accurate nashi pear, lemon and fennel personality, with a crisp finish that encapsulates all there is to love about King Valley prosecco. The price is right, too.

COFIELD PROSECCO NV

\$20 | ALPINE VALLEYS | CROWN SEAL | 10.9% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 90 POINTS

A characterful prosecco of baked apple, fennel and pear flavours, enlivened with the lime acidity of the Alpine Valleys and finishing with refreshingly low dosage.

DAL ZOTTO PUCHINO PROSECCO NV

\$20 | KING VALLEY | CROWN SEAL | 10.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 90 POINTS

Clean, fresh and fruity, this is a prosecco that celebrates the cool definition of the King Valley in accurate flavours of nashi pear, lime and fennel, with balanced dosage and crunchy fruit appeal.

BROWN BROTHERS SINGLE VINEYARD KING VALLEY PROSECCO 2016

\$20.9 | KING VALLEY | CORK | 11.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 90 POINTS

Charmat method; 12g/L dosage

Crunchy green apple, nashi pear and lime fruit announce a prosecco of poise, texture and a refreshingly low dosage. The result is crunchy, finely textured and impressively persistent, celebrating the poise and fine acid line of Brown Brother's Banksdale Vineyard in the upper reaches of the King Valley.

SANTA & D'SAS D'SAS PROSECCO 2016

\$32 | KING VALLEY | CROWN SEAL | 11% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 90 POINTS

Prosecco 10g/L dosage

A big step up in purity and fruit character from the NV rendition, this is a prosecco of nashi pear, fennel and white pepper, with excellent fruit definition, a finely textured structure and cool King Valley acid line. It finishes with good persistence and seamlessly integrated dosage.

OTHER PROSECCOS

ARTWINE PROSECCO NV

\$25 | ADELAIDE HILLS | CROWN SEAL | 11% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 89 POINTS

A crunchy and varietal prosecco of nashi pear and lemon fruit with hints of fennel. Cool Adelaide Hills acidity defines a fresh and primary style, completed with well-integrated, nicely balanced dosage. It finishes short and simple, but meets the easy-drinking prosecco brief confidently.

DAL ZOTTO PUCINO COL FONDO PROSECCO 2014

\$27 | KING VALLEY | CROWN SEAL | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 89 POINTS

Sustaining an impressively pale straw hue at three years of age, this is a prosecco that fuses the bright definition of the King Valley to the subtle complexity of age, lending a savoury feel and a grip to its structure.

BROWN BROTHERS PROSECCO NV

\$17.99 | KING VALLEY | CORK | 11.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 88 POINTS

2016 base vintage; charmat method; 15g/L dosage

A simple apple and grapefruit flavoured prosecco of clean fruit definition, with more candied dosage than it really needs.

REDBANK PROSECCO 2016

\$21.95 | KING VALLEY | CROWN SEAL | 11% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 88 POINTS

Crunchy nashi pear, fennel and grapefruit define a fresh and accurate prosecco of refreshingly low dosage, capturing the cool tension of the King Valley.

YELLOWGLEN VINTAGE PROSECCO 2015

\$21.99 | SOUTH-EASTERN AUSTRALIA | CORK | 10.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 88 POINTS

Prosecco; Dosage 15g/L; Oak - nil

A spicy and sweet prosecco of honey and ginger over a core of nashi pear and lemon. A vintage older than many in the market, it is also building subtle biscuity complexity.

CHRISTMONT OF KING VALLEY LA ZONA PROSECCO NV

\$22 | KING VALLEY | CROWN SEAL | 11.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 88 POINTS

Prosecco 100% Base wine predominately 2016 vintage; Charmat; Dosage 10g/L; Prosecco 100%

An elegant style of apple and pear fruit, with well balanced dosage. It's a simple charmat style of primary fruit and subtle grip on the finish.

EDDIE MCDUGALL KING VALLEY PROSECCO NV

\$24 | KING VALLEY | CROWN SEAL | 10.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 88 POINTS

Charmat; 9g/L dosage

Fragrant and accurate lemon, nashi pear and golden delicious apple fruit define a pale, refreshing and crunchy prosecco that celebrates the cool heights of the King Valley. Balanced dosage of 9g/L melds seamlessly with refreshing acidity.

BOX GROVE VINEYARD PROSECCO 2016

\$24 | VICTORIA | CROWN SEAL | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 88 POINTS

Charmat; Dosage 7g/L

Notes of boiled lollies, sea spray, lime and nashi pear denote a prosecco that leads out ripe and finishes taut, tense and a touch firm.

AD HOC CARTE BLANC PROSECCO NV

\$26.99 | PEMBERTON | DIAM | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 88 POINTS

Glera with a three percent blend of eight other varieties; 10 g/L dosage

Crunchy nashi pear denotes a fresh and lively prosecco with complex fruit notes of star fruit, kiwi fruit and lime. 10g/L dosage neatly balances the refreshing acidity of Pemberton.

FEATHERTOP VINTAGE PROSECCO 2014

\$35 | ALPINE VALLEYS | CROWN SEAL | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 88 POINTS

18 months on lees; dosage 4g/L; disgorged May 2016; 250 dozen

A flinty and savoury bottle-fermented prosecco of metallic tension and dry finish. It's shed its primary fruit but hasn't yet picked up secondary complexity.

ZILZIE SELECTION 23 PROSECCO NV

\$11.99 | MURRAY DARLING | CORK | 11.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 87 POINTS

Crunchy apple and lemon fruit unite in a style of refreshingly low dosage. It's short and simple but not too sweet, and at this price, that's a blessing.

BROWN BROTHERS PROSECCO ROSÉ NV

\$17.99 | KING VALLEY | CORK | 11.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 87 POINTS

2016 base vintage; charmat method; 15g/L dosage

A full crimson pink tint heralds a sweet prosecco of simple strawberry and raspberry fruit, finishing with candied musk stick notes and too much sweetness.

WORDSMITH BED OF ROSES ALPINE VALLEY PROSECCO NV

\$22 | ALPINE VALLEY | CORK | 11% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 87 POINTS

A simple prosecco of understated apple and pear fruit and a touch of flinty, reductive complexity, lacking lift and verve.

ZILZIE REGIONAL COLLECTION PROSECCO NV

\$22 | KING VALLEY | CROWN SEAL | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 87 POINTS

Apple and pear fruit are supported by subtle toasty complexity, with a honeyed effect from more dosage than this soft style really needs.

RISKY BUSINESS KING VALLEY PROSECCO NV

\$25 | KING VALLEY | CROWN SEAL | 10.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 87 POINTS

15g/L dosage; 417 dozen

A fresh and lively prosecco that leads out with lemon, apple and fennel, finishing short and simple with yeasty complexity.

SCOTT LA PROVA KING VALLEY PROSECCO 2016

\$25 | KING VALLEY | CROWN SEAL | 11% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 87 POINTS

100% Prosecco, charmat method; Dosage 9g/L

Honeydew melon, fennel and a touch of earthy, yeasty influence make for a simple prosecco with dry phenolic grip.

ZILZIE PROSECCO NV

\$14 | MURRAY DARLING/KING VALLEY | CORK | 12% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 86 POINTS

Red apple fruit and honey make for a simple prosecco of soft structure and primary character.

ZONTE'S FOOTSTEP BOLLE FELICI PROSECCO NV

\$18 | FLEURIEU PENINSULA | DIAM | 11% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 86 POINTS

95% Glera 5% Pinot Grigio; Dosage nil; charmat method; Base vintage 2016

Apple and lemon fruit of such fruit sweetness that it has no dosage, and no need for any. It's fresh, fruity, clean, short and simple.

SAM MIRANDA PROSECCO NV

\$20 | KING VALLEY | CROWN SEAL | 11% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 86 POINTS

Lemonade and ginger announce a ripe and sweet prosecco of fruity, fresh and primary style, backed with the freshness of King Valley acidity.

INNOCENT BYSTANDER PROSECCO NV

\$20 | KING VALLEY | DIAM | 9% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 86 POINTS

There's a tropical and musk note to the apple and pear fruit of prosecco, concluding with sweet dosage. A clean, fruity and sweet style.

FREEMAN PROSECCO 2016

\$23 | NSW | CORK | 11.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 86 POINTS

A spicy and full prosecco that contrasts ripe notes of orange liqueur with grassy suggestions.

RED HILL ESTATE COOL CLIMATE PROSECCO NV

\$25 | MORNINGTON PENINSULA | CORK | 9% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 86 POINTS

Nashi pear and golden delicious apples are accented with notes of fennel, finishing tropical and sweet. A clean and fruity style.

GAPSTED LIMITED RELEASE PROSECCO 2015

\$25 | KING VALLEY | DIAM | 11% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 86 POINTS

A pale, bright and dry style that is losing freshness and gaining a hint of earthy complexity at this age, though retains bright structure and cool acid drive.

