

WARATAH HILLS VINEYARD TASTING NOTES

The Waratah Hills Vineyard is the mainland's southern-most site - on the edge of the road to Wilson's Promontory.

Closely planted and steep - it sits at the ultra-premium end of the spectrum - along with iconic producers such as Bindi (Macedon) and Mt Langi Ghiran (Grampians) - Waratah Hills operates at the margins - producing exceptional fruit that balances flavour with finesse - varietal character with the ethereal.

There are no notes for their sensational Chardonnays, as they sell it out each vintage on release. Lucky there's more area for vineyard expansion.....and more vines coming to fruition next vintage.

The Pinot Noirs from this estate are, quite simply, exceptional. Legendary Philip Jones, the initial consultant, working his magic with spacing and clones and row-orientation. These are silken wines the rival the best in the world - vine age set to reward and reward the next custodian/

2017 Waratah Hills "Ignatius" Pinot Noir

- I love the colour of this wine - translucent garnet red - proudly Pinot.
- Loads of spice on first turn of the glass - pepper and a tease of whole bunch clove. Cherries (sour) and wild strawberries - plenty of power emanating from a deceptively pale wine.
- The palate glides with a silky softness. Nothing forced. The sour cherry theme continues with secondary Asian sauce notes playing softly in the background. The charm only blossoms with time liberated from the bottle. Delicious.
- An aristocratic expression capturing the coolness of the site.

2019 Waratah Hills Pinot Noir

- A noticeably darker hue than the vineyard usually produces - dark cherry with brick red edges.
- Again - loads of spice - black pepper and skin-derived earthiness. The riper notes of a dry and warm vintage putting this in the deeply cored, brooding spectrum.
- A coiled spring. It needs time to unfurl and to release its latent varietal softness. Rhubarb and strawberry liqueur - bright red cherry acidity.
- Screaming for roast duck.
- The most forward of the premium triumvirate - a lovely wine that captures the sensitivity of the special site.

2021 Waratah Hills "Bonnie Rose" Pinot Noir

- A delightful youthfulness to this in the glass - the rare combination of crimson with indigo edges. These are special wines.
- High-toned aromas - sour red cherries and white pepper - quality French oak - it's agile and compelling; silken and ethereal - red cherry fruits continue - acidity and ripeness perfectly aligned.
- So tightly wound - tensile - pristine fruit picked at optimum ripeness. Winemaking without ego and totally respectful of the site.
- I wouldn't change a thing.
- Magnificent, coolest-climate Pinot Noir, rivalling the greatest wines of Gippsland's pioneers.

2022 Waratah Hills “Prom Road” Prosecco

- Classic pale Prosecco hue – the bead softly bubbling to the surface.
- Green apples and soft white floral notes – lemon notes too – lovely nose.
- A real crowd-pleasing style – ultra creamy mouthfeel delivering a balanced, crisp young wine with plenty of cider apple charm.
- This is a vinous licence to print money. Very well put together.

2017 Waratah Hills Blanc de Noir

- Retaining a youthful sensibility with the copper hue entirely expected of the pinot grape.
- An entirely seductive nose – a tease of autolysis – brioche brushed with strawberries – more minerals and savoury notes than overt fruit expressions.
- Strength in its subtlety – its underbelly of red berries tamed by a flow of vineyard specific minerality and the chalky tannins of pristine, low-yielding fruit.
- It’s a beautiful sparkling wine and an all-too-rare expression of the style.
- Will continue to age with grace.

2019 Prom Road “Picnic White”

- Soft yellow and settled in its skin – just as you’d expect from a white with some time in the bottle.
- Loads of lemon zest – a tangy nose – guava and soft tropics – quite the nose.
- More stone-fruits and riper citrus characters on the palate.
- A delicious, swirling wine of interest and intrigue – aptly built for enjoyment on a picnic rug with cheese and BBQ chicken.

2019 Prom Road Pinot Noir

- Loads of weight and colour in the glass – deep crimson red – at ease.
- It’s spicy – oak and skins and (I suspect) some bunch work providing plenty of tensions and frame. Mixed red and black berries – cinnamon too.
- Ripe and robust – the palate carries spiced plums and dark cherries – smoky oak – chalkiest of tannins.
- This wine absolutely blossoms with time in the glass – justifiably separate from the Picnic Red release – this, decanted, is exceptional value – complex and varietal.
- Kudos to the winemaker.

2019 Prom Road “Picnic Red”

- This is a delicious medium-weight red, crafted from a quality parcel of Sangiovese.
- Hallmark sour cherries on the nose – skin-spice and dried herbs lurking with intent.
- Juicy and uncluttered by oak or winemaking – a classic “picnic red” that suits all sorts of fare – soft red berries flow without effort – tannins soft.
- A blessing that this wine has had its time in the bottle.
- Think quality Friday night pizza with friends – you’d look for no other wine.

2018 Prom Road Shiraz

- Impressive colour at 5 years of age – deep purple with red edges.
- Plums and dark berries; cloves and aniseed; a hint of tapenade – the nose more in the medium-weight spectrum than the colour implies.
- A luscious and soft mouthful of shiraz – sitting right in the sweet spot – complex and considered – with an earthy, funky element sitting latent.
- Delicious, modern, and beautifully made

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