

The Reviews – 2002 Shiraz

Robert Parker Junior Tasting Notes: 2002 Sanguine Estate Heathcote Shiraz
The Wine Advocate Issue 148 (23/08/2003) **92 out of 100**

While there are some notable exceptions (Wild Duck for example), I am generally not as impressed with Shiraz from Heathcote as that from Barossa and McLaren Vale. Sanguine's 2002 Shiraz is another exception. A beautifully made wine, it reveals a spicy perfume of cloves, incense, Allspice, espresso roast, and black as well as red fruits. Singularly styled and medium to full-bodied, with powerful tannin, and that distinctive earthiness found in offerings from this region, it should drink well for 10 to 12 years.

Vintage Direct Newsletter

2002 SANGUINE ESTