



James Halliday Australian Wine Companion 2011

De Bortoli Yarra Valley ★★★★★

The quality arm of the bustling De Bortoli group, run by Leanne De Bortoli and husband Steve Webber, ex-Lindemans winemaker. The top label (De Bortoli), the second (Gulf Station) and the third (Windy Peak) offer wines of consistently good quality and excellent value – the complex chardonnay and the pinot noirs are usually of outstanding quality. The volume of production, by many times the largest in the Yarra Valley, simply underlines the quality/ value from money ratio of the wines. This arm of the business has vineyards in the Yarra Valley, and in the King Valley. Viticultural resources to one side, Steve was Gourmet Traveller Winemaker of the Year '07, recognition he thoroughly deserved. Exports to all major markets.



Reserve Release

Reserve Release Yarra Valley Chardonnay 2007

95 Points

A particularly distinguished interpretation of the Yarra Valley, oak providing no more than a fermentation medium, the grapes picked to precisely provide the stone fruit and fig flavours support by natural acidity.



Reserve Release Yarra Valley Sauvignon 2008

94 Points

A textured and (to use Webber's description) detailed wine with strong French overtones; in a different universe to conventional sauvignon blanc; the late Didier Dagenneau would approve.



Reserve Release Pinot Noir 2007

95 Points

A very expressive bouquet, with elements of spice, cedar and smoke; the palate has great length and outstanding texture, line and length; very attractive red fruits at the core.



Reserve Release Syrah 2007

94 Points

Light colour; a very expressive bouquet, almost perfumed; the palate also walks along a path of its choosing, intense yet with spicy/ savoury components; has elements of the Northern Rhône Valley in its make-up.





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Melba

Melba Reserve 2007

96 Points

Deep crimson; a cabernet blend from vineyards dating back to 1971, and has the silken polish that winemaker Steve Webber prizes so highly; no one flavour or aroma jumps out, and the line of the palate is superb.



Melba Lucia 2007

95 Points

A fragrant bouquet of cassis and black fruits, then an elegantly poised, medium-bodied palate that has particularly good line and length; a winemaker in complete command. Cabernet Sauvignon/Merlot/ Sangiovese/ Petit Verdot.



Melba Mimi (Cabernet Sauvignon Syrah Nebbiolo) 2008

94 Points

Hits all the right notes, with an understated elegance to the ensemble of black fruits, with bass notes of cedar, and fine tannins as the finale.



Gulf Station

Gulf Station Yarra Valley Chardonnay 2008

94 Points

The oak contribution has been deliberately suppressed in a subtle wine, with very harmonious fruit, oak and acidity; the flavours are ripe without threatening the elegance of the palate, nor obscuring its length.



Gulf Station Yarra Valley Pinot Noir 2008

94 Points

A serious pinot at this price, aromatic and spicy, with excellent texture and structure; the flavours half way between plum and cherry, and a savoury finish; subtle oak.



Gulf Station Yarra Valley Shiraz Viognier 2008

93 Points

Typically bright and lifted red cherry aromas and flavours; superfine tannins lengthen the finish, as does the French oak. Seductive style.





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Estate Grown

Estate Grown Yarra Valley Chardonnay 2008

94 Points

Bright colour; has a very fragrant and fresh bouquet, doubtless thanks in part to its low alcohol; the resulting delicate fruit has been protected from new oak; has early picking has been taken a little too far?

Estate Grown Yarra Valley Sauvignon 2008

93 Points

no review given, just a rating.

Estate Grown Yarra Valley Viognier 2008

92 Points

no review given, just a rating.

Estate Grown Yarra Valley Shiraz Viognier 2008

96 Points

Bright, clear crimson; a fragrant bouquet of red and black fruits, then a captivating burst of energy and intensity to the beautifully weighted palate, the tannin texture exemplary.

Estate Grown Yarra Valley Pinot Noir 2008

95 Points

Clear colour; a fragrant and pure bouquet has distinct Burgundain overtones, the palate showing all the precision that Steve Webber works so hard to achieve, and remarkable for its length.

Estate Grown Yarra Valley Syrah 2008

94 Points

Bright hue; a highly floral and fragrant bouquet with spicy dark berry aromas, then a long palate with strong spicy/ savoury nuances from the inclusion of whole bunches in the ferment.

