

# The WINE ADVOCATE.

## 2 UP

### 2 UP 2005 SHIRAZ

An amazing offering for \$14 (I assume discount stores will have it priced even lower), this firm is a joint venture between importer Peter Click and winemaker Kevin O'Brien, who produces the youthful cuvees from McLaren Vale's Kangarilla road estate. This deep ruby/purple-tinged Shiraz offers gorgeous aromas of

### SOUTH AUSTRALIA \$14 RED 90

sweet blackberries, figs, plums, and kirsch. Dense, opulent, and full-bodied, it is a terrific South Australian fruit bomb. Enjoy it over the next 2-3 years. It is the type of wine value that simply can't be found in California.

## BROKENWOOD

### BROKENWOOD 2003 CRICKET PITCH RED BROKENWOOD 2004 SHIRAZ GRAVEYARD BROKENWOOD 2004 SHIRAZ RAYNER BROKENWOOD 2004 SHIRAZ WADE BLOCK 2

One of Hunter Valley's most respected estates, Brokenwood is owned by a syndicate of 23 partners. They fashion some inexpensive, competent, but less than exciting whites in addition to the following red wine cuvées. A delicious Australian version of a French Côtes du Rhône is the **2003 Cricket Pitch Red**, a blend of equal parts Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, and Shiraz as well as small dollops of Pinot Noir, Petit Verdot, and Nebbiolo. Revealing a Rhône-like earthy, peppery, slightly herbal perfume with plenty of sweet cherries, currants, and spice, this is a value-priced, delicious, medium-bodied, fleshy, dry red to drink over the next 1-2 years.

The more expensive include the **2004 Shiraz Wade Block 2**, a deep purple-hued offering displaying notes of dark berries,

### HUNTER VALLEY \$16 RED 88 HUNTER VALLEY \$87 RED 88+ McLAREN VALE \$70 RED 91 McLAREN VALE \$46 RED 90

white chocolate, and hints of mint as well as spicy oak. Medium-bodied, with outstanding concentration, freshness, and definition, it should evolve for 7-10 years. My favorite wine in this portfolio is the **2004 Shiraz Rayner Vineyard**. This blockbuster, dense purple-hued Shiraz exhibits aromas of mocha, chocolate, sweet berry fruit, blackberries, and earth. Rich, chewy, full-bodied, ripe, and well-balanced, this beauty can be drunk now and over the next 10-15 years. Brokenwood's flagship wine, the **2004 Shiraz Graveyard Vineyard**, is a totally different animal. More monolithic, backward and tightly knit, its deep ruby/purple color is accompanied by hints of red fruits, mint and herbal underpinnings, and a notion of sweet oak. It will benefit from 5-6 years of cellaring, and should keep for at least a decade.

## CAMPBELLS

### CAMPBELLS N.V. MUSCAT CAMPBELLS N.V. RARE MUSCAT MERCHANT PRINCE CAMPBELLS N.V. RARE TOKAY ISABELLA CAMPBELLS N.V. TOKAY

The Campbells first established their Rutherglen winery in 1870, and, as I have written in the past, these are true treasures from Australia. Each year's releases taste similar to the previous ones as they are all based on the same soleras. For starters, the sensational **non-vintage Muscat** possesses 230 grams per liter of residual sugar, 17% alcohol (typical for this region's fortified cuvees), a deep amber color, good unctuousity, and a sweet bouquet of brand macerated raisins, molasses, caramels, and toffee. Rich, full-bodied, and extraordinarily intense, it is an amazing wine. Displaying a lighter amber hue, the **non-vintage Tokay** is more elegant, not as sweet (205 grams of residual sugar per liter), but unctuous, long, and fragrant, revealing hints of Chinese black tea, toffee, and marmalade. Both of these cuvées are based on 20-25 year old soleras.

