



# TORBRECK

BAROSSA VALLEY

“The Torbreck new releases are always an exciting suite of wines to taste through, as they straddle a delicate line: they are true to their traditional Torbreck roots—the very thing that made the brand famous—in that they are lusty, powerful, full-throttle wines that represent the power and density that the Barossa (and Eden, where relevant) is capable of. However, they do so with a measure of grace and elegance.”

— ERIN LARKIN

98



## 2019 THE FOREBEAR

RATING: 98

FROM: Barossa Valley, South Australia

VARIETY: Shiraz

The 2019 The Forebear Shiraz is the inaugural release of this wine, positioned alongside the Laird. The fruit is sourced from the oldest plantings in the Hillside Vineyard in Lyndoch—12 rows planted in the early 1850s. The wine is astounding. It is inky black in its fruit spectrum, infused from all sides with gravelly tannin that feel both velvety and gritty; there's loads of chewy tannin to support the kaleidoscopic fruit, and monumental length. This is a very impressive wine, memorable and precise. I can understand why a single vineyard was made from this special parcel. So, on the nose, you get mulberry, blackberry, blueberry and ironstone, rust, blood plum, raspberry pip, aniseed, sumac and clove. The tannins splay across the palate and leave a trail of ferruginous spice in their wake, with inflections of ras el hanout, pomegranate molasses, pink peppercorns and roast beef crust. This is a whopping wine. Superb. 15% alcohol, sealed under natural cork and wax, with a black front label.

98+

## 2021 RUNRIG

RATING: 98+

FROM: Barossa Valley, South Australia

VARIETY: Shiraz, Viognier



This is the wine that people seem to lose their minds over, and just between you and me, I do understand that. It's one of a handful of super sensational Shiraz Viognier from this great country, and the ability of this cuvée to speak so eloquently of both the Barossa and its harmonious varietals is impressive to say the least. So is, while we're discussing it, the density and volume of the wine. On the nose, the 2021 RunRig is savory and meaty, with charry oak at the fore, backed by black cherry, graphite, dried rose petals, red and purple fruit, flowers and black tea. There is both detail and density. On the palate, the wine is both silky and huge. It's momentous, long and complex. It's like the volume has been turned up in every possible way, and what I know of sound mixing is on show here; it's a loud mix, but all the elements are perfectly in balance. And ultimately, that's what's up. Like Nick Cave, it's got it all, and it does it with conviction and intellect. It's a great wine, from a great season. Bigger than perhaps ever before. 15% alcohol, sealed under natural cork.

# 96+



# 96+

# 96



## 2019 THE LAIRD

**RATING:** 96+

**FROM:** Barossa Valley, South Australia

**VARIETY:** Shiraz

The 2019 The Laird is savory, earthy and dense, a true Darth Vader wine in every sense: black, firm, gently rasping, authoritative and powerful. On the nose, the wine leads with resin and kicked black dirt, pipe tobacco, charred sandalwood, blackberries and blood plum. On the palate, the wine is laden with black peppercorns and black olive brine, lashings of charcoal, black tea and every other manner of black thing (clove, arnica, salted licorice and balsamic poached strawberries). It is an eloquent product of the dry 2019 season (300 or so days without effective rain!), and ultimately, it is this that makes the wine great—its ability to express the year and the vineyard with such expressiveness is thrilling. Actually, going back to the wine now, it is opening up (it was poured straight from bottle without decanting) and becoming more fleshy, defined by Satsuma plum and mulberry and detailed aromatically. This wine will evolve gracefully over the years. 15.5% alcohol, sealed under natural cork and wax.

## 2022 THE STEADING

**RATING:** 94+

**FROM:** Barossa Valley, South Australia

**VARIETY:** Grenache, Shiraz, Mataro

The 2022 The Steading is juicy, fleshy and aromatically abundant. It is routinely a reliably satisfying wine, and it has been ever since I started drinking wine. Framed by this fine, fresh, late vintage, the Steading looks better than ever, with raspberry, licorice, mulberry, star anise and a hint of aniseed. Super! 15% alcohol, sealed under natural cork and wax.

## 2021 THE FACTOR

**RATING:** 96+

**FROM:** Barossa Valley, South Australia

**VARIETY:** Shiraz

The 2021 The Factor is a blend of vineyard sites (Krondorf, Rowland Flat, Greenock and Marananga) and is 100% Shiraz (Syrah). On the nose, it offers a complete vision of Barossa Shiraz—chewy, supple, spicy, big, expansive and voluminous. It has a way of being both structural and inviting and flows long through the finish. This is a very good wine here, classy, comforting and evocative, and while silky, it's also pleasingly regional. The tannins are gently chewy through the finish, which I like very much. Good! 15.5% alcohol, sealed under natural cork and wax.

