

MATTHEW JUKES  
100 BEST AUSTRALIAN WINES  
2022/23



T O R B R E C K

# WINERY OF THE YEAR 2022/23



**My Winery of the Year is Torbreck. Ever since Ian Hongell was appointed winemaker at Torbreck, the wines have sky-rocketed in precision, impact and detail.**

The red wines have improved beyond all expectations, and the whites have also done so. From the affordable prices to the elite collector's items wines, Torbreck pays as much attention to every wine, and it shows. The focus on the vineyards is the reason for the ramp-up in quality, and while you might expect to find Honky in the winery, you ought to walk the rows of his beloved vines first because that is where he will be. It is my honour and my privilege to announce that Torbreck is the '100 Best Australian Wines' Winery of the Year 2022/23

## 2019 THE DESCENDANT

**FROM:** Barossa Valley, South Australia  
**VARIETY:** Shiraz Viognier

My Winery of the Year has an indecent number of recommendations in this years roll-call of greats and it is led by the descendent of RunRig Shiraz / Viognier itself, cleverly entitled The Descendent! This is an utterly incredible wine that narrowly missed a perfect score by the smallest of margins. So deep, so classy and so regal this is a super-posh Torbreck Shiraz by comparison to some of the wilder wines and the more evocative wines in this portfolio and it is straight out of the elite Rhône playbook with a delicious, haunting, iodine-soaked perfume and ripple after ripple of muscular black fruit.

## 2019 RUN RIG

**FROM:** Barossa Valley, South Australia  
**VARIETY:** Shiraz

So often was so often the main wine that one turned to in this glittering portfolio, but there are so many superstars these days it seems like it has to make an extra level of effort to maintain its reputation at the top of the tree. This is not a bigger wine, but the same sized creation and the Factor. The main difference is that there are so many more layers of power, muscle and also grace. This is a monumental wine and it will be sure to rearrange your sense when you taste it.

## 2017 THE LAIRD

**FROM:** Barossa Valley, South Australia  
**VARIETY:** Shiraz

The Laird proves that super-cuvées, even in 'lesser' vintages can perform miracles. This is an insanely intense wine with gloriously powerful dark fruit countered by arresting crispness and astonishing freshness on the finish. I have never tasted The Laird with such composure and completeness and it earns its place at the £500 per bottle table by virtue of its unrivalled complexity and impeccable equilibrium.

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## 2020 HILLSIDE VINEYARD GRENACHE

**FROM:** Barossa Valley, South Australia  
**VARIETY:** Grenache

Comes from 1949 planted wines in the Lyndoch ward and this is a super-complex and very youthful wine with boisterous tannic under very composed and bright fruit core. There is whole bunch mintiness here that lifts everything and adds a different set of grippiness and this second battalion of scratchy invaders pinch the palate further, bringing yet more technical excellence to this fascinating wine. There is no doubt that Hillside is pushing Grenache to new heights in Barossa.



## 2019 THE FACTOR

**FROM:** Barossa Valley, South Australia  
**VARIETY:** Shiraz

Incredible black ink, blackberry, lead pencil and granite aromas. Hints of spearmint. Bark and mushroom, too. Deep and dark with superb depth and intensity. Tight at the end but then it opens and shows a weightless sensibility. Has vineyards back to the 1900s. Drinkable but better in 2024.

## 2020 WOODCUTTER'S SHIRAZ

**FROM:** Barossa Valley, South Australia  
**VARIETY:** Shiraz

Spicy and earthy with genuine tannins and a serious stance on the palate, this is a rich wine, but it is not too heavy style such that it falls out of balance. Tobacco and black fruit notes wrestle for your attention and I have no doubt that this is the finest ever Woodcutter's Shiraz, not least because it has all the trappings of a wine that will age well, too. And, as and aside it is yet another stupendous red hovering round the £25-mark!



## 2020 THE STRUIE

**FROM:** Barossa, South Australia  
**VARIETY:** Shiraz

Uses fruit from both Barossa and Eden and this brings sooty darkness and moments of teasing chariness to the fore. There are even some Spanish-style olive notes and exoticism which layer complexity here. Challenging, youthful and feisty, the finish is a dangerous place to hang around because while it appears to offer a smooch, there I every chance The Struie will reward you with a tongue bite!

## 2020 THE STEADING

**FROM:** Barossa Valley, South Australia  
**VARIETY:** Grenache, Mourvèdre, Shiraz

Shows tremendous ripeness of Grenache which keeps a firm hold of the tiller and never tips over into allowing the black fruit tones to hog the limelight. Earth, spice and tension perfectly offset this red fruit ripeness and the tannin structure is jaw-droppingly impressive with equal parts of freshness and grip keeping all of the fruit in check.