### RUTHERGLEN \$19; 375 ml FORTIFIED 95 RUTHERGLEN \$85; 375 ml FORTIFIED 99 RUTHERGLEN \$85; 375 ml FORTIFIED 98 RUTHERGLEN \$19; 375 ml FORTIFIED 94

The more ancient soleras (usually the base wine is well over 60 years of age) are bottled under the "Rare" caption, and often flirt with perfection. The deep amber-colored **non-vintage Rare Muscat Merchant Prince** has 328 grams of residual sugar per liter, approximately 18% alcohol, and huge extract and richness. Notes of figs, marmalade, toffee, caramel, and gorgeous sweetness as well as richness are all found in this beauty. The **non-vintage Rare Tokay Isabella** is slightly sweet (293 grams of residual sugar per liter) with a lighter amber color. Nevertheless, it possesses superb intensity as well as palate presence with hints of honeysuckle, raisins, black tea, marmalade, and toffee. To reiterate, these are extraordinary beverages that must be tasted to be believed.

## CAPE BARREN

CAPE BARREN	2005	GSM
CAPE BARREN	2004	SHIRAZ OLD VINE
CAPE BARREN	2004	SHIRAZ WILD GOOSE

An intense blueberry note as well as hints of tasty oak, licorice, and chocolate emerge from the **2004 Shiraz Wild Goose**. Full-bodied with terrific purity, layers of flavor, and a soft, unctuous finish, it should drink well for 5-7 years. From a 70 year-old Willunga vineyard, the **2004 Shiraz Old Vine** tips the scales at 14.9% alcohol. While packed and stacked, this loaded Shiraz is neither pruny, raisiny, nor over the top, a criticism, albeit a false one, often aimed at McLaren Vale and Barossa Shiraz. This offering

## KANGARILLA ROAD

KANGARILLA ROAD	2004	CABERNET SAUVIGNON
KANGARILLA ROAD	2005	CHARDONNAY
KANGARILLA ROAD	2004	SHIRAZ
KANGARILLA ROAD	2005	SHIRAZ/VIIGNIER
KANGARILLA ROAD	2005	VIIGNIER
KANGARILLA ROAD	2004	ZINFANDEL

Kangarilla Road, located on a road of the same name in McLaren Vale, was founded in 1997 by Helen and Kevin O'Brien, a winemaker with a knack for turning out high quality efforts. These are all classic South Australian cuvees with a sense of balance and restraint suggestive of European influence. However, there is no compromise of the wines' flavor or ripeness levels.

A delicate, nuanced style of **Viognier**, the **2005** makes a mockery of many New World, tooty fruity, bubble gum type wines. Exceptional freshness, a mineral-like character, medium body, and plenty of peach, apricot, and citrus oil notes are present in this impressively endowed effort. It should drink nicely for several years. Another top-notch offering is the **2005 Chardonnay**. This white possesses moderate alcohol (13.5%) along with subtle notes of French oak (30% was barrel fermented) interwoven with elegant touches of tangerines and white peaches. Medium to full-bodied with excellent acidity, freshness, and flavor intensity, this beauty can be enjoyed over the next 1-3 years.

The **2005 Shiraz/Viognier** (92% and 8% respectively) was

McLAREN VALE	\$24	RED	91
McLAREN VALE	\$32	RED	93
McLAREN VALE	\$24	RED	89

exhibits pure blackberry and briery fruit characteristics intermixed with *pain grillé*, espresso roast, and mocha. The aromatics are followed by a full-bodied, chewy, powerful, layered, rich, accessible wine that can be enjoyed now and over the next 7-8 years. A superb blend of 50% Grenache, 40% Shiraz, and 10% Mourvèdre, the **2005 GSM** reveals a deep ruby/purple hue along with scents of pepper, charcoal, roasted herbs, meat, blackberries, and cherries. This full, rich Aussie red is ideal for drinking over the next 3-4 years.