## 2021 THE PICT

**RATING:** 96

**FROM:** Barossa Valley, South Australia

**VARIETY:** Mataro

The 2021 The Pict Mataro is a svelte, spicy thing, totally evocative and earthy. The fruit is from a 1901 planting, planted in the middle of a paddock. "There's sheep and one tree. And some rocks," says winemaker Ian Hongell. Mulberry compote, pink peppercorn, red earth, salted licorice and black olive brine, the palate is built around a core of red fruit; it has clarity and poise, which is saying something great in a wine that is a) 100% Mataro (a.k.a. Mourvèdre) and b) a wine with as much volume as this. It's awesome. Really good. Brilliant in this fine vintage. 14% alcohol, sealed under natural cork and wax.

## 2021 DESCENDANT

**RATING:** 96

**FROM:** Barossa Valley, South Australia

**VARIETY:** Shiraz Viognier

The 2021 Descendant is often termed as the "Baby Runrig," which, as we all know, is a bit of a myopic way to view things, but it gets the point across. This is Shiraz fermented on Viognier skins (8% by weight, no liquid) and decidedly floral on the nose, with marmalade and orange peel, pink peppercorns and blood plums. The wine is dense and velvety, with loads of tannin; the Viognier, while contributing floral aromatics, textural silk and flow, also contributes tannin, and it is felt here. There is no new oak, which helps with the tannin expression and core of red and purple fruit. The signature Barossan red dirt and ironstone show through the finish. It's really good! Excellent wine. 15% alcohol, sealed under cork and wax.

## 2022 THE STRUIE

**RATING:** 96

**FROM:** Barossa, South Australia

**VARIETY:** Shiraz

The 2022 The Struie is composed of 79% Barossa Valley and 21% Eden Valley fruit. It is impenetrably dense in the glass and aromatic and rich in the mouth. It's totally concentrated with impressive flavor penetration on the palate. This is an epic wine, as usual, and at \$55 AUD, it represents sensational premium Barossa Shiraz drinking. It's all velvet and volume, with detail and varietal definition. It could only come from one place on the planet, as it speaks as much to its red dirt origins as it does to the variety, Shiraz. 15% alcohol, sealed under cork and wax.



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### 2022 THE GASK

**RATING:** 95

**FROM:** Eden Valley, South Australia

**VARIETY:** Shiraz

The 2022 The Gask is all Eden Valley fruit and is picked later than the valley floor, generally a month or so later. The soils are granite, sand and quartz at 450 meters above sea level and irrigated by rain only. Inky intense on the nose here, the wine is an impenetrable beast, but it does so with elegance. The fruit is ripe to the point of moving into savory, with dark chocolate and cocoa, salted licorice, roast beef crust, cracked black peppercorns, blueberry and blackberry, aniseed and blood plum. This is an epic, dark, midnight wine here, brooding and intense. 15% alcohol, sealed under natural cork and wax.

### 2022 CUVÉE JUVENILES

**RATING:** 91+

**FROM:** Barossa Valley, South Australia

**VARIETY:** Grenache Mourvèdre Shiraz

The 2022 Cuvee Juveniles is lipstick pink and lusty and fresh, with savory spice and black cherry in profusion. There is kirsch and peppercorns, salted licorice and Satsuma plum and raspberry pip. I tasted this wine almost a year ago, and it has settled and evolved beautifully in that time. In its way, it has clarity and freshness and lovely, grippy tannins. I like it. 15% alcohol, sealed under screw cap.



### 2021 LES AMIS

**RATING:** 94

**FROM:** Barossa Valley, South Australia

**VARIETY:** Grenache

The 2021 Les Amis Grenache is spicy and wide, meaty and yet floral, with black tea, dried rose petals, graphite, roast beef crust, a hint of pastrami, blood orange and salted macadamias. The wine is shaped by charry oak (matured in barrique as opposed to Harris and Hillside foudre). This lends an altogether different angle to the wine, and I must admit, I quite like it. The oak is in the charry, bacon fat, pipe resin, tobacco spectrum, and it sits very well with the sweet, floral fruit. This is a very interesting wine here. 15% alcohol, sealed under natural cork and wax.

### 2022 HILLSIDE VINEYARD SHIRAZ ROUSSANNE

**RATING:** 91

**FROM:** Barossa Valley, South Australia

**VARIETY:** Shiraz Roussanne

The 2022 Hillside Vineyard Shiraz Roussanne is floral and yet meaty on the nose, with roast beef crust, pomegranate pearls, raspberry coulis, red dirt and ironstone, graphite and black tea. There's a lot going on here, plenty of punch. 15% alcohol, sealed under screw cap.