Estate Grown Yarra Valley Shiraz Viognier 2007

90 Points

no review given, just a rating.





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Rococo

Rococo Yarra Valley Blanc de Blancs

90 Points

no review given, just a rating.



Windy Peak

Windy Peak Pinot Noir Chardonnay NV

89 Points

Good mousse, and salmon-pink colour; obvious care in selection of base wine, most from the Yarra Valley; the strawberry fruit notes are, of course, pinot-derived, backed up by citrusy acidity.



Windy Peak Chardonnay 2008

92 Points

Bright pale green; has vibrantly juicy grapefruit and stone fruit flavours, which have largely absorbed the barrel ferment inputs; very elegant wine.



Windy Peak Sangiovese 2008

89 Points

Bright hue for sangiovese; doubtless primarily from the King Valley; light-bodied, with cherry fruit neatly balanced by tropical tannins.





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De Bortoli Riverina ★★★★★

Famous among the cognoscenti for its superb Noble One, which in fact accounts for only a minute part of its total production, this winery turns around low-priced varietal and generic wines that are invariably completely made and equally invariably provide value for money. These come in part from estate vineyards, but also from contract-grown grapes. The rating is in part a reflection of the exceptional value for money offered across the range. Exports to all major markets.



Fortifieds

Noble One 2008

95 Points

Bright yellow-gold; the vast experience of De Bortoli with this style results in a wine with the rich, opulent and sweet fruit balanced by the acidity missing from lesser wines; cumquat, mandarin, honey and vanilla are all part of the package.

Noble One 2007

95 Points

Brilliant green-gold; has all the luscious intensity expected, ranging through citrus, cumquat and vanilla bean, yet is not over the top. Its best features are its balance, line and extreme length, similar to that of the '02.



Montage

Montage Semillon Sauvignon Blanc 2009

88 Points

De Bortoli seems best able to create surprises with wines under \$10; the lemony/grassy semillon has considerable thrust and intensity, carrying the light tropical characters of the sauvignon blanc along in its wake.



Montage Cabernet Merlot 2008

87 Points

Fresh, clear red-purple; a light-bodied, well-balanced wine with good varietal expression of black fruits and plums; impossible to expect more at this price.





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Deen Vat Series

Deen Vat 2 Sauvignon Blanc 2009

88 Points

Well priced given its generous tropical/passionfruit aromas and flavours, then the crisp finish.



Deen Vat 7 Chardonnay 2008

88 Points

Has that extra bit of elegance that lifts it out of the ruck, some oak maturation adding to the texture, not the flavour.



Deen Vat 6 Verdelho 2008

87 Points

Punches above its weight, with positive tropical fruit aromas and flavours on a generous palate.



Deen Vat 1 Durif 2008

90 Points

Deep crimson-purple; this simply has to be one of the most durable and flexible red varieties in the world, it keeps its colour and rich plummy fruit regardless of how and where it is grown, or how heavily it is cropped.



Deen Vat 9 Cabernet Sauvignon 2008

87 Points

Good colour; a very well made wine at this price point, with plenty of blackcurrant and plum fruit supported by soft, fine tannins.



Sacred Hill

Sacred Hill Cabernet Merlot 2008

88 Points

Vibrant colour; juicy young fruited style; redcurrant and a touch of cedar; clean and vibrant on the finish. Has developed a few savoury characters, which add to the interest and length.



Emeri

Emeri Chardonnay Pinot Noir NV

87 Points

Best mousse; the best of the three Emeri Sparklings, which should come as no surprise; good balance to the stone fruit and citrus flavours; clean, dry finish.



DE BORTOLI
WINES





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De Bortoli Hunter Valley ★★★★★☆

De Bortoli Extended its wine empire in 2002 with the purchase of the former Wilderness Estate, giving it an immediate and significant presence in the Hunter Valley courtesy of the 26 ha of established vineyards; this was expanded significantly by the subsequent purchase of an adjoining 40 ha property. Export to all major markets.



Hunter Valley

Murphy's Vineyard Semillon 2005

95 Points

Quite a restrained and delicate bouquet, with lemon curd and anise on show; the palate is fine, almost ethereal, with crisp acidity providing a clean and focused conclusion.



Will's Hill Shiraz 2008

90 Points

no review given, just a rating.