McLAREN VALE	\$22	RED	91
McLAREN VALE	\$18	WHITE	90
McLAREN VALE	\$22	RED	92
McLAREN VALE	\$25	RED	91
McLAREN VALE	\$19	WHITE	90
McLAREN VALE	\$33	RED	89

aged 14 months in primarily new French oak. It exhibits an attractive *pain grillé* character intermixed with blackberries, camphor, violets, and bacon fat. This dense ruby/purple hued, full-bodied, opulent, rich, fleshy wine should drink well for 8-10 years. The **2004 Cabernet Sauvignon** (100% Cabernet Sauvignon) was aged in a combination of new and old French and American wood. This vintage's long, cool growing season resulted in a wine with beautifully pure notes of black currants, mint, white chocolate and spicy vanillin. Medium to full-bodied and super-rich with lovely purity that is a polished, sophisticated Cabernet that should drink well for a decade or more. Also stunning, the **2004 Shiraz** boasts deep mocha, blackberry, cherry, and white chocolate notes interspersed with hints of new oak (both French and American wood are used), pepper, smoke and coffee. This rich, layered, tasty Aussie red can be drunk now and over the next 7-8 years. Lastly Kangarilla Road does a beautiful job with **Zinfandel**, and the **2004** possesses a dark ruby/purple color as well as a big, sweet, briery-scented perfume displaying hints of herbs, pepper, and spice. Aged in one-year-old French oak for 14 months, it reveals a powerful Zinfandel character. Consume it over the next 2-3 years.

## NEPENTHE

NEPENTHE	2005	CHARDONNAY UNWOODED	LENSWOOD	\$16	WHITE	90
NEPENTHE	2005	PINOT GRIS	LENSWOOD	\$21	WHITE	90
NEPENTHE	2005	RIESLING	LENSWOOD	\$21	WHITE	90
NEPENTHE	2003	THE ROGUE PROPRIETARY BLEND	LENSWOOD	\$21	RED	88
NEPENTHE	2005	SAUVIGNON BLANC	LENSWOOD	\$16	WHITE	88
NEPENTHE	2005	TRYST PROPRIETARY WHITE	LENSWOOD	\$15	WHITE	91

Seemingly regardless of vintage, I adore the dry whites that come from Nepenthe, a South Australia winery owned by the Tweddell family. The operation is in Lenswood, a sub-region of Adelaide Hills known for its cool climate viticulture. Readers are unlikely to find better crisp, fruit-driven, mineral-laced, dry whites than those produced by Nepenthe. The **2005 Riesling** offers beautiful fruit as well as loads of citrus oil (lemons, limes, and a hint of orange blossoms) character. This deep, but light-bodied white can be drunk with an assortment of cuisines, from Japanese sushi to other Asian dishes, including the spicy, hot varieties. Another brilliant effort, the **2005 Pinot Gris** was fermented in temperature-controlled tanks and saw only old French wood. It exhibits an attractive apple butter-like note intermixed with lemon honey and oranges. An excellent texture, lovely aromatics, and beautiful purity suggest this delicious, all purpose white will drink well for 1-2 years. The medium-bodied, crisp, tasty **2005**

**Sauvignon Blanc** exhibits wonderful notes of melons, dried herbs, figs, and passion fruit. The finest wine in this portfolio is the sumptuously rich, but light on its feet **2005 Tryst**, a gorgeous blend of 59% Sauvignon Blanc, 36% Semillon, and 5% Pinot Gris. A stunning effort, it offers subtle aromas of spice, honeysuckle, citrus oil, and orange marmalade. Beautiful white peach, poached pear, and honey characteristics emerge from the **2003 Unwooded Chardonnay**. Richly fruity, with terrific purity, and a heady finish, it is best consumed over the next 1-2 years. The previous two wines are [unreal bargains](#).

While Nepenthe continues to work on its Pinot Noir and Tempranillo program, I am less enthusiastic about those cuvees than I am about its finest red wine, the **2003 The Rogue**. A blend of 59% Cabernet Sauvignon, 22% Merlot, and 19% Shiraz, this is an attractive bistro-styled red revealing plenty of mocha, berry, earth, pepper, and plum characteristics. Drink this tasty red over the next 3-4 years.