SANTA & D'SAS PROSECCO NV

\$24 | KING VALLEY | CROWN SEAL | 11% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

2016 Base; 12 g/L dosage

Apple and lemon fruit with an earthy, yeasty overtone and a soft finish, with a little more sweetness than it needs.

STEFANO DE PIERI DI QUALITA PROSECCO NV

\$24 | KING VALLEY | CORK | 10% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

An earthy prosecco that lacks fruit definition, vibrancy and acid cut.

AUSTINS & CO 6FT6 PROSECCO NV

\$25 | KING VALLEY | SCREW CAP | 11.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

Base wine predominately 2016; Dosage 10g/L; Charmat

A crunchy prosecco of lemon and nashi pear fruit, with acid and dosage finding balance, though lacking fruit character and presence, concluding hard and short.

SEE SAW WINE PROSECCO 2016

\$25 | ORANGE | CORK | 10.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

15g/L dosage

From the cool 850m elevations of Orange, this first release prosecco captures a crunchy and lively style, with fruit purity marred by earthy, yeasty impurity.

TRENTHAM ESTATE THE FAMILY PROSECCO NV

\$15 | AUSTRALIA | CORK | 11% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 84 POINTS

Charmat method; 14g/L sugar; 91% Prosecco 9% Pinot Grigio

Candied dosage and tropical fruits make for a clean, sweet, simple and fruity prosecco with a short, sweet finish.

JACOB'S CREEK PROSECCO 2015

\$16.99 | SOUTH AUSTRALIA | DIAM | 11% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 84 POINTS

12g/L dosage

A neutral style almost completely devoid of aroma, with just slight pear and apple character on the palate. In the absence of fruit presence, the sweetness of what might otherwise be a modest 12g/L dosage is its most prominent feature.

ALLEGIANCE FORTUITY PROSECCO 2016

\$25 | ORANGE | CROWN SEAL | 10.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 84 POINTS

Yeasty and earthy notes dominate crunchy, cool Orange fruit, lacking freshness, lift and definition.

DALFARRAS PROSECCO 2016

\$18.85 | VICTORIA | CORK | 11% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 83 POINTS

Varietal 100% Prosecco

A pale prosecco of earthy, yeasty character more than fruit definition, finishing with candied dosage.

CAPPA STONE PROSECCO NV

\$16 | CORK | 9% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 82 POINTS

Glera

Tropical fruits and grubby, earthy impurity conclude with a short, hard finish.

T'GALLANT PROSECCO NV

\$19.99 | AUSTRALIA | CORK | 11.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 82 POINTS

100 % Prosecco; Base vintage 2016; Dosage 9.5g/L

Nashi pear and grapefruit is marked by earthy notes and pronounced bitterness, making for an astringent finish that lacks fruit definition and freshness.

THE BEST SPARKLING RED WINES OF THE YEAR

Dollar for dollar, point for point, reds represent a strong category in Australia's sparkling offering. Unlike its white counterparts, sparkling shiraz is a characteristically Australian style, thriving in our warmer regions and not afraid of warm seasons.

The result is greater regional diversity among my highlights than any other sparkling category (Tasmania can't always have the fun to itself!). Standout regions this year include the Grampians, Clare Valley, McLaren Vale, Great Western, Heathcote, the Barossa, Langhorne Creek, Pyrenees Coonawarra and Bendigo.

While sparkling reds can be polarising, I have converted many friends who now regularly ask for this style. I admire its versatility with our warm climate and diverse international cuisine. The trick is not to over chill a sparkling red, for risk of over-accentuating its tannins. Just be super careful when you open the bottle as a sparkling red spray isn't nearly as endearing as a champagne shower!

This year of 67 sparkling reds in my tastings, an incredible 26 (almost 40%) were worthy of 90 or more points. This is more than double the strike rate of sparkling whites, rosés, proseccos and moscatos together. The median score came in at an impressive 89.

This year I awarded a sparkling red the highest score I have ever given an Australian sparkling wine. It hails from an estate with more than 120 years of sparkling red heritage. Don't miss it.

TYSON STELZER'S SPARKLING RED OF THE YEAR

SEPPELT SHOW SPARKLING LIMITED RELEASE SHIRAZ 2007

\$99.99 | GRAMPIANS | CROWN SEAL | 13% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2027-2047 | 97 POINTS

100% Shiraz from the Seppelt Great Western Vineyard; aged 8 years on lees; Disgorged 16/11/16; Dosage 23g/L; Oak seasoned 3000L vat

Seppelt has pioneered Great Western sparkling shiraz since the 1890s and I have been privileged to witness the stamina of great bottles from the 1950s and 1960s. Grand longevity is the key to this style, and even on release at a decade of age (eight years of which were spent on lees) the fruit of the Seppelt Great Western vineyard itself demands a long time yet to fully blossom. Enticingly poised, effortless, medium-bodied black cherry liqueur, black plum and blackberry fruit are here aplenty, framed in high cocoa dark chocolate, but the real distinction of this cuvée lies in its impeccably mineral, powder-fine tannins. Such enduring structure would crush the spirit of any mere mortal cuvée, but here it is neither confronting nor dominating propelling a thrilling finish that reverberates long with cherry liqueur and dark chocolate. After more than 120 years, this remains the pinnacle of Australian sparkling, and it will outlive all others.

THE RUNNERS-UP

ASHTON HILLS SPARKLING SHIRAZ 2009

\$45 | CLARE VALLEY | CROWN SEAL | 13.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2024 | 96 POINTS

From the dry grown vines of Wendouree estate, half planted in 1919; aged in old oak barrels for 4 years; 100% Shiraz; dosage fortified Shiraz; disgorgement March 2016; Released 2016

The old vines of Wendouree, half planted in 1919, furnish an integrity, a finely mineral tannin structure and a savoury fruit presence that define one of Australia's greatest sparkling reds. Black plum, black cherry and even strawberry fruit of medium-bodied restraint is underlined by magnificently toned and effortlessly harmonious structure that speaks of the calm confidence of these grand old vines. There are nuances here of liquorice straps, black olives and delicate rose hip lift. Dosage is not insubstantial, yet perfectly tuned, providing added depth and dimension from old fortified shiraz. Magnificent.

PRIMO ESTATE JOSEPH SPARKLING RED NV

\$90 | MCLAREN VALE | CORK | 13.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2020 | 96 POINTS

Predominately Shiraz and Cabernet. A hogshead of Primo Estate Shiraz from every vintage since 1989 and Moda Cabernet Merlot since 1991 with museum vintages from the last 40 years; Aged 24 months on lees; liquor of Australian fortified wines; disgorged July 2016; Dosage 20 g/L; 10% new American barriques

The grand complexity of Joseph meets every expectation of its deep and complex recipe, capturing all the depth and character of McLaren Vale cabernet, merlot and shiraz young and old. A deep purple hue heralds a universe of expansive complexity, spanning primary black plum and black cherry fruit, secondary roast nuts, dark chocolate and coffee and the tertiary allure of black olives. Firm, fine tannins and well-gauged dosage unite seamlessly on a long finish of captivating personality. Another great in the grand lineage of Joseph.

BEST'S GREAT WESTERN SPARKLING SHIRAZ 2013

\$35 | GREAT WESTERN | CROWN SEAL | 14% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2025 | 95 POINTS

A grand expression of the finely mineral savoury texture, depth of old vine black plum skin and blackberry fruit and savoury allure that defines the fame of this magnificent old estate. Superfine tannin texture, a creamy bead and perfectly gauged dosage unite on an enduring finish accented by dark chocolate and coffee. A wonderful Great Western sparkling shiraz today, with the stamina to age confidently.

HUNTER-GATHERER SPARKLING SHIRAZ 2013

\$35 | HEATHCOTE | DIAM | 14% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2021 | 94 POINTS

100% Shiraz; Traditional methods; 2 years on lees before disgorgement

An enticing expression of Heathcote shiraz, with deep black plum and black cherry fruit, juicy black pastilles, fine mineral tannins and the complexity of pepper and sage. It's impeccably underscored by dark chocolate and coffee oak, harmonising evenly on a long finish of creamy bead and well-judged dosage.

ROCKFORD BLACK SHIRAZ NV

\$64 | BAROSSA | CORK | 13.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2020-2026 | 94 POINTS

Disgorged August 2016

The iconic Rockford Black Shiraz is as multifaceted as its vast depth of maturity predicts, with all the personality of old vine fruit ricocheting in black plum, black cherry, liquorice, even a hint of sarsaparilla, and the ever present, long-lingering delight of high cocoa dark chocolate. Age has brought notes of cedar, leather, mixed spice and orange liqueur. It's magnificently finished with perfectly integrated dosage and firm, fine yet somehow creamy tannins that will sustain it for a good while yet.

