



Silent Noise, McLaren Vale

Silent Noise is the new project of young Charlie O’Brien, son of famed McLaren Vale winemaker Kevin O’Brien of Kangarilla Road. Kevin is around to help source the fruit and consult on winemaking; but the distinctive name and branding is very much Charlie’s idea, contrasting the noise of winemaking - belts, crusher and presses - with the silence of the bottles waiting to be opened.

Silent Noise, Chardonnay, Adelaide Hills, 2017, 13%

Bottle £14.50 Case with 10% discount £156.60
Code SIL117

From grapes sourced in the cool Adelaide Hills the other side of Adelaide, this is very much in the fresh modern Aussie idiom. Pale and clear. All barrel fermented, half in new oak, but it’s not an “oaky” wine, rather a streamlined, lightly creamy example, lemony and bright. Perfect summer Chardonnay. Now-2020

Silent Noise, SGZ, (Shiraz / Grenache / Zinfandel), McLaren Vale, 2017, 14%

Bottle £13.50 Case with 10% discount £145.80
Code SIL617

An unusual blend; but the Shiraz doesn’t dominate, and the fruit character of both the Grenache and Zinfandel comes through well. This is deliberately made in a breezy, up-front style, juicy and lively. Very food friendly - pork ribs or slow roast belly of pork would be perfect. Now-2020

Silent Noise, Shiraz, McLaren Vale, 2016, 14%

Bottle £14.95 Case with 10% discount £161.46
Code SIL816

Just what we have been looking for: a kick-ass Aussie Shiraz at the right price. Aged half in French and half in American oak barrels, this shows a lovely, deep, youthful colour - and delivers stacks of fresh black fruit, bramble and blueberry. Fine and silky. Definitive wine for a carnivore’s barbecue; and should keep very well too. Now-2023

Tomfoolery, South Australia

Tomfoolery is the creation of two young guys in South Australia, Tom Yaps and Ben Chipman. They source small parcels of fruit to make delicious, artisanal wines which combine high quality, old vine fruit with gentle, old world-style winemaking.

Both the Young Blood wines are made in a transparent, forward style to be enjoyed young. Both are fermented in open vats with 30% whole bunch; and then 50% goes into tank and 50% into old French barrels. Both are beautifully balanced and oh-so-drinkable (the Aussies call this style of wine “smashable”). The Black and Blue is a different animal: from vines dating back to 1945, it’s very concentrated but also elegant.

Tomfoolery, Young Blood Grenache, Barossa, 2017, 14.3% [Screwcap]

Bottle £19.50 Case with 10% discount £210.60
Code TOM317

Pale and clear dark cherry tone. Textbook Aussie Grenache strawberry perfume. For a wine over 14%, this appears so light, supple and aromatic and spiked with white pepper. Smooth and refined and all in harmony. Now-2020

Tomfoolery, Young Blood Shiraz, Barossa, 2017, 13.9% [Screwcap]

Bottle £19.95 Case with 10% discount £215.46
Code TOM117

Lovely youthful clear ruby. This is deliciously vibrant and exciting. Bright raspberries and spiced cherries with just the right backing of tannin. Juicily stimulating. Now-2021

Tomfoolery, Black & Blue Shiraz, Barossa, 2016, 14%

Bottle £29.95 Case with 10% discount £323.46
Code TOM516

To quote from the winery website: “sourced from a select premium vineyard in the northern sub-region of Ebenezer in the Barossa Valley. Grown by 5th generational grape grower Adrian Hoffmann, this site offers soils that are commonly sandy loam over heavy red clay which provide a controlled yet accessible source of water allowing the vines to produce stunning fruit”. This includes 5% Viognier. Wonderful wine: magically combines vibrancy with fragrance, density with grace. Smoky and violet hints dance around a svelte core of black fruit - blackcurrants and blueberries. Now-2025



