

James Halliday - Best wineries Best wineries of the regions

I have explained the rationale for the ratings in the 'How to use the Companies' section (page 49). For the record, 12.5% of wineries received 5 stars.

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| BAROSSA VALLEY | Peter Lehmann |
| Barossa Valley Estate | Rockford |
| Charles Melton | Saltram |
| Craneford | Seppelt |
| Deutsche Wines | Soul Growers |
| Gibson Barossavale | Spatzies |
| Glanville Wines | St Hallett |
| Grant Shiraz | St John's Road |
| Haas Wines | Thorn-Clarke Wines |
| John David Wines | Torbreck Vintners |
| Kaiser Wines | Trevel Jones/ |
| Langmeil Winery | Kellermeister |
| Laughing Jack | Turkey Flat |
| Leo Paring | Wolf Blass |
| LIEBICH WEIN | Yalumba |
| Mount Tootellen | |
| Orlando | |
| Penfolds | |



Darkie Shiraz

winestate

Liebich The Darkie Barossa Valley Shiraz 2002 ★★★1/2

Aromas of ripe licorice and aniseed - a traditional Baros style. Nice tannin structure adds a savoury note to the palate. \$42

winestate051

Liebich The Darkie Barossa Valley Shiraz 2003 ★★★★★

Big, dense, ripe style - all chocolaty and spicy. Nice primary fruit characters on the nose. Big, rich and jammy on the palate with nice minty hints. \$40

Lofty Cabernet Sauvignon

advertiser020403



Liebich
The Lofty Barossa
Cabernet Sauvignon
2001
92 points
14.4 per cent alcohol
Available direct,
ph: 8524 4543
\$35

LIEBICH means "I love", which is exactly what you'll find yourself doing to this traditional cabernet from the old Liebich block at Rowland Flat. The dead-arm disease ensures the most intensely flavoured minimal yields, and the Liebich family's unwavering attitude to old values in the winery ensures those ancient flavours get right through to your glass.

FOOD: Sauerkraut with steamed, smoked Barossa wursts.

winestate

Liebich The Lofty Barossa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon 2002 ★★★★★1/2

Heaps of lovely oak floods this generous wine but the beautiful dense, sweet fruit helps forgive the excessive oak. Dense, mouth-coating tannins. A fruit cake-like finish. \$34



THE LOFTY 2002
CABERNET SAUVIGNON

You want to dive deep into this dark cavern of cassis, anise and cedary oak that you get the feeling you could be lost forever. It's big in tannins, too, though there are some pretty garden herb edges to grab onto. It's a leviathan, though well toned and impressive.

94 points cork

Leveret Shiraz

James Halliday for The Australian

Barossa's great year for shiraz



WINE
James Halliday

THIS week it is the turn of the Barossa Valley, rightly or wrongly seen as the womb of Australian shiraz.

In 2002, that vintage was seen as the best since 1996, edging ahead of 1996 thanks to the extra touch of elegance and finer tannin structure of the wines. I duly accorded it the maximum score, albeit with the caveat that all vintage ratings are outrageous generalisations.

While I noted a dismissive remark from one wine critic the other day, the 2002 wines that are now coming onto the market are overwhelmingly good when taken across the board, and some of the best are yet to be released.

So, in alpha order, here follow some of the discoveries to date. Steve Hoff established Heritage Wines in 1984, and deserves a far wider audience, having produced many excellent wines since. None, however, has been as full of promise as his 2002 Barossa Shiraz (94 points, \$27) with dense black cherry, plum and licorice, and great depth without over-extraction, or his 2002 Cabernet Sauvignon (also 94 points, \$24) with sumptuous blackcurrant, blackberry and chocolate plus fine tannins. And his super-premium Roscoe's Shiraz is yet to come! (Phone: 08 8562 2800.)

I have recently written about the superb shirazes of Kalleske Wines and Schubert. Potable, but I should also take off my hat for the Kalleske 2002 Old Vine Grenache (94 points, \$30) a concentrated, imperious mix of black fruits, moose tangy spices and sweet, American oak, notable in particular for the structure that many grenaches lack.