## PEARSON VINEYARDS

PEARSON VINEYARDS	2004	CABERNET FRANC	CLARE VALLEY	\$32	RED	92
PEARSON VINEYARDS	2004	CABERNET SAUVIGNON	CLARE VALLEY	\$37	RED	92+

An artisanal winemaker dedicated to producing small lots for 50-year-old Cabernet Franc and Cabernet Sauvignon vines, Jim Pearson established this operation in 1993. He appears to be content to fashion two wines that have the potential to be very long-lived. I would love to come back to these Cabernets in 10-15 years to see what they are doing. Blueberries, violets, earth, graphite, and spice aromas jump from the glass of the **2004 Cabernet Franc** (5% Cabernet Sauvignon is included in the

blend). Aged in 3-year old French 300 liter hogsheads for two years, this fragrant, intense, Bordeaux-like effort exhibits sweet tannin, a beautiful texture, and an impressive sense of elegance as well as complexity. Drink it over the next 10-15 years. The deep ruby/purple-tinted **2004 Cabernet Sauvignon** offers smoky notes of graphite, black currants, cedar, and underbrush. Full-bodied, moderately tannic, pure, and natural tasting, this beauty should at its finest between 2008-2020+.

## ROCKBARE

ROCKBARE	2003	BAROSSA BABE	BAROSSA VALLEY	\$34	RED	94
ROCKBARE	2005	CHARDONNAY	MCLAREN VALE	\$16	WHITE	92
ROCKBARE	2004	SHIRAZ	MCLAREN VALE	\$17	RED	90

RockBare was only founded in 2000, but I love these offerings made by Tim Burvill, who seems to have a Midas touch when it comes to producing rich, concentrated, complex wines. The remarkable **2005 Chardonnay** sells for a song. It sees about 40% malolactic and includes 13% Semillon in the blend. A flamboyant perfume of lemon blossom, flowers, orange marmalade, and white peaches is followed by a wine with great weight in the mouth, gorgeous acidity, beautiful freshness, and a long, heady finish. This terrific Chardonnay blew me away. It should drink well for 1-3 years. Another beautiful, pure, intense,

concentrated effort is the **2004 Shiraz**. A deep ruby/purple color is accompanied by aromas of mocha, white chocolate, black cherries, and cassis. This full-bodied, opulent, gorgeous Shiraz can be enjoyed over the next 5-6 years. The stunning **2003 Shiraz Barossa Babe** (100% Shiraz) is a big, thick, quintessential Barossa Shiraz offering notes of licorice, toasty new oak, blackberry jam, chocolate, and spice box. Offering oodles of glycerin and power (16.6% alcohol) as well as long, 40+ second finish, this heady cuvee is produced primarily from a 140-year-old vineyard. It should drink well for 15 or more years.

## THE DON

THE DON	2003	SHIRAZ CRYSTAL HILL
THE DON	2002	SHIRAZ CRYSTAL HILL
THE DON	2001	SHIRAZ CRYSTAL HILL
THE DON	2004	SHIRAZ TRUST

I'll keep my notes on these wines brief since the production of each cuvee is microscopic (less than 100 cases each). Winemaker Don Lewis worked for many years as the chief winemaker at Mitchelton, and The Don is his personal project. All of these wines, which come from ancient gravelly ironstone and quartz soils of Victoria, are brilliant efforts boasting considerable aging potential of 10-15+ years. The **2004 Shiraz Trust** (96% Shiraz and 4% Viognier) exhibits a floral, sexy, exotic bouquet displaying loads of black fruits intermixed with spring flower garden character. Rich, full-bodied, and intense, it should be consumed over the next 7-10 years.

VICTORIA	\$143	RED	93
VICTORIA	\$143	RED	96
VICTORIA	\$143	RED	91
VICTORIA	\$44	RED	91

The deep ruby/purple-hued **2001 Shiraz Crystal Hill** offers sweet aromas of espresso roast, *pain grillé*, chocolate, blackberries, and cassis. Remarkably, it is a blend of 86% Shiraz, 10% Tempranillo, and 4% Viognier. Drink it over the next decade. The finest wine of this quartet is the **2002 Shiraz Crystal Hill**, a prodigious effort offering amazing fruit, texture, and concentration. In addition to its fruit, glycerin, and intensity, it reveals a striking definition as well as minerality. It should age nicely for 10-15 years. The **2003 Shiraz Crystal Hill** is not quite up to the level of the 2002, but it does reveal a similar character. All of these cuvées possess striking minerality as well as floral, black fruit-scented bouquets, and big, structured, intense palates.