Ashton Hills, Adelaide Hills

I was so surprised to discover that these wines, which I used to drink decades ago, were no longer in the UK market. In 1982 Burgundy lover Stephen George began planting Pinot on a south-facing site at 570m. in the Adelaide Hills - which he perceived to be one of the coolest and wettest in the state. It was then, and remains today, just a 3 hectare plot (illustrated on this page), with plantings of five clones of Pinot and seven or eight rows of Riesling. James Halliday described the Ashton Hills vineyard and Stephen’s efforts thus: “the most distinguished site in South Australia for Pinot Noir; Stephen’s unrelenting attention to detail has made Ashton Hills the one Grand Cru of the state.” In 2015 Stephen George sold the vineyard to Wirra Wirra, but continues in an advisory role. Winemaking is resolutely Burgundian and minimalist, using open-top fermenters, some whole bunches in the vat, wild ferments, and then all basket-pressed to French oak barrels.

Every one of these four wines is superb. Production is tiny (for example just 180 dozen of the Riesling and 800 dozen of the Piccadilly Valley PN) so we are very fortunate to have secured an allocation.

Ashton Hills, Blanc de Noirs, Piccadilly Valley, 2011, 13%

Bottle £31.50 Case with 10% discount £340.20
Code ASH811

100% Pinot Noir from the estate’s own grapes, from a very cool vintage perfect for sparkling wine production. Enticingly yeasty nose, showing development. Beautifully ready: soft red fruit, but with some structure, bready and savoury. Could be drunk with rich food as much as an aperitif. Now-2020.

Ashton Hills, Riesling, Adelaide Hills, 2017, 11% [Screwcap]

Bottle £20.50 Case with 10% discount £221.40
Code ASH617

Of all the Rieslings I tasted in Australia this was my favourite, displaying a perfect, palate-stimulating balance of ripe peach and apricot flavours, and steely citric cut. 5-7 grams of residual sugar make it so much more enjoyable than more austere examples. Transparent and intense; lovely on its own or drink with oysters, scallops and any seafood with light Asian spice. Now-2023

Ashton Hills, Pinot Noir, Piccadilly Valley, 2016, 14.5% [Screwcap]

Bottle £29.50 Case with 10% discount £318.60
Code ASH116

Based on fruit from the home vineyard, with grapes from two other nearby farms; no new barrels. Friendly Pinot aromas, just lightly herbaceous and attractively savoury. Lovely texture. Red fruit, very slightly heated, mildly gamey; and appealingly long. Drinking perfectly from now, this tastes like a decent Côte de Beaune at five years of maturity. Now-2021

Ashton Hills, Estate Pinot Noir, Adelaide Hills, 2016, 14.5% [Screwcap]

Bottle £39.95 Case with 10% discount £431.46
Code ASH316

From four clones; 30% whole bunch; some new oak on this wine; and bottled without filtration. So generously open and fat, silky and supple with splendid flesh and intriguing spice hints (star anise?). This is a big step up on the Piccadilly Valley Pinot in terms of structure, complexity and longevity. Now-2024

“It has amazing purity of rich fruit, showing aromas and flavours of ripe cherry and strawberry, exotic spices and autumn leaves. It’s savoury and silky with firm structure and bright acidity. Superb! Drinking window 2018 - 2021. 94/100”, Tina Gellie, Decanter online, tasted 23rd January 2018



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Premium Australia

Last October I spent two weeks in Australia. Whilst I didn’t traverse the whole country (omitting Western Australia and Tasmania sadly) I did cover a lot of ground - and here are the fruits of that journey. Over the fortnight I tasted samples from over 110 wineries; and I wrote notes for over 400 wines (a lot more were enjoyed over mildly inebriated dinners!).

In some ways it was a frustrating trip. In twenty years of wine prospecting never have I tasted such a high proportion of wines I would have loved to ship and stock, only to find the prices quoted prohibitive. The Australian dollar is supported by rising commodity prices, and labour costs in Australia are higher than in Europe. So I began to narrow down my focus to what the country’s strengths really are: in particular premium Shiraz, Pinot Noir and Chardonnay, and on wines from cooler (by Aussie standards) regions such as the Yarra and King Valleys and the Adelaide Hills. Of the six estates listed here three - Hoddles Creek, Mac Forbes and Ashton Hills - are categorised by the best known Australian wine guide, Halliday’s, as among the ***** wineries. Quality never comes cheap - but I am confident that these wines also offer value.