TEUSNER MC SPARKLING SHIRAZ 2010

\$65 | BAROSSA | CROWN SEAL | 14% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2018-2024 | 94 POINTS

Traditional method; 16g/L dosage; disgorged October 2016

The great 2010 season in the Barossa was blessed with all the plush black cherry and plum fruit and liquorice and yet medium-bodied restraint and definition that make it particularly endearing in a sparkling style. Kym Teusner has captured it impeccably, with supple allure, fine-grained structure, dark chocolate oak, creamy bead and lingering persistence. One of the great vintages for MC, and it's only going to get better with a few more years in bottle.

BREMERTON CHW SPARKLING SHIRAZ TRADITIONAL METHOD 2014

\$25 | LANGHORNE CREEK | CORK | 14% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2019 | 93 POINTS

Matured for 6 months in barrel and 12 months in bottle

All the glory of Langhorne Creek shiraz shines in enticing layers of satsuma plums, black cherries, fresh liquorice straps, dark fruit cake and mixed spice, impeccably framed in milk chocolate oak, supple dosage and finely textured tannins. It's at once deep and bright, culminating in a creamy bead and grand persistence. Bargain sparkling shiraz.

SEPPELT ORIGINAL SPARKLING SHIRAZ 2013

\$26.99 | VICTORIA | CORK | 13% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2023 | 93 POINTS

Original kicks well above its weight in 2013, built around an enticing core of black plum and black cherry fruit, supported by high cocoa dark chocolate complexity in a sea of fine, mineral tannins. Decades of expertise culminate in a sparkling shiraz of captivating fruit and intricately balanced structure.

CAMPBELL'S SPARKLING SHIRAZ MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE NV

\$30 | RUTHERGLEN | CROWN SEAL | 14.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2020 | 93 POINTS

Aged 9 months on lees

Bringing focus, refinement and balance to ripe Rutherglen shiraz is no small undertaking. This cuvée captures depth of black plum fruit and frames it in finely composed tannins, dark chocolate oak and a creamy bead, achieving the accord with savoury restraint, dark olive complexity and lingering persistence.

CHANDON SPARKLING PINOT NOIR SHIRAZ MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE NV

\$31.99 | DIAM | 14% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 93 POINTS

Disgorged March 2016

Cool climate pinot noir and shiraz make for a compelling duo in sparkling form, pinot lending its elegant red cherry and strawberry fruits and shiraz its plum, pepper and spice. The result is impeccably composed, carrying great fruit poise and persistence, supported by fine-tuned acidity, silky, soft tannins, and well-integrated dosage.

BARFOLD ESTATE SPARKLING SHIRAZ NV

\$32 | HEATHCOTE | DIAM | 13.4% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2019 | 93 POINTS

100% Shiraz; Produced using a blend of two different years of Barfold Shiraz; Disgorged 7/6/16; 13 months on lees

The personality of Heathcote is encapsulated in medium-bodied dark plum fruit, white pepper and a note of paprika spice. Carefully handled, finely structured tannins define a long and seamless finish. It's precise and enticing.

GLENWILLOW SPARKLING SHIRAZ 2014

\$35 | BENDIGO | DIAM | 13% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2024 | 93 POINTS

90% shiraz, 10% cabernet sauvignon; Méthode Traditionnelle; fermented & matured in new & old French oak; disgorged August 2016; 24g/L dosage

A sparkling shiraz cabernet of character and confidence, propelling the depth of blueberry, blackberry, pepper and nutmeg of Bendigo, well supported by finely textured tannins that carry the finish long and true. Impressively crafted for a young sparkling red, upholding depth in a style of refinement and appeal.

HUNGERFORD HILL CARDINAL SPARKLING SHIRAZ NV

\$36 | DIAM | 13% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2020 | 93 POINTS

27g/L dosage

Blackberry and plum fruits, dark chocolate, leather, pepper and spice unite in an elegantly medium bodied sparkling shiraz of crafted harmony, fine knit tannin structure and effortless persistence. It's compelling from the outset and will confidently improve over the medium-term.

HENTLEY FARM BLACK BEAUTY SPARKLING SHIRAZ NV

\$62 | BAROSSA VALLEY | CROWN SEAL | 14% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2018-2024 | 93 POINTS

97% Shiraz 3% Viognier; base vintage 2014; fermented and matured for 18 months in French barrels, 40% new; 12 months on lees; disgorged October 2016

This young sparkling shiraz viognier brims with the black plum and black cherry depth of the Barossa, layered with the dark chocolate character of French oak (40% new). For its age, it pulls off the balance with consummate control, supported by well-toned, firm, fine tannins that will sustain it well into the future.

SEPPELT ORIGINAL SPARKLING SHIRAZ 2014

\$26.99 | GRAMPPIANS/HEATHCOTE | CORK | 13.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2018-2022 | 92 POINTS

100% Shiraz; Dosage 25g/L; No oak

Seppelt Original is defined by a mood of calm, effortless, understated character that characterises the medium-bodied fruit of Grampians and Heathcote. It's savoury and spicy, with notes of pepper and fresh leather over a core of elegant black plum and black cherry fruit. Tannins are firm, fine and mineral and will appreciate a few years to soften and integrate.

MAJELLA SPARKLING SHIRAZ 2009

\$30 | COONAWARRA | CROWN SEAL | 14% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2019 | 92 POINTS

100% Estate grown shiraz; aged for 6 months in 2nd & 3rd use French oak; aged in bottle on lees for 2 years; disgorged November 2011; Dosage 25g/L

Disgorged in November 2011 and first released in October 2015, this estate grown sparkling shiraz is ticking along magnificently, upholding the black plum, berry compote, black pepper, liquorice and spicy appeal of this lauded Coonawarra site, while beginning to build the allure of bottle-aged complexity in appealing nuances of leather and game. Finely integrated tannins and balanced dosage provide all the support to keep on for some time yet. For all it represents, this is a bargain in the sparkling red stakes.

MOUNT AVOCA JACK BARRY SPARKLING SHIRAZ NV

\$47.50 | PYRENEES | DIAM | 13% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2021 | 92 POINTS

Méthode Traditionnelle; 25g/L dosage; base vintage 2009 with reserves from 2006 and 2005; aged in old French and Hungarian oak hogsheads for between 6 and 40 months; Aged on lees in bottle 12 months

This is a non-vintage blend of great vintage depth, built on the 2009 harvest, with reserves from 2005 and 2006, all aged in old hogsheads for between 6 and 40 months. It carries the savoury allure of barrel age while upholding primary definition of black cherry and black plum fruit, supported by firm, fine tannins and balanced dosage. The finish lingers long with dark chocolate oak appeal.

SHINGLEBACK BLACK BUBBLES NV

\$23.50 | MCLAREN VALE | DIAM | 13% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2019 | 91 POINTS

100% Shiraz; 19g/L dosage

Plum, black cherry fruit, pepper and McLaren Vale black olives define this single vineyard sparkling red. Complexity is built thanks to a solera-like reserve of twelve years of age. Fine tannins and dark chocolate oak support a balanced finish. Value.

TALTARNI VINEYARDS SPARKLING SHIRAZ 2015

\$26 | VICTORIA | DIAM | 14.2% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2018-2020 | 90 POINTS

Residual sugar 24g/L; Aged in French oak barriques for 6 months and in bottle for 12 months; Disgorged Dec 2016

A bright and crunchy sparkling shiraz that captures the mood of cool climate Victorian fruit in blackberry, plum and black cherry flavours. Dosage jostles with firm, fine tannin grip, without quite the fruit carry to mediate this tension.

FOX CREEK VIXEN NV

\$27 | MCLAREN VALE | CORK | 14% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2018 | 90 POINTS

76% Shiraz; 17% Cabernet Sauvignon 7% Cabernet Franc; Base vintage 2015; Dosage 22g/L; Charmat method; New to three year old French and American oak maturation

The blackberry and blueberry fruit of shiraz is accented by the blackcurrant and fine tannin structure of one-quarter contribution of cabernet. It's a well-poised style that unites fruit brightness and depth with the dark chocolate influence of barrel maturation, finishing with drying tannins.

2 MATES SPARKLING SHIRAZ NV

\$27.50 | MCLAREN VALE | CORK | 14.9% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 90 POINTS

Full-throttle McLaren Vale shiraz with all the luscious, sweet, ripe layers of blackberry, black cherry and black plum fruit it needs to handle 14.9% alcohol while remaining juicy and enticing. Firm, fine tannins hold their place in this maelstrom, providing direction and structure to the finish.

BERESFORD SPARKLING SHIRAZ 2013

\$30 | MCLAREN VALE | CORK | 13.4% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 90 POINTS

Dosage 32 g/L; aged in 5 year old French and American hogsheads for 16 months

McLaren Vale shiraz of stature and depth yet crunch and brightness makes for a sparkling shiraz of character and appeal. Dark berry fruits meld seamlessly with dark chocolate (thanks for 16 months maturation in seasoned French oak barrels). A full dosage of 32g/L counters tannin grip and renders the finish sweet.

