

THE AUSTRALIAN WINE COMPANION 2018

BY JAMES HALLIDAY ★★★★★

*Amazing
Sites*

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POINTS

THE APOTROPAIC TRISKAIDEKAPHOBIA

Single Vineyard Shiraz 2013

This takes the ever-idiosyncratic d'Arenberg wine names altogether too far. The vinification is as usual, with 20 months maturation in used French oak. It is full-bodied, with a wealth of black fruits of every size and description on the mid-palate; the back-palate and finish add a dimension of earthy/savoury, tannin-linked, notes.



THE FRUIT BAT

Single Vineyard Shiraz 2013

More towards medium-bodied, and more accessible as a young wine than its brethren. Ripe, juice-dripping damson plum aromas lead the way, but the bouquet also offers up floral notes of rose perfume and Asian spice. The flavours show some regional earthiness, but there's a lightness of touch which carries it easily along to the lingering, sweet-fruited finish.



THE PICEOUS LODESTAR

Single Vineyard Shiraz 2013

All the usual deep colour and ripe fruit aromas and flavours, but in addition polished tannins frame the fruit in an unexpected way. There are bright nuances, even elegance, that the other d'Arenberg wines don't have. It's probably the particular vineyard speaking.



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THE EIGHT IRON

Single Vineyard Shiraz 2013

Very much McLaren Vale in personality, although of course the vineyard applies its own stamp as well. The first impression is of baked earth, with the term 'ironstone' coming to mind, although that may be geologically flawed. Beyond that the wine shows notes of anise, caraway and lavender sprinkled through the ripe red fruit, the palate buoyant and long in flavour.



THE AMARANTHINE

Single Vineyard Shiraz 2013

Standard vinification, matured for 20 months in used French oak. Deep, dense crimson-purple colour, excellent for age; a concentrated, boldly full-bodied shiraz with a deep well of black fruits, licorice and bitter chocolate; the tannins are still resolving themselves, but are in balance and will underwrite the future of the wine.



THE SWINGING MALAYSIAN

Single Vineyard Shiraz 2013

Seems to be a more approachable example of this label, and none the worse for that. Red and black fruits dominate the bouquet, with blood plum and juicy, almost jubey raspberry aromas. All those elements carry through to the palate, which then offers another dimension, with flavours of clove and other sweet spices seasoning the brew. A very good release.



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TYCHE'S MUSTARD

Single Vineyard Shiraz 2013

Ultra-powerful, with a lava-like molten flow of black fruits, spices, chocolate and licorice sweeping all before it until the last gasp, when ripe tannins come to the rescue. All of these d'Arenberg wines are



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THE BAMBOO SCRUB

Single Vineyard Shiraz 2013

You can doubtless get lost in the bamboo scrub as easily as you can get lost in the sea of black/dark chocolate fruits of these d'Arenberg wines. The problem is not one of quality, but of fearful symmetry, the point of difference here the lift on the aftertaste. A glass half full job - it's there, but is it a positive or a negative? Difference is not of itself to be admired willy-nilly.



THE PICKWICKIAN BROBDINGNAGIAN

Single Vineyard Shiraz 2013

Density and warmth seem to be the recurring themes through this wine. The aromas and flavours conjure up blackberry, but it's more reminiscent of something cooked, perhaps conserve, than freshly picked fruit. A bitumen-like character in the bouquet and on the palate adds a dark, impenetrable quality. Needs a good spell in the cellar to show its worth.



SHIPSTERS' RAPTURE

Single Vineyard Shiraz 2013

Always a deep, dark sort of wine, and no different with this vintage. On the bouquet and palate, 'tarry' is the most characteristic descriptor, with liquorice not far behind and a touch of alcohol warmth poking through. A pine/mint-like aroma, black fruit and bitter chocolate flavours are typical of the vineyard, and it will take much time to fully evolve.

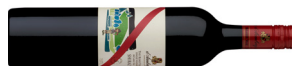


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POINTS

THE BLIND TIGER

Single Vineyard Shiraz 2013

Standard d'Arenberg vinification, identical to Amaranthine. Totally counterintuitively, this 15.4% alcohol wine has more savoury spicy components in its make-up, even if the alcohol has some thinning impact on the fruit.



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POINTS

THE VOCIFERATE DIPSOMANIAC

Single Vineyard Shiraz 2013

Deep, dense colour; a massive, full-bodied shiraz, years away from opening its doors for business. Thick fruit and armoured car tannins hold the fort.