Simon Taylor, April 2018



All wines in this list are offered at 10% off the bottle prices for unmixed cases of twelve until the end of May



Australian Wines: Our first ever all- Australia tasting

with Charlie O’Brien of
Silent Noise, South Australia

Tuesday May 15th,
5.30pm to 8.00pm

Venue: Our shop in Twyford

A first chance to taste the superb wines we have shipped: let’s hope for a sunny spring evening to enjoy a wide selection of Australian wines at an informal, walk-round event. Expect brilliant Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Shiraz, but also Arneis and Sangiovese. Around 7pm Charlie O’Brien, founder of Silent Noise (and son of famed Kangarilla Road owner and winemaker Kevin O’Brien) will introduce the three wines we have shipped from him and talk generally about producing wine in South Australia: from sourcing grapes to winemaking and branding.

10% off all bottle prices of ALL of our Australian wines on the evening, and all wines will be available to take away.

Please call or email us to indicate if you are planning to come so we can judge numbers - and manage our staffing accordingly, as we want to give you as good a service as we can!

Mixed Cases

Each of the cases includes two bottles of each of the six wines listed, with a discount of 10% on the bottle prices in the list.

Kangaroo Case £171.63 Code AUS18

Wickham Road, Chardonnay, Gippsland, 2017

Pizzini, Verduzzo, King Valley, 2016

Silent Noise, Chardonnay, Adelaide Hills, 2017

Wickham Road, Pinot Noir, Gippsland, 2017

Pizzini, Nonna Gisella Sangiovese, King Valley, 2016

Silent Noise, SGZ, (Shiraz/Grenache/Zinfandel), McLaren Vale, 2017

Chardonnay and Pinot: Down Under Dozen £228.40 Code AUS28

Wickham Road, Chardonnay, Gippsland, 2017

Hoddles Creek, Chardonnay, Yarra Valley, 2016

Silent Noise, Chardonnay, Adelaide Hills, 2017

Wickham Road, Pinot Noir, Gippsland, 2017

Hoddles Creek, Pinot Noir, Yarra Valley, 2016

Ashton Hills, Pinot Noir, Piccadilly Valley, 2016

Premium Aussie Reds £229.20 Code AUS38

Wickham Road, Pinot Noir, Gippsland, 2017

Pizzini, Nonna Gisella Sangiovese, King Valley, 2016

Silent Noise, Shiraz, McLaren Vale, 2016

Tomfoolery, Young Blood Grenache, Barossa, 2017

Tomfoolery, Black & Blue Shiraz, Barossa, 2016

Ashton Hills, Pinot Noir, Piccadilly Valley, 2016

The Yarra Valley

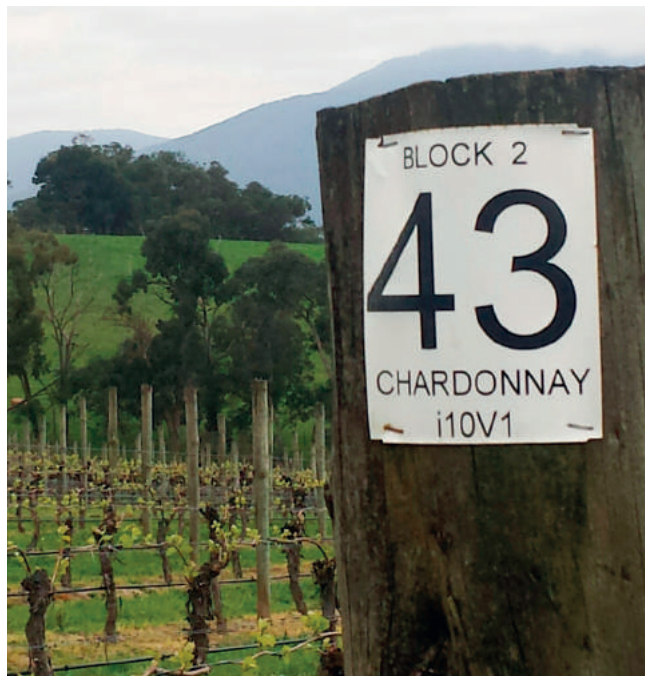
The Yarra Valley is just an hour’s drive east of Melbourne: as such it was one of the country’s first wine growing areas - for example at historic Yeringberg, where vines were first planted in the 1850s, pulled out in the 1920s, and replanted in the 1960s.