PEPPERJACK SPARKLING SHIRAZ NV

\$38.99 | BAROSSA | CORK | 13.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2018-2019 | 90 POINTS

100% Shiraz, Charmat method. Dosage 20g/L stainless steel fermentation 81% and seasoned and new oak 19%

A bright and crunchy Barossa sparkling shiraz, with satsuma plum, black cherry and pepper, backed by high cocoa dark chocolate. Firm, fine tannins jostle with dosage on a grainy finish.

MAGPIE ESTATE THE TIGHT CLUSTER' SPARKLING SHIRAZ 2012

\$48 | BAROSSA VALLEY | CROWN SEAL | 13.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 90 POINTS

Two years in seasoned oak barrels followed by 14 months in bottle.

Signature Barossa shiraz with bubbles, built around a core of black plum and black cherry fruit and layered with luscious milk chocolate, both from old oak barrel maturation and from the vineyards themselves. A hint of gamey complexity adds interest without imposing too much.

KRINKLEWOOD VINEYARD THE GYPSY SPARKLING SHIRAZ 2014

\$50 | HUNTER VALLEY | DIAM | 13% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2021 | 90 POINTS

100% Shiraz; matured 12 months in oak; Traditional methods; 2 years on lees before disgorgement in December 2015; 20g/L dosage

Capturing the elegant mood and fine-tuned focus of the great 2014 season in the Hunter, this is a sparkling shiraz of black plum fruit overlaid with notes of coal dust and leather. Dark chocolate oak and firm, fine tannins leave the finish a touch furry and dosage pokes out a little in this first disgorgement.

OTHER SPARKLING REDS

O'LEARY WALKER THE GREAT EASTERN SPARKLING SHIRAZ NV

\$28 | CROWN SEAL | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2019-2021 | 89 POINTS

Matured 2 years in 5 year old French oak barriques and a further 2 years on tirage; 23g/L dosage

The Great Eastern is a steeplechase in the Adelaide Hills and a clever nod to the grand history of sparkling reds of Great Western. This is a tense style that contrasts the black cherry and black plum fruit of presumably Adelaide Hills shiraz with the dark chocolate of barrel age and the elegant mood and tangy acidity of the region. The result is light, bony and fine, though lacking mid-palate stuffing and persistence.

FORBES & FORBES RED LETTER DAY SPARKLING RED NV

\$30 | EDEN VALLEY | CROWN SEAL | 14% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2018-2020 | 89 POINTS

Shiraz, Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc

Inspired by the late Big Bob McLean and blended from his Mengler's Hill vineyard and a site in Springton, this blend of shiraz, merlot, cabernet sauvignon and cabernet franc unites the medium-bodied restraint of the Eden Valley with the complexity of dried herbs and curry spice. It concludes dry and firm with fine tannins and lingering plum skin character.

BLUE PYRENEES ESTATE SPARKLING SHIRAZ NV

\$32 | PYRENEES | DIAM | 13.9% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2018-2020 | 89 POINTS

100% Shiraz; aged for 18 months in old oak barrels; 86% 2014 14% 2015; Disgorged Nov 2016

Black plum skin and black cherry fruit express the character of Pyrenees shiraz, with hints of savoury spice and pepper. Firm, astringent tannins provide grip to the finish, with sweet dosage sitting disjoint.

KIMBARRA ERIC GREAT WESTERN SPARKLING SHIRAZ 2008

\$32 | GREAT WESTERN, VICTORIA | CROWN SEAL | 13% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 89 POINTS

The savoury, peppery, dusty personality of Great Western shiraz is alive in this mature vintage sparkling, leading out with liquorice and black plum fruit but falling into a callow finish of paprika and astringent, dry tannins.

1847 WINERY SPARKLING PETIT VERDOT 2013

\$35 | BAROSSA VALLEY | CORK | 13.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2018-2019 | 89 POINTS

Matured 12 months in oak barrels and 12 months on lees in bottle.

Petit verdot makes for a deeply coloured and intensely flavoured sparkling shiraz, accented with the firm grip of this high tannin variety. It's built on black plum and blackberry fruit, with the subtle savoury, gamey complexity of the Barossa.

ANDERSON WINERY MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE DURIF 2006

\$39 | RUTHERGLEN | CORK | 14% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 89 POINTS

Aged for 12 months in 3 year old French oak puncheons; released 10 years old, after 8.5 years on lees; Dosage 23g/L

Howard Anderson learnt about stamina in sparkling reds while working at Seppelt Great Western. The vibrant hue and dark plum, fruit cake and liquorice depth of durif are upheld in his own sparkling, even on release at ten years of age. Fine, firm tannins and dark chocolate define a dry finish.

SINCLAIR'S GULLY SPARKLING GRENACHE 2014

\$40 | MCLAREN FLAT | DIAM | 13% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 89 POINTS

Disgorged 15/12/16; 20g/L dosage;

True to the mood of grenache, there is a lightness to the body of this sparkling red, with gentle red berry fruits accented by savoury tomato notes. Tannins are firm, dry and astringent on the finish, a little too much for the restraint of its fruit.

TURKEY FLAT SPARKLING SHIRAZ NV

\$42 | BAROSSA VALLEY | CROWN SEAL | 13.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2018-2020 | 89 POINTS

Disgorged October 2016; matured in barrel and bottle; dosage of pedro ximenez; blend No 11, released November 2016

There is elegance and restraint in this savoury and understated Barossa sparkling shiraz of medium-bodied, peppery fruit character and fine, drying tannins. It lacks in the supple mid-palate fruit generosity that the sparkling style calls for, leaving the finish a little callow.

SPINIFEX LOUIS SPARKLING SHIRAZ NV

\$60 | BAROSSA VALLEY | CROWN SEAL | 13.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 89 POINTS

Aged 8 years on lees; disgorgement #1; 150 dozen bottles

Eight years on lees is an enormous effort for a total production of just 150 dozen and this first disgorgement from Pete Schell is a savoury and understated take on Barossa shiraz. It's gamey and complex, with some brettanomyces building complexity and bolstering dryness on the finish.

LECONFIELD SYN ROUGE SPARKLING SHIRAZ NV

\$18 | CORK | 13.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 88 POINTS

A sparkling shiraz of vibrant colour and lively fruit lift, swimming with crunchy blackberries, blackcurrants and black cherries. It's loaded with dosage, making for a particularly sweet style.

DI GIORGIO FAMILY LUCINDALE SPARKLING MERLOT 2014

\$19 | COONAWARRA | CORK | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2018 | 88 POINTS

Merlot

The fragrant, spicy redcurrant fruits of merlot are accurately presented in this crunchy style of firm, dry tannins. A simple quaffing sparkling red with refreshing Limestone Coast acidity.

THE BLACK CHOOK SPARKLING SHIRAZ NV

\$20 | SOUTH AUSTRALIA | DIAM | 13% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 88 POINTS

McLaren Vale and Langhorne Creek; matured in French oak barrels; batches aged for 3-5 years; 22g/L dosage

A spicy sparkling shiraz of black pastilles flavours, tannin grip and sweet dosage. There is depth and character here, albeit without refined polish.

PAULETTS TRILLIANS SPARKLING RED NV

\$22 | POLISH HILL RIVER/CLARE VALLEY | ZORK | 13.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2018 | 88 POINTS

51% Shiraz 49% Cabernet Sauvignon Base vintage 2011; Charmat method; Dosage 15 g/L; Matured in older French & American oak for 30 months

Based on the 2011 vintage, this is a sparkling shiraz cabernet blend of respectable character for its price. Dark berry and plum fruit sits a little disjoint from dark chocolate oak and firm fine tannins. It concludes short and simple.

GRANT BURGE SPARKLING SHIRAZ CABERNET NV

\$27 | BAROSSA | DIAM | 13.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 88 POINTS

Fermented in French and American oak, then aged for between 15 and 18 months in old puncheons. After blending, the wine was on tirage for 24 months before being disgorged and liqueured with Vintage Port; 6.43g/L dosage

The blueberry depth of shiraz meet the blackcurrant definition of cabernet, underlined with dark chocolate oak and finely structured tannins. This is a sweet style and dosage overtakes a little on the finish.

DOWIE DOOLE MOXIE SPARKLING SHIRAZ NV

\$29.99 | MCLAREN VALE | CORK | 13.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2018 | 88 POINTS

79% blend from 2012 back to 1996 stored in old oak hogsheads; 21% 2015; Dosage 28g/L

A deep reserve of 79% from 2012 back to 1996 stored in old oak hogsheads makes for a complex style of secondary berry fruits, orange rind and dark chocolate, freshened with 21% 2015. A sweet dosage of 28g/L contrasts fine tannin structure.

STONEHURST VINTAGE SPARKLING RED 2015

\$20 | CEDAR CREEK NSW | CORK | 12.8% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 87 POINTS

A callow and firm style of savoury, herbal character, lacking fruit brightness, persistence and definition. Tannins are fine and balanced and dosage is well integrated.

