

THE **tastingpanel** MAGAZINE
the voice of hospitality & retail

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A NEW

Victorian
ERA

AUSTRALIA'S SMALLEST MAINLAND STATE
IS ONE OF ITS **BIGGEST SUCCESS STORIES**



From top to bottom: Fowles Wine in the Strathbogie Ranges; winemaker Rick Kinzbrunner of Giaconda Vineyard & Winery in Beechworth; wines from Yarra Yering and Mount Mary Vineyard in the Yarra Valley; the cellar at Tahbilk Estate in Nagambie Lakes; and Chalmers Heathcote Vineyard in Heathcote.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF FOWLES WINE, GIACONDA, DAVID'S & WINERY, YARRA YERING, MOUNT MARY VINEYARD, TAHBILK ESTATE, AND CHALMERS HEATHCOTE VINEYARD

Publisher's PICKS



Slouch Hat Wines 2022 Parade Rest GSM, Santa Ynez Valley, Santa Barbara County (\$33) Ballard Canyon (Syrah and Grenache) and Los Olivos District (Mourvèdre) are top sub-AVAs in Santa Ynez for Rhône varieties. Aged ten months in neutral oak barrels, with a lower ABV of 13.3%, this fresh-tasting red blend allows earth and wild strawberry backed by fine acidity to shine. Cocoa, black raspberry, and rooibos tea stand out on the midpalate. The wine is buoyed by sleek tannins and a spiced sandalwood finish. **93**



Wente Vineyards 2021 Cabernet Sauvignon, Wetmore Vineyard, Livermore Valley (\$35) Conveying the essence of Livermore Valley terroir, this opulent red is luscious from the start, with coffee and plum-skin tannins forming its backbone. Notes of black cherry and dark chocolate are memorable, as is the suede mouthfeel. **93**



Yacoubian-Hobbs 2019 Areni, Rind, Vayots Dzor, Armenia (\$35) Blistered notes of tobacco are sweetened by black cherry and licorice and swathed in wet stone. This wine's appeal lies in its subtlety: Unwavering, elegant, and complex, it offers deep earth tones draped in animale and black tea. **95**



PAUL HOBBS SELECTIONS



Matarromera 2020 Crianza, Ribera del Duero, Spain (\$35) Cherry, plum, and cedar are accompanied by lingering notes of vanilla spice. The palate shows structure and balance, with firm tannins and a mineral base. **92**

SPANISH ACQUISITION, NY;
TRADEWINDS SPECIALTY IMPORTS,
D.C., VA, MD; UNITED CELLARS, FL; BOTTLE
DIPLOMACY, GA; MANOLO'S WINES, IN



J. Lohr 2021 Tower Road Petite Sirah, Paso Robles (\$35) Ripeness reigns through teeth-coating blackberry, bramble, and white pepper. The palate is creamy and broad, with generous brushstrokes of violets and dark chocolate espresso. **92**



The Four Graces 2022 Pinot Gris, Willamette Valley, Oregon (\$35) Fresh, glossy notes of peach and pear are dotted with white pepper. Juicy, with vivid acidity and a finish of honeysuckle and tangerine. **93**

FOLEY FAMILY WINES



Alvaredos-Hobbs 2021 Codello, Ribeira Sacra, Spain (\$35) While salinity graces the front of the palate, a creamy base of lemon verbena and cashew covers the back of the tongue. Orange blossom and chamomile are held upright by acidity and a grassy, lean profile before the finish of crisp pear. **94**



PAUL HOBBS SELECTIONS



Villa Huesgen 2022 Enkircher Steffensberg Riesling Kabinett, Mosel, Germany (\$40) Petrol, pear, peanut brittle, and honey sing in harmony on the nose and palate as apricot and apple reverberate with creamy yet dry minerality. The grapes for this wine, which has a low 9.5% ABV, grow on 30-year-old vines on the steep slopes of Enkircher Steffensberg. **94**



QUINTESSENTIAL



Cantina Mesa 2020 Buio Buio Carignano del Sulcis DOC Riserva, Sardinia, Italy (\$40) From ungrafted Carignano vines trained in the ancient bush format on sandy soils, this standout red is full-bodied and well structured. Rich, dark fruit character and robust tannins meld with notes of underbrush and spiced cedar. The intensity of the red fruit reaches a crescendo on the midpalate with sharp acidity and a sleek, lithe mouthfeel, leading to a finish of red plum steeped in lavender tea. **95**

SANTA MARGHERITA USA



Jordan 2022 Chardonnay, Russian River Valley, Sonoma County (\$42) Honeyed and floral in all its glory, with a lit-from-within brilliance. The glossy mouthfeel offers ripe pear, fresh mango, and lemon. **94**