Over the last generation the growers in the Yarra have correctly selected Chardonnay and Pinot Noir as the most successful grapes here, already identified the best vineyard sites and are now making excellent wines from vines of decent age. No question, this is a global sweet spot for these two varieties: note in particular the moderate alcohol levels.

Hoddles Creek, Yarra Valley & Wickham Road, Gippsland

Sometime you earn your luck. I was staying with Tony Jordan (one of the grand old men of the Australian wine industry) in Hoddles Creek, in the south-east of the Yarra, and he produced a bottle of his neighbour’s Hoddles Creek 2016 Pinot for dinner. It stood up very well against some top competition. A week later I was back in the Yarra for an eye-opening tutored tasting of seven Yarra Chardonnays and seven Yarra Pinots. This was a fascinating experience: what made the two Hoddles Creek wines stand out was their retail price, so much less than comparable wines from the others, for example TarraWarra or Giant Steps. The 2015 edition of Halliday’s Wine Companion chose Hoddles Creek for their **Best Value Winery** selection.

Hoddles Creek Estate, now run by friendly whirlwind Franco d’Anna, was established in 1997 when the D’Anna family decided to establish a vineyard on land that had been in



the family since 1960. Its steeply sloping blocks at about 250m. prohibit mechanical harvesting, with all vines being hand pruned and harvested; and their grapes are crushed at the family’s winery, constructed for the 2003 vintage. The family owns ten hectares of Pinot Noir (five clones), six of Chardonnay, plus some Pinot Gris, Sauvignon Blanc, Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon, situated in the southern, highest and coolest district of the Upper Yarra. Winemaking is determinedly non-interventionist: some whole bunches are put in the tank; all fermented with wild yeasts, without additions of enzymes or acid.

Since 2011 the family have also managed an eight hectare vineyard, with vines now 17 years old, planted solely to Chardonnay and Pinot Noir in Gippsland. Gippsland is an up-and-coming coastal region east and south of Melbourne. The wines from this cool, free draining site are sold under Franco’s Wickham Road label. The two Wickham Road wines are more obvious and muscular than those from the Yarra but share a similar concentration and balance. We are delighted to introduce Franco’s wines to the UK market.

Wickham Road, Chardonnay, Gippsland, 2017, 12.8% [Screwcap]

Bottle £18.95 Case with 10% discount £204.66
Code WIC117

Oak, cream and ripe apple aromas. Richly textured, plenty of flavour, generous heart - expansive Chardonnay. Now-2021

Wickham Road, Pinot Noir, Gippsland, 2017, 13% [Screwcap]

Bottle £19.50 Case with 10% discount £210.60
Code WIC617

Soft plum hue. Open, forward Pinot character: juicy, punchy and crunchy raspberry fruit, already enticingly tinged with hints of that appealing savouriness which is so food friendly (think game, turkey, veal, mushrooms). Hugely successful and delicious. Now-2022

Hoddles Creek, Chardonnay, Yarra Valley, 2016, 13.2% [Screwcap]

Bottle £21.95 Case with 10% discount £237.06
Code HOD116

Restrained and subtle nose - this benefits from decanting right now - but then unfurls flavours of honey and ripe pears. Considerable weight cut by refreshing acidity. Very refined and complete, with genuine length, this is comfortably a match for more expensive white Burgundy. Highly recommended. Now-2022