CENTENNIAL VINEYARDS SPARKLING SHIRAZ NV

\$25 | ORANGE | DIAM | 14% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2018-2020 | 87 POINTS

95% Shiraz 5% Merlot; 66% 2013, 33% 2014; wines aged in oak (10% new) Time on lees 21 months. Disgorged Sept 2016; Dosage 23g/L sugar in dilute port

A spicy and peppery Orange shiraz of dark plum skin character, with a short, dry and astringent finish of coarse tannin structure.

BALGOWNIE ESTATE SPARKLING SHIRAZ 2015

\$32 | BENDIGO | CROWN SEAL | 14.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2018 | 87 POINTS

Dark chocolate, coffee and orange rind unite in a ripe, powerful and firmly structured sparkling shiraz that delivers more in impact than it does in finesse.

LINFIELD ROAD SPARKLING MONARCH MERLOT 2013

\$35 | BAROSSA | DIAM | 13.6% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2018 | 87 POINTS

Single vineyard, traditional method disgorged November 2016 after almost two years on lees

The tangy strawberry, redcurrant and raspberry fruits of merlot make for a fruity sparkling red of sweet dosage and hard, astringent tannin grip.

MERINDOC HEATHCOTE SPARKLING SHIRAZ 2015

\$39 | HEATHCOTE | DIAM | 14.3% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 87 POINTS

18 months on lees; Disgorged October 2016; 25g/L: old French oak for 12 months

A savoury and spicy sparkling shiraz of gamey complexity and notes of paprika, with a fine structure of gentle tannin presence and a touch of phenolic bitterness, failing to attain the lofty heights of the inaugural 2013 release.

BARRISTERS BLOCK LEGALLY RED SPARKLING SHIRAZ 2016

\$17 | WRATTONBULLY | CORK | 15% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2018 | 86 POINTS

With a deep and vibrant hue, this is a flamboyant, young shiraz of heightened alcohol and firm, furry tannin texture, lacking the seamlessness, depth, complexity and drive that come with age.

KATNOOK ESTATE FOUNDER'S BLOCK SPARKLING SHIRAZ 2015

\$23 | COONAWARRA | DIAM | 13.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 86 POINTS

100% Shiraz, 50% matured for 12 months after primary ferment in older French and American oak; dosage 7.9 g/L; Charmat method

Sweet, crunchy berry fruits with hints of spice and pepper are true to the medium-bodied mood of Coonawarra shiraz, though lack the suppleness, depth and persistence to uphold firm, fine, drying tannins.

ANDREW GARRETT MCLAREN VALE SPARKLING SHIRAZ 2014

\$24.99 | MCLAREN VALE | CORK | 13.4% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 86 POINTS

Dosage 38 g/L; aged for 16 months in 5 year old French and American hogsheads

Maturation for 16 months in 5 year old French and American oak hogsheads bolsters the milk chocolate character of plummy McLaren Vale shiraz, bolstered by a strong 38g/L dosage, which makes for a sweet finish.

MR RIGGS BATTLE AXE SPARKLING SHIRAZ NV

\$25 | MCLAREN VALE | DIAM | 13% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 86 POINTS

Dark berry fruits lead out but quickly lose momentum, lacking mid-palate presence and giving way to astringent tannins on a callow finish.

BROWN BROTHERS HEATHCOTE SPARKLING SHIRAZ 2014

\$28 | HEATHCOTE | CORK | 13.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2018 | 86 POINTS

2014 base vintage; disgorged October 2016; 34g/L dosage

A reductive style of garlic and cabbage, contrasting a high dosage and an astringent, metallic texture.

STANTON & KILLEEN SPARKLING TEMPRANILLO MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE 2015

\$35 | VICTORIA | DIAM | 14.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017-2020 | 86 POINTS

Matured in older oak barrels; aged on lees 12 months;

The crunchy berry fruits and tangy acidity of tempranillo in concert with dosage make for a sweet and sour style with herbal notes. It does not have the fruit persistence to support its firm tannin grip on the finish.

ANDREW GARRETT SPARKLING SHIRAZ NV

\$13.99 | CORK | 13% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

61% 2016, 20% 2015, 2% 2014, 7% 2013, 8% 1999, 2% 1998; Shiraz 92%, unknown 3%, Cabernet 2%, Pinot Noir 2%, Chardonnay 1%; 36g/L dosage; no oak

A sweet sparkling shiraz of 36g/L dosage, contrasting with flavours of juicy berry fruits and milk chocolate. It finishes short and sweet.

WISE BLACK BEAD SHIRAZ NV

\$16 | WESTERN AUSTRALIA | CORK | 14.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

A ripe sparkling shiraz from Margaret River and Great Southern, with warm alcohol and a short, dry finish.

KOONARA THE GOLDEN ORB COONAWARRA SHIRAZ 2013

\$24.95 | COONAWARRA | DIAM | 13% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

Single vineyard; tank fermented

A sweet, fruity and spicy sparkling shiraz of paprika, orange rind and marmalade character, backed with firm, drying tannins.

LLOYD BROTHERS SPARKLING SHIRAZ TRADITIONAL METHOD 2014

\$25 | MCLAREN VALE | DIAM | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

DISGORGED DEC 2015; DOSAGE DRY; FRENCH OAK

A savoury style of olive character, lacking fruit brightness and presence, finishing callow and short.

DUKE'S VINEYARD MAGPIE HILL RESERVE SPARKLING SHIRAZ 2012

\$35 | PORONGURUP | CORK | 13.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

Dosage 2.5g/L; disgorged May 2016

Medium-bodied plum and black cherry fruit pulls up short into a dry finish of dusty notes and firm, astringent tannins.

SIRROMET SIGNATURE COLLECTION PETIT VERDOT MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE 2013

\$35 | GRANITE BELT | DIAM | 13.7% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

100% Petit Verdot; disgorged November 2016 after more than 3 years on lees; no oak; Dosage 30g/L; 1800 dozen

An earthy and savoury style with tart berry fruits clashing with a high dosage of 30g/L to produce a sweet and sour style. Tannins are fine and it finishes short.

BAROKES BUBBLY CABERNET SHIRAZ MERLOT NV

\$4.50 | SOUTH-EASTERN AUSTRALIA | CAN | 13% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 84 POINTS

46% Cabernet Sauvignon 41% Shiraz 8% Merlot

Plum and blackberry fruit captures the blend of cabernet and shiraz with a dash of merlot, finishing with drying tannin grip and sweet dosage.

MT JAGGED SPARKLING RED NV

\$18 | SOUTHERN FLEURIEU | CORK | 12.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 84 POINTS

70% Merlot 30% Shiraz; 38.5g/L dosage; Matured 7 months in 2-5 year old French and American puncheons, hogsheads and barriques

Led by merlot, this is a fragrant and leafy sparkling shiraz of crunchy black- and redcurrant fruit, bolstered by a high dosage of almost 40g/L, making for a sweet and sour finish.

ROCLAND ESTATE CHOCOLATE BOX SPARKLING SHIRAZ NV

\$20 | SOUTH AUSTRALIA | DIAM | 13.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 84 POINTS

A very sweet sparkling shiraz of berry fruits and milk chocolate notes. Rainy tannins clash with overt dosage.

ANDREW GARRETT MCLAREN VALE SPARKLING SHIRAZ 2013

\$24.99 | MCLAREN VALE | CORK | 13.2% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 84 POINTS

Dosage 32 g/L; aged for 16 months in 5 year old French and American hogsheads

A sweet McLaren Vale shiraz of berry fruits and milk chocolate, finishing with astringent tannin structure. One bottle was corked.

CHERRY TREE HILL SPARKLING RED 2016

\$25 | SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS | CORK | 13% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 84 POINTS

Cabernet and Merlot

The cool mood of the Southern Highlands is expressed in a leafy and herbal style of cranberry fruit, medium crimson hue, firm, dry tannin grip and short finish.

LANGMEIL SPARKLING SHIRAZ NV

\$35 | BAROSSA | DIAM | 13% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 84 POINTS

Disgorged March 2016

A dry, savoury style of dark chocolate oak presence, black olive notes and some volatile acidity. It's lost fruit definition, lift and freshness in barrel, rendering the tannins astringent and the finish callow.

COFIELD SPARKLING SHIRAZ DURIF NV

\$20 | RUTHERGLEN | CORK | 13.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 83 POINTS

80% Shiraz 20% Durif; disgorged 2014

Lacking generosity and ripeness, this is an astringent style of bitter tannin grip that contrasts sweet and sour fruit, with herbal notes and a tart finish.

COFIELD SPARKLING SHIRAZ VINTAGE 2014

\$28 | RUTHERGLEN | CORK | 13.6% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 83 POINTS

100% Shiraz; No Oak; reserves back to 1999; disgorged July 2016

Sweet and sour fruit contrast herbal notes, firm acidity and sweet dosage, making for an astringent and awkward style, lacking in generosity and ripeness.

KINGSLEY GROVE ESTATE ZIPP SPARKLING BRUT CHAMBOURCIN 2016

\$24 | SOUTH BURNETT | CORK | 11.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 81 POINTS

Astringent, callow, tannic hard, and improperly corked (by hand?)

MOSCATOS

Above all else, moscato should be cheap. Let's face it, if you're after a sweet, grapey, bubbly hit, you're hardly looking for a profound drinking experience and you're not about to break the bank.

What am I looking for in moscato? Clean fruit and balance of sweetness and acidity.

This year I've decided not to award a Best Moscato of the Year, because no wines came forward above 88 points.

As always, super chill it in the freezer to tone it down. The more ice crystals, the better! Froscato, anyone?

This year I reviewed 28 Australian moscatos with a median score of 85 points.

MOSCATOS

LOGAN MOSCATO 2016

\$20 | ORANGE | SCREW CAP | 6.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 88 POINTS

Muscat a Petits Grains; 90g/L dosage

From vineyards over 900m on the slopes of Mount Canobolas in Orange, this is a moscato loaded with sweetness yet presenting the acidity to hold its own. It's fresh, fragrant, floral and loaded with apricot, peach and musk.

PERTARINGA LAKESIDE MOSCATO 2016

\$20 | SOUTH AUSTRALIA | SCREW CAP | 6.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 88 POINTS

57% White Frontignac, 43% Gewürztraminer. 80 g/L dosage

With a pale hue and a fragrant mood of lemon and apple, this is a moscato that presents plenty of sweetness in a style of tangy poise and restraint. And in this category, that's saying a lot.

SEPPELTSFIELD BAROSSA VALLEY MOSCATO 2016

\$15 | BAROSSA | CROWN SEAL | 7.9% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 87 POINTS

Muscat Rouge a Petits Grains from the western Barossa

A sweet, luscious and creamy moscato of strawberry and raspberry fruit in a fresh and fruity style. It carries good length, though demands a stern chill to counter its candied sweetness.

CAMPBELL'S MOSCATO RUTHERGLEN 2016

\$16 | RUTHERGLEN | SCREW CAP | 7% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 87 POINTS

Muscat a Petits Grains Rouge

A pretty pale pink moscato in a smart little 500mL bottle, this is a spicy, sweet and fruity style loaded with ginger, watermelon, musk and strawberries. It's a friendly style of soft acidity that will appreciate a strong chill.

BROWN BROTHERS SPARKLING MOSCATO NV

\$16.2 | CORK | 6.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 87 POINTS

With lemonade, ginger and apricot jam flavours, this is a sweet moscato of fruit purity and persistence.

BROWN BROTHERS SPARKLING MOSCATO ROSA NV

\$16.20 | CORK | 7% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 87 POINTS

With a luminescent pink/crimson hue, this is a sweet and fruity moscato of lemonade, ginger and candied strawberry notes. It's clean and fresh.

BROWN BROTHERS MOSCATO 2016

\$16.50 | VICTORIA | SCREW CAP | 5.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 87 POINTS

Muscat Gordo Blanc; charmat method

Clean and fresh moscato, filled with lemonade, ginger and honey flavours, finishing with bucket loads of candied sweetness.

BROWN BROTHERS MOSCATO ROSA 2016

\$16.50 | VICTORIA | SCREW CAP | 5.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 87 POINTS

Muscat Gordo Blanc; charmat method

With a bright crimson pink hue and flavours of lemonade, ginger and honey, this is a clean and fresh pink moscato with a sweet, candied finish.

KIES BAROSSA VALLEY SPARKLING TINA 2016

\$20 | BAROSSA VALLEY | CORK | 11.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 87 POINTS

A sweet sparkling frontignac of distinctive varietal lychee, rose petal and lemonade flavours; primary, fruity and simple. It will appeal to moscato lovers looking for a little less sugar.

OLD OVAL ESTATE FORK IN THE ROAD MOSCATO NV

\$16.50 | SOUTH AUSTRALIA | CROWN SEAL | 7% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 86 POINTS

A sweet lychee and ginger moscato of simple, fruity style and short, sweet finish.

DOGRIDGE MOSCATO NV

\$18 | ZORK | 7% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 86 POINTS

Lemonade and ginger flavours unite in a sweet, simple and fruity style with a short finish.

T'GALLANT PINK MOSCATO NV

\$19.99 | AUSTRALIA | CORK | 7.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 86 POINTS

100 % Red Frontignac Base vintage 2016 Dosage 90g/L

With a pinkish purple hue, this is a moscato of strawberry and guava character, with a very sweet dosage. It's simple but fresh and fruity.

INNOCENT BYSTANDER MOSCATO 2016

\$25 | VICTORIA | DIAM | 5.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 86 POINTS

Black Muscat; charmat method

So immensely sweet that you could almost spread it like strawberry jam. Tastes like it, too.

BAROKES BUBBLY MOSCATO NV

\$4.50 | SOUTH-EASTERN AUSTRALIA | CAN | 6% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

100% Gordo

Sweet lemonade and ginger flavours with a candied finish. Clean and fresh. The best of the range, believe it or not.

DE BORTOLI SCARED HILL MOSCATO 2016

\$7.50 | AUSTRALIA | SCREW CAP | 8% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

Fragrant, fresh, lively and sweet, this is a moscato built on notes of lemonade, ginger and apricot. It's simple and sweet, but for \$5 on discount, what more do you really need in a moscato? Chill it ice cold and don't think about it.

QUEEN ADELAIDE MOSCATO 2016

\$8 | SOUTH-EASTERN AUSTRALIA | SCREW CAP | 8% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

Lemon, lime and apple fruit in a sweet and simple style. It's clean, fresh, sweet and cheap, which is, after all, really what this category is all about.

WINE MEN OF GOTHAM MOSCATO 2016

\$10 | SOUTH AUSTRALIA | SCREW CAP | 7.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

100% Gordo; 90g/L dosage

A very sweet moscato of lemonade, ginger and boiled sweets characters, in a simple, fresh and fruity style.

JACOB'S CREEK SPARKLING MOSCATO ROSÉ NV

\$14.99 | SOUTH AUSTRALIA | DIAM | 8.4% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

2016 base vintage; 80g/L dosage

A bright salmon pink moscato of musk, ginger and lemonade character and grainy acid grip on a short and simple finish.

LERIDA ESTATE ZENZI ROSATO FRIZZANTE NV

\$16.50 | NSW | DIAM | 8% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

A fruity and sweet pink moscato of bitter phenolic presence.

CHALK HILL MOSCATO 2016

\$19 | MCLAREN VALE | SCREW CAP | 6.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

80% Orange Muscat & Flora 20% Muscat a Petits Grains; 74g/L dosage

With lively orange blossom, lemon cordial and ginger, this is a sweet moscato of lively, powdery acid grip and a short finish.

AUDREY WILKINSON MOSCATO 2016

\$22 | AUSTRALIA | SCREW CAP | 6.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 85 POINTS

Red muscat from the Hunter Valley and Swan Hill unite in this pink-salmon tinted moscato of candied sweetness and short finish.

JACOB'S CREEK SPARKLING MOSCATO NV

\$14.99 | SOUTH AUSTRALIA | DIAM | 8.4% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 84 POINTS

2016 base vintage; 80g/L dosage

Lemonade, ginger and musk mark out a sweet moscato of grainy acid grip and a short, simple finish.

AZAHARA MOSCATO NV

\$15 | CORK | 6% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 84 POINTS

100% Muscat Gordo Blanco; 100 g/L dosage; 42% 2016, 30% 2015, balance 2014; carbonated

A sweet moscato of lemon, ginger and a note of fennel, finishing short, sweet and creamy.

MOJO MOSCATO 2016

\$16.99 | LANGHORNE CREEK | SCREW CAP | 6.1% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 84 POINTS

100% Frontignac; Sugar 80.5 g/L

Savoury, grassy characters detract from fruit purity in this sweet style, lacking lift and fragrance.

SCOTCHMANS HILL HILL MOSCATO NV

\$13 | ADELAIDE | SCREW CAP | 6.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 83 POINTS

Muscat Gordo Blanco; 110g/L

A sweet moscato of guava and lemonade flavours and a note of mushroom.

SOUMAH BRACHETTO D'SOUMAH 2016

\$24 | YARRA VALLEY/KING VALLEY | CROWN SEAL | 9.5% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 83 POINTS

With a full crimson pink hue, this is a gently sparkling style of moscato levels of sweetness, contrasting firm tannin grip and savoury tomato flavours. The combination makes for a challenging and awkward style.

CARGO ROAD MOSCATO 2016

\$25 | ORANGE REGION | SCREW CAP | 9% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 83 POINTS

Golden kiwi fruit and musk unite in a sweet moscato of boiled sweets notes and some phenolic grip.

MICHELINI ISABELLA MOSCATO ROSÉ NV

\$15 | VICTORIA | CROWN SEAL | 7% ALCOHOL | DRINK 2017 | 81 POINTS

80% Moscato 20% Fragolino; Dosage 138.6g/L

A moscato of massive dosage, which clashes with savoury tomato notes and gooseberry pungency.

SPARKLING WINE GLOSSARY

ACIDITY A crucial element that gives sparkling wine its tangy freshness, vitality and life, and a sharp, clean taste on the finish.

APÉRITIF A drink used to get the taste buds humming before a meal (sparkling wine, naturally!).

ASSEMBLAGE The process of blending a sparkling wine.

AUTOLYSIS The breakdown of dead yeast cells during ageing on lees, improving mouth feel and contributing biscuity, bready characters.

BARRIQUE Small oak barrel of 225-litre capacity.

BÂTONNAGE Stirring of the lees in barrel or tank.

BEAD Bubbles. The best sparkling wine always has tiny bubbles, the product of the finest juice fermented in cold cellars.

BIODYNAMICS An intensive viticultural regime of extreme organics, eschewing chemical treatments and seeking a harmonious ecosystem.

BLANC DE BLANCS Literally translates as 'white from white'. White sparkling wine made exclusively from white grapes, usually chardonnay.

BLANC DE NOIRS Literally 'white from black'. White sparkling wine made exclusively from the dark-skinned grapes pinot noir and/or meunier. This is achieved by gentle pressing removing the juice from the skins before any colour leaches out.

BRUT Raw/dry, in champagne containing less than 12g/L sugar (formerly less than 15g/L sugar).

BRUT NATURE OR BRUT ZÉRO No added sugar (less than 3g/L sugar in champagne).

CAPSULE Crown cap.

CARBON DIOXIDE The gaseous by-product of fermentation that is responsible for the bubbles in sparkling wine.

CARBONATION The cheapest method of creating sparkling wine, in which the wine is injected with carbon dioxide in the same manner as lemonade.

CHARMAT A method of bulk sparkling wine production in which second fermentation occurs in a pressure tank.

CORKED Cork taint is an all too common wine fault resulting from the presence of 2,4,6 trichloroanisole (TCA) in natural cork. It imparts an off-putting, mouldy, 'wet cardboard' or 'wet dog' character, suppressing fruit and shortening the length of finish.

CORK TAINT See 'corked'.

CROWN CAP A metal seal like a beer cap, used to seal a sparkling wine bottle during second fermentation and lees ageing. In Australia, some disgorged sparkling wines are sold under crown cap, a very reliable closure.

CUVÉE The first pressing of the grapes (in Champagne 2,050 litres from 4,000 kilograms of grapes), yielding the best juice. Also refers to an individual blend or style.

DEGREES POTENTIAL The ripeness at which grapes are picked, which determines the alcohol content of the finished wine.

DIAM Mytik DIAM is a brand of sparkling wine closure made by Oeneo, moulded from fragments of cork which have been treated to extract cork taint. Its reliable performance has made it an increasingly popular choice for sparkling wine in recent years.

DISGORGEMENT Removal of a frozen plug of sediment from the neck of the bottle.

DOSAGE The final addition to top up the bottle, usually a mixture of wine and sugar syrup called *liqueur d'expédition* or *liqueur de dosage*. A dosage of 10–12g/L of sugar is typical.

EXTRA BRUT Extra raw/dry (less than 6g/L sugar in champagne).

EXTRA DRY OR EXTRA SEC Off dry (12–17g/L sugar in champagne).

FERMENTATION The conversion of sugar to alcohol by the action of yeasts. Carbonic gas is produced as a by-product.

FLUTE NARROW SPARKLING WINE GLASS.

GYROPALETTE A large mechanised crate to automatically riddle sparkling wine bottles.

INOCULATE To seed a ferment with yeast.

LATE DISGORGEMENT A sparkling wine that has been matured on its lees for an extended period.

LEES Sediment that settles in the bottom of a tank, barrel or bottle, primarily dead yeast cells.

LIGHTSTRUCK The degradation of wine exposed to ultraviolet light. Sparkling wines in clear bottles are most susceptible.

LIQUEUR DE DOSAGE See '*Liqueur d'expédition*'.

LIQUEUR D'EXPÉDITION The final addition to top up the bottle, usually a mixture of wine and sugar syrup.

LIQUEUR DE TIRAGE A mixture of sugar and wine or concentrated grape juice added immediately prior to bottling, to produce the secondary fermentation in bottle.

MACERATION Soaking of red grape skins in their juice in the production of red or rosé wine.

MALIC ACID A naturally occurring acid in grapes and other fruits, particularly green apples. It is most pronounced in grapes in cold climates and is responsible for sparkling wine's searing acidity, which is usually softened through malolactic fermentation.

MALOLACTIC FERMENTATION 'Malo' is the conversion of stronger malic (green apple) acid to softer lactic (dairy) acid.

MÉTHODE TRADITIONNELLE The official name for the traditional method of sparkling winemaking, in which the second fermentation occurs in the bottle in which the wine is sold.

MINERALITY The texture and mouth feel of a wine derived from its soil.

MOUSSE See 'Bead'.

MUSELET Wire cage to hold a sparkling wine cork in the bottle.

NON-VINTAGE (NV) A sparkling wine containing wine from more than one vintage. In Australia, it is permissible to label a wine as a vintage with up to 15% of other vintages.

ORGANICS A viticultural regime that avoids the use of any synthetic pesticides, herbicides, fungicides or other treatments. Copper is permitted, though criticised in some circles for a toxicity higher than that of some synthetic products.

OXIDISED A wine that has reacted with oxygen. At its most extreme, oxidation can produce browning in colour, loss of primary fruit, a general flattening of flavours, a shortening of the length of finish, or even a vinegar or bitter taste.

PH The level of acid strength of a wine expressed as a number. Low pH equates to high acidity; 7 is neutral.

PHENOLICS A grape compound responsible for astringency and bitterness in the back palate. It is particularly rich in stems, seeds and skins, and especially prevalent in sparkling wines from warm regions.

PRESTIGE CUVÉE The flagship sparkling wine or wines of a brand, typically the most expensive.

PRISE DE MOUSSE The second fermentation that creates the bubbles.

PUPITRE Hand riddling rack.

REDUCTIVE A wine made or aged with limited contact with oxygen may develop reductive characters, hydrogen sulphide notes akin to struck flint, burnt match and gunpowder. At their extreme, these can manifest themselves as objectionable notes of rubber, rotten eggs, garlic, onion or cooked cabbage.

REMUAGE The riddling process.

RESERVE WINES Wines held in the cellar for future blending in a non-vintage cuvée. Usually aged in tanks, although sometimes kept in barrels or bottles.

RIDDLING The process of moving the lees sediment into the neck of the bottle prior to disgorgement, either by hand or by gyropalette.

SAIGNÉE A technique in which rosé is made by 'bleeding' off juice from just-crushed pinot noir or meunier grapes after a short maceration (soaking) on skins prior to fermentation.

SEC Dryish (17–32 g/L sugar in champagne).

SOLERA A system of fractional blending through a system of wines of different ages, with the bottled wine drawn from the last stage. Sometimes also used in sparkling wine production to refer to a simplified system of perpetual blending, in which successive vintages are added to a single tank.

STALE Lacking in fruit freshness.

TAILLES Coarser, inferior juice that flows last from the press.

TCA See 'Corked'.

TERROIR A catch-all term for anything that defines the character of a vineyard – soil, micro-climate, altitude, aspect, exposure, slope, drainage, and even the hands that tend it.

TIRAGE Bottling of the blended wine with an addition of sugar and yeast, so as to provoke the second fermentation in bottle.

TRANSFER METHOD A method of sparkling wine production in which second fermentation occurs in bottle before the wine is transferred to a tank and its lees removed, invariably losing some gas, before rebottling.

VIN CLAIR Still base wine that has undergone its primary fermentation and (potentially) malolactic fermentation, but not its secondary fermentation.

VINTAGE Wine from a single year. Australian law permits a wine to be labelled as a vintage provided it contains less than 15% of other vintages.

ZERO DOSAGE No sweetness is added during the final addition to top up the bottle.

TYSON STELZER

Tyson Stelzer is a multi-award winning wine writer, television host and producer, author of 15 wine books, international keynote speaker and wine show chairman and judge. He is the author of five editions of *The Champagne Guide*, the sparkling wine reviewer for the *Halliday Australian Wine Companion* and the host and co-producer of the television series *People of the Vines Tasmania* and *People of the Vines Barossa*. An accomplished presenter, Tyson has 13 years experience presenting at international events in the UK, Japan, Italy, South Africa, Hong Kong, New Zealand and across Australia.