Kaiser Wines has released two Rhone blends, the 2002 Avignon Shiraz Grenache Mourvedre (91 points, \$30) and 2002 Bismarck Grenache Shiraz Mourvedre (90 points, \$17.50). For some strange reason it seemed to me the Avignon was driven by sweet juicy berry fruit, which I associate with grenache, and that the Bismarck had more structure and power, a feature of shiraz. (The order of the varieties in the name tells you which is dominant, which the least so.)

Here, too, the 2002 Old Vine Shiraz is yet to make its appearance, since the 2001 easily rated 94 points, the others for the 2002 are indeed auspicious.



A duet of wines from Liebich Wein continues the theme. Here my choice is not the most expensive: the 2002 Leveret Shiraz (94 points, \$22) has the rich, concentrated and ripe fruit of the vintage, with a ripple of exotic spices and bitter chocolate, closing with fine tannins. The 2002 The Darkie Shiraz (92 points, \$40) has dense impenetrable colour, and layer upon layer of black fruits and spice, and alcohol of 15.7 per cent, which seems to me to make one pass a little, but which will doubtless be appreciated by the US critics.

Penfolds' first offering from the vintage is the Bin 128 Shiraz Mourvedre Grenache (91 points, \$25). Smooth aromas of dark plum lead into an impeccably balanced palate with more of the same flavour, and great development potential over the next 10 years.

Rosevale Wines is yet another long-term grapegrower recently turned wine maker (for a small portion of its 60ha of vineyards). The 2002 Shiraz (94 points, \$28) has saturated colour, aromas and flavours, with gloriously mouthfilling, satin smooth black fruits and a great finish. The 2002 Cabernet Sauvignon (93 points, \$28) is replete with totally delicious cassis and blackcurrant fruit, soft but lingering tannins and a neat touch of French oak.

Yet another new arrival is Tim Smith, his 2002 shiraz (94 points, \$29) offers a plucky, lush cascade of sweet berry fruits, and is long and intense, tangy and lively. Sophisticated wine-making, with Cote Rotie as the model.

Whisper Wines is almost ancient, dating back to the previous century (1869). Here there is a quartet of modestly priced wines that over-deliver in no uncertain terms: 2002 Cabernet Merlot (92 points, \$19), 2002 Cabernet Sauvignon (92 points, \$21), 2002 Shiraz (90 points, \$30) and 2002 Merlot (90 points, \$23) all have fantastic fruit, all with a decade of improvement in front of them.

And then there is the Torbreck Vintners pair of the The Decorous (94 points, \$125) a stunning shiraz vigneron, and 2002 The Strife (94 points, \$46) a great shiraz by any standards.

LINKS
www.winepros.com.au

James Halliday's Guide to wine

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Liebich Wein

★★★★

Steingarten Road, Rowland Flat, SA 5352 REGION Barossa Valley
T (08) 8524 4543 F (08) 8524 4543 www.liebichwein.com.au OPEN Wed-Mon 11-5
WINEMAKER Ron Liebich EST. 1992 CASES 2500

Liebich Wein is Barossa Deutsch for 'Love I wine'. The Liebich family have been grapegrowers and winemakers at Rowland Flat since 1919, with CW 'Darkie' Liebich one of the great local characters. His nephew Ron began making wine in 1969, but it was not until 1992 that he and wife Janet began selling wine under the Liebich Wein label. Exports to the US, the UK and Germany.

★★★★ Leveret Barossa Valley Shiraz 2004. Dark but bright purple-red; a complex array of aromas and flavours, carrying the alcohol with ease, seemingly only medium-bodied; spice, blackberry, licorice, plum and dark chocolate; fine, savoury tannins. Screwcap. 15% alc. RATING 94 DRINK 2019 \$23

Advertiser Top 100

Advertiser Top 100

LEVERET 2004 SHIRAZ

One of Barossa's tiny boutiques turns in a stellar Rowland Flat red here with rich fruitcake elements in the nose turning to huge, dark plum flavours on the palate. Its got an honest old fashioned coats and ties around the fireplace personality

91 points screw cap