Hoddles Creek, Pinot Noir, Yarra Valley, 2016, 13.2% [Screwcap]

Bottle £22.50 Case with 10% discount £243.00
Code HOD616

Cedar / cigar box accents on a fresh red fruit perfume. Juicy red and black fruit backed by a correct structure. Excellent transparency and intensity. Peck of spice. This has staying power too. Now-2023

Mac Forbes, Healesville

Mac Forbes is a phenomenom. Born and raised in the Yarra, “determined, focused and able to multitask at high speed” (as he describes himself), he crisscrossed Europe before returning to Australia in 2004 and commencing winemaking in the Yarra the following year.

Since then he has built a great reputation. From his large range of wines, some from his own vines and some from bought in fruit, we have chosen three.

Mac Forbes, Woori Yallock Chardonnay, Yarra Valley, 2016, 12.5%

Bottle £33.50 Case with 10% discount £361.80
Code MAC116

From a south facing cool site in the Upper Yarra planted in 1995. Panoply of scents: honeysuckle, marzipan and butter. There is a hint of that honeysuckle exoticism, plus stone fruit notes, in this classy, understated Chardonnay. Some steeliness too - this should keep well. Now-2022

Pizzini, King Valley

The King Valley is about 250 kms. north-east of Melbourne: it’s arguably the highest wine-growing region in the country, with vineyards on the slopes at 300m. to 800m, so it definitely qualifies as a cooler zone by Australian standards. Many Italian immigrants were among the first settlers here, bringing Italian vines, and the Valley’s current grapegrowers are building on that heritage by specialising in Italian varieties. At Pizzini this means not just Sangiovese but Nebbiolo, Barbera and Sagrantino, plus Pinot Grigio, Arneis, Glera (for sparkling wine) and the obscure Verduzzo. Father Fred (Alfredo) began planting in 1978 but didn’t begin bottling wine under the family label until 1994, and now the wines are made by skilful son Joel.

Pizzini, Verduzzo, King Valley, 2016, 14%

Bottle £13.95 Case with 10% discount £150.66
Code PIZ116

Verduzzo’s home is in Friuli, made there into dry and sweet wines. It delivers real weight: full-flavoured - stone fruit and cream, long and penetrating. Perfect for chicken dishes. Now-2019



Mac Forbes, Coldstream Pinot Noir, Yarra Valley, 2016, 12%

Bottle £34.50 Case with 10% discount £372.60
Code MAC316

Coldstream is the best-known area of the warmer Lower Yarra; here the Pinot tends to be riper, more forward and opulent. This has an exciting vitality - the red fruit bounces from the glass. Very seductive. Now-2022

Mac Forbes, Healesville Syrah, Yarra Valley, 2016, 13%

Bottle £35.00 Case with 10% discount £378.00
Code MAC516

Just the second vintage of this, from plots around Healesville, where Mac’s cellar is located and note the name - Syrah, indicating Mac’s wish to emulate a French model. Vivid purple. Fresh fruit scent. Very intense, bittersweet, with crunchy blackcurrant flavours. Pepper and spice on the finish. Is this a look-alike for Hermitage? Whatever, it’s very convincing. Now-2024



Pizzini, Arneis, King Valley, 2017, 12.5%

Bottle £15.95 Case with 10% discount £172.26
Code PIZ316

Arneis, as grown in Piedmont, is an under-rated grape. Here it delivers a stimulating, lively, almost minty scent; and a super-fresh mouthful of citrus, stone fruit and even a hint of guava. Lovely summer aperitif or drink with salad lunches. Now-2019

Pizzini, Nonna Gisella Sangiovese, King Valley, 2016, 13.5%

Bottle £14.95 Case with 10% discount £161.46
Code PIZ616

Named after Alfredo’s grandmother, so intended to be “warm and humble just like its namesake”, this is a very winning wine. Aroma of cooked strawberries; and then it’s deliciously ripe and charming, with real berry and cherry fruit concentration. Cries out for any Italian food from lasagna to tagliata. Now-2021