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WITH JEAN-FRANCOIS CLOUET
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PAN PACIFIC PERTH – 16 AUGUST
PLAZA BALLROOM MELBOURNE – 21 AUG

Champagne Dinner

HOTEL RICHEMOND GENEVA
1 SEPTEMBER

Champagne Tour

3-10 SEPTEMBER

Champagne Dinner

STOKEHOUSE ST KILDA
12 OCTOBER

Champagne Dinner

STOKEHOUSE BRISBANE
19 OCTOBER

Deutz

WITH FABRICE ROSSET
SYDNEY, MELBOURNE & BRISBANE
NOVEMBER

Effervescence Tasmania

LAUNCESTON
16-19 NOVEMBER

BOOKING DETAILS & PRICING TO BE ANNOUNCED AS EVENT DATES APPROACH

Enquiries & Reservations

WWW.TYSONSTELZER.COM



PAN PACIFIC
PERTH
WED 16 AUG 2017

INAUGURAL
PERTH EVENT



PLAZA BALLROOM
MELBOURNE
MON 21 AUG 2017



SOFITEL CENTRAL
BRISBANE
MON 14 AUG 2017



FOUR SEASONS
SYDNEY
MON 7 AUG 2017



OLD PARLIAMENT HOUSE
CANBERRA
WED 9 AUG 2017

INAUGURAL
CANBERRA
EVENT

You are invited to taste more than 160 cuvées from more than 60 champagne houses, growers and cooperatives at our biggest Taste Champagne series yet!

In its fourth year, Taste Champagne has established itself as the most important champagne showcase event series in the country. Returning to Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane in August, this year we are thrilled to announce that Canberra and Perth will be joining the parade!

Taste Champagne is a grand tasting in which you are invited to stroll at your own pace between houses, growers and cooperatives, experiencing all their cuvées and hearing their stories from their makers and importing agents.

Tickets are \$115 (incl GST) and include a hot fork dish.

www.tastechampagne.com.au



Tyson Stelzer

INTERNATIONAL WINE COMMUNICATOR OF THE YEAR

INVITES YOU TO DINNER WITH

Vincent Chaperon

DOM PÉRIGNON OENOLOGIST



SHOWCASING

Dom Pérignon 2006

Dom Pérignon 2005

Dom Pérignon Rosé 2004

Dom Pérignon P2 2000

Dom Pérignon P2 1998

MATCHED TO FIVE COURSES CREATED BY MCA OR VUE DE MONDE



MCA Sydney - Level 6 Quayside Room - 6:45pm - Thursday 6 July 2017

Vue de Monde Melbourne - 6:45pm - Friday 7 July 2017

PLACES STRICTLY LIMITED - TICKETS \$795

BOOKINGS JODY ROLFE - 0419 710 886 - BOOKINGS@WINEPRESS.COM.AU



Tyson Stelzer

INTERNATIONAL WINE COMMUNICATOR OF THE YEAR

INVITES YOU TO DINNER WITH

Jean-François Clouet

CHAMPAGNE ANDRÉ CLOUET

SHOWCASING

André Clouet Grande Réserve Blanc de Noirs Brut NV en magnum

André Clouet Silver Brut Nature NV en magnum

André Clouet Rosé No 3 Brut NV en magnum

André Clouet Dream Vintage 2006

André Clouet Brut Millésime Panthere Neck 2008

André Clouet 1911 NV

MATCHED WITH FIVE COURSES CREATED BY STROKEHOUSEQ OR OTTO

Otto Sydney - Mezzanino - 6:30pm - Wednesday 26 July 2017 - \$335

Stokehouse Brisbane - Mezzanine - 6:30pm - Saturday 29 July 2017 - \$295

PLACES STRICTLY LIMITED - BOOKINGS JODY ROLFE - 0419 710 886 - BOOKINGS@WINEPRESS.COM.AU





Tyson Stelzer's
CHAMPAGNE
TOUR

Tyson Stelzer invites you to join him on an intimate, behind-the-scenes tour of Champagne. Tyson will personally introduce you to the most celebrated houses and growers, escorting you through their ancient cellars, elegant private dining rooms, lauded vineyards and tasting their finest cuvées.

Tyson Stelzer's Champagne tour is an opportunity to experience the finest and most exclusive champagne houses, growers, restaurants and accommodation that France has to offer, in the intimate company of only ten guests.

Every cellar and winery visit and tasting on the tour is exclusive, private and not otherwise available to the public.

Dates and details have now been set for 2018 tours, with limited places available.

Tyson Stelzer is also available to arrange and host private tours for you or your group of up to ten guests. He would be pleased to liaise with you to customise your dream Champagne experience.

Join Tyson Stelzer on the Champagne tour of a lifetime.

www.champagnetours.com.au



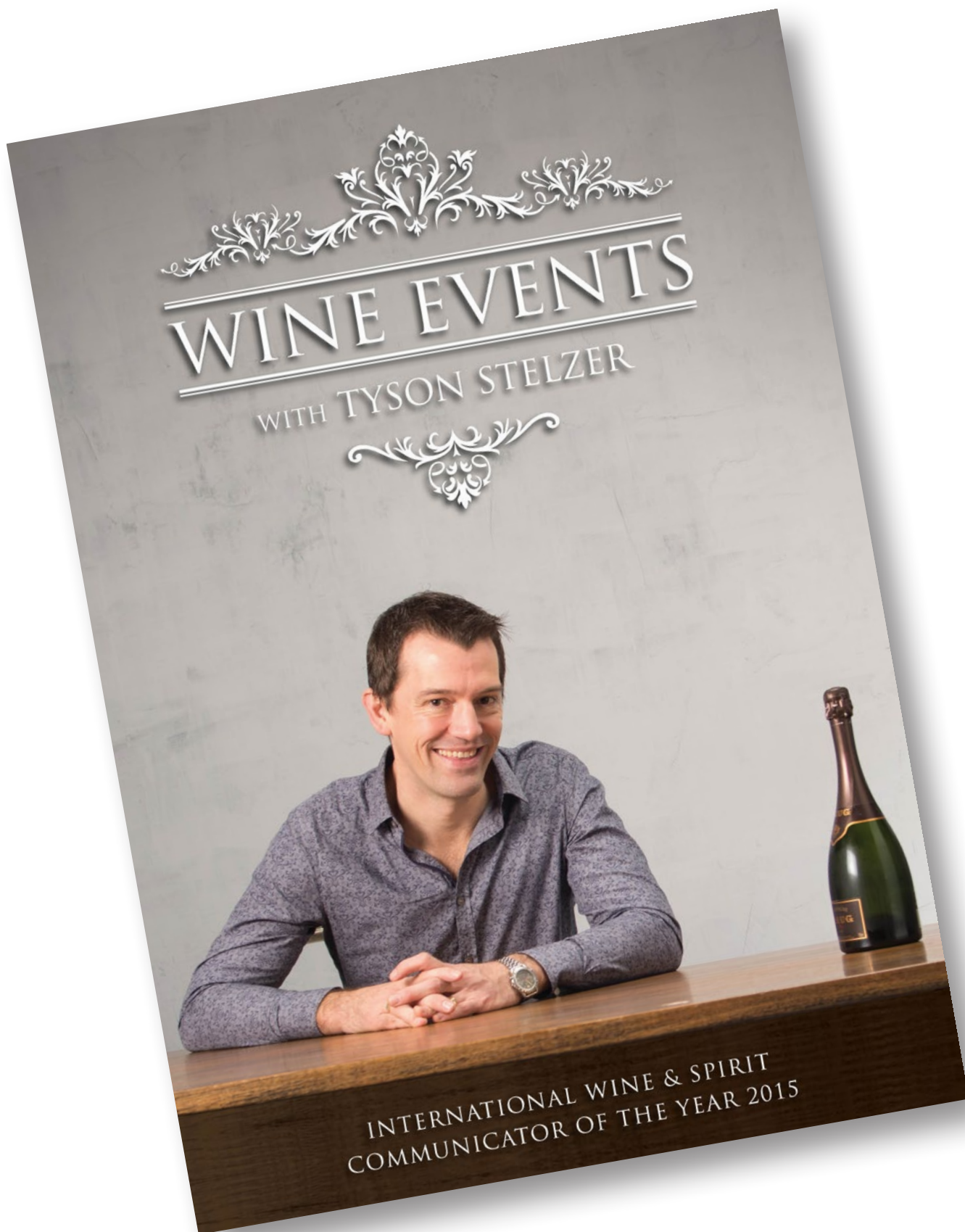
THE
CHAMPAGNE
GUIDE



2018—2019



COMING OCTOBER 2017



Tyson Stelzer is one of the world's leading wine presenters. From a structured boardroom wine tasting, hosted dinner, keynote presentation, informal client meet and greet, product launch or even a wedding, Tyson Stelzer brings a wine perspective to any event. An accomplished presenter with 13 years experience presenting at international events in the UK, Japan, Italy, South Africa, Hong Kong, New Zealand and across Australia, Tyson will educate and entertain audiences from 3 to 3000.

His dynamic and informal approach encourages interaction, making wine enjoyable and unpretentious.

[READ MORE ABOUT WINE EVENTS WITH TYSON STELZER](#)

CONTACT

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