

Corkscrew: wine reviews

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The 2014 Gartelmann Jesse Shiraz is a gold-medal winning wine (2017 Mudgee Wine Show) that shows a ruby garnet hue around the rim indicating its age.

The nose offers ripe red currant and blackberry aromas with a touch of aniseed and menthol. The palate is soft with generous amounts of red/black fruits. The oak and acids are nicely balanced as are the tannins. The wine is full-bodied combined with fruit intensity, complexity and balance. A superb wine made from single vineyard batch grapes by winemaker Liz Jackson who has played a deft hand in showing the best of what the Mudgee region has to offer. (rrp \$30)



The 2015 Gartelmann Rylstone Petit Verdot is another Mudgee wine from the same winemaker. This grape variety is decidedly old school and originated in Bordeaux where its popularity has waned over the years. Having said this, new world producers from South Africa, Australia and California, especially the Paso Robles region, have picked up on this grape variety where the Bordelaise have left off. This wine shows a violet red around the rim of the glass. The nose is awash with ripe to very ripe mulberry and blackberry fruit, which jumps out of the glass. Hints of violets are also evident. The palate is dry and fruit driven with balanced acid/oak/tannin structure. This full-bodied wine is a lovely drop with all the components coming together well. The wine over-delivers on the palate. (rrp \$35)

The following two wines are part of a collective of wine community professionals who initially banded together to fill a niche for organic, preservative-free fruit-driven wines. These wines are all made by winemaker Jason O' Dea located at Canowindra in the Central Ranges of NSW. The 2017 The Natural Wine Company Organic Rosé is light pink in colour, with the nose offering raspberry and black cherry spice. The fruit on the palate offers the same flavours with cherry ripe characters, strawberries and a touch of black peppery spice adds to a fresh, fruity style with balanced acidity. The other wine from this portfolio is the 2017 The Natural Wine Company Organic Sauvignon Blanc. Green tinged in colour, it combines lashings of gooseberry, citrus and other tropical fruit flavours on the nose. The palate offers mouth-watering acidity that is crisp and dry. Herbaceous blackcurrant bud, grapefruit and passionfruit abound on the palate. The finish (like the Rosé) is naturally fruit driven with minimal intervention from the viticulturist and winemaker. (rrp \$18)

The Serafino winery, in McLaren Vale, was established in 2000 and owner Maria Maglieri has done, and continues to do, a magnificent job producing quality wines. The 2018 Serafino Cabernet Sauvignon displays a beautiful and inviting pink rim; the nose offers opulent red/black fruits with a whiff of almond and cashew notes from the French oak. The acid/oak/tannins on the palate are nicely enveloped into the fruit, which shows depth and complexity. The finish is medium to full bodied with lingering fruit aplenty. (rrp \$28)

Staying with Serafino, try their 2017 Serafino Grenache Shiraz Mourvedre (known in the trade as GSM). Bright

red in colour, the nose is rich and complex with such myriad fruits, both red/black, that it's hard to pinpoint any particular fruit. This wine is a big style, full bodied with balanced acid/oak and tannins that are all nicely intertwined into the wine. Lingering ripe fruit gives the palate great length. (rrp \$28)

2017 Robert Stein Semillon Riesling Gewürztraminer. This Mudgee producer has put together an old style of blended white, which is often done by winemakers who have certain batches of fruit left over at the end of vintage. I must say, I do like this blend occasionally but couldn't drink too much of it as I find the fruit over-ripe. Straw yellow with green highlights to the eye, the nose expresses overly ripe fruits such as gooseberry, apricots and citrus flavours. The fruit on the palate is, well, fruity with a generous mouth-feel combined with a creamy texture. The acids are present and the wine is a full-bodied fresh, fruity style with lashings of mouth-watering fruit and acidity. A slight spritzig semi-dry finish that demands food such as fish, mezze plate or a fruit, prosciutto platter. For those with an off-dry sweet tooth. (rrp \$18)

Something that is a little different from Robert Stein is the 2017 Robert Stein Shiraz Nouveau. This wine was whole-bunch pressed with a cold and carbonic maceration prior to fermentation allowing soft extraction of the grapes flavours without too much tannin coming through into the wine. Bright red in colour with a lively pink hue, the nose expresses ripe black mulberry and blackcurrant flavours. The freshness of the fruit on the palate is ripe and juicy showing red currant and stewed plums with minimal hints of oak and tannins. A light bodied style that's better served chilled (not too chilled) before opening. I found the wine a delightful change from the big blousy shiraz style one often sees. (rrp \$18)

2016 Morambro Creek Chardonnay. This wine comes from the same stable as The Bryson below and again, it's their flagship white. Light straw yellow in colour, the nose offers nectarine and citrus aromas together with apricots and melon. The oak is not overly detectable on the nose but comes through on the palate. The fruit on the palate is a follow-on from the nose. The oak is evident by the vanilla cashew flavours that are nicely intermingled with the fruit offering a balanced medium to full-bodied chardonnay. The finish is dry with a tantalising zesty acid finish. It's one that makes you sit up and take note. (rrp \$35)

Next is the 2016 Berton Vineyards Coonawarra Shiraz. Bright crimson hues give way to peppery spice, aniseed and dark cherry flavours. The palate is showing judicious amounts of black cherry and raspberry fruits with cinnamon and other spicy notes evident. The wine is full-bodied with acid/tannin/oak in check allowing the wine to shine brightly with lots of concentrated varietal fruit flavours to match. The complexity of fruit leaves a lasting impression. (rrp \$20)

Finally, I offer the 2015 Morambro Creek The Bryson. This wine comes from the Bryson Family situated in Padthaway, South Australia, and sits at the top of the tree in its wine portfolio. Deep purple in colour with a vibrant pink hue around the rim, the fruit on the nose is expressive with dark mulberry, plum and blackcurrant flavours dominating. The dark fruits on the palate are silky and juicy with balanced oak adding to the generous mouth-feel. The wine has great depth with body and flavour; the tannins are firm and velvety. The oak imparts flavour and is nicely balanced and the body of the wine is ample and full. The finish is long, giving the wine great palate weight and length. A wine to give that wine aficionado as a special Christmas gift. (rrp \$55)

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