### 2022 THE KYLOE

**RATING:** 90

**FROM:** Barossa Valley, South Australia

**VARIETY:** Mataro

The 2022 The Kyloe is a fresh, earthy take on the bigger Pict Mataro. The wine is spicy and fulsome but light in its framing. It's a pretty wine that is "bistro" in its styling. 15% alcohol, sealed under screw cap.

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### 2022 HILLSIDE VINEYARD GRENACHE

**RATING:** 94

**FROM:** Barossa Valley, South Australia

**VARIETY:** Grenache

The 2022 Hillside Vineyard Grenache leads with black peppercorns and raspberry pip, red licorice, layers of forest berries and exotic spice, such as star anise, aniseed, sumac and the like. The wine is fresh and yet fearsome, with soft (fresh) fruit and lashings of profuse, soft tannins. At 15% alcohol, the fruit doesn't have any hint of desiccation; it remains bright and vibrant but with quite a bit of depth. Sealed under natural cork and wax.

### 2022 HARRIS VINEYARD GRENACHE

**RATING:** 92

**FROM:** Barossa Valley, South Australia

**VARIETY:** Grenache

The 2022 season was later than 2021, with very similar temperature range. There was rain at the end of the 2022 season, as a defining difference, however. "The challenge for us is to achieve the Torbreck style with phenolic ripeness in a season like 2022," says winemaker Ian Hongell. So, here on the nose, the 2022 Harris Vineyard Grenache is more savory in style than the Hillside Grenache tasted beside it; here, we have roasted meat crust, pomegranate, black cherry, star anise, raspberry coulis and green olive brine. On the palate, the wine is silky and soft, in its way. It blankets the tongue, and while the Hillside is more floral, more pert, this is more sedate, more velvety, has more "flow." The fruit for this wine is grown on ironstone and clay, and this contributes density and power to the wine. This come from the northern side of the Laird hill, on the Western Ridge of the Barossa, at about 260 meters above sea level. 15% alcohol, sealed under natural cork and wax.

### 2022 WOODCUTTER'S SHIRAZ

**RATING:** 91

**FROM:** Barossa Valley, South Australia

**VARIETY:** Shiraz

The 2022 Woodcutter's Shiraz is a brilliant entrée to Barossa Shiraz. It exhibits all the earthy, red gravel, ironstone characters that infuse the tannic structure, while fleshed out by dense, purple fruit. It has levity and balance and freshness too, which is ultimately what makes it a great wine. There's gorgeous splay of spicy tannins, chewy and a little grippy. Matured for 10 months in seasoned oak, "the 2023 is coming out of oak as we speak now," says winemaker Ian Hongell. The fruit for this wine cascades down from a number of different sources within the Barossa (including Eden Valley). It's very good. 15% alcohol, sealed under screw cap.

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### 2023 CUVÉE JUVENILES BLANC

**RATING:** 93

**FROM:** Barossa Valley, South Australia

**VARIETY:** Roussanne Marsanne Clairette Grenache Blanc Viognier

The 2023 Cuvée Juveniles Blanc is sedate and driven by dry extract; it is wider than it is sweet or intense, and the flavor across the palate draws out long over the finish. This is a classy wine here, with lemongrass, chalk, pear skin and green almond. It has an intense mid-palate with very pretty flavor; it's structured like Chenin Blanc. I like it, a lot. 13% alcohol, sealed under screw cap.

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### 2023 WOODCUTTER'S ROSE

**RATING:** 92

**FROM:** Barossa Valley, South Australia

**VARIETY:** Mataro

The 2023 Woodcutter's Rosé pours a pale flamingo/onion skin in the glass and leads with a surprisingly earthy nose; it smells almost reductive, and the response I get is, "Mataro...?" (100%, if you were wondering...) I tend to agree. This is all width and spice, earth and density, with an upper register of mulberry, red apple, sumac, pink peppercorn and poached strawberry. I hate comparisons, but they're handy for context; this has a real Provençal mid-palate—spicy and weighty and fleshy and savory, with a fresh little flick of acid through the finish. It's bone dry but fleshy. Good! 13.5% alcohol, sealed under screw cap.

### 2023 WOODCUTTER'S SEMILLON

**RATING:** 92

**FROM:** Barossa Valley, South Australia

**VARIETY:** Semillon

The 2023 Woodcutter's Semillon is grassy and fine on the nose—herbaceous and pretty but textural and grippy in its way—with green apple, lychee, hay, straw, cut grass, lemongrass, lime brûlée and chalk. This is really good; it's kind of enveloping on the mid-palate. Good! Fine. 13.5% alcohol, sealed under screw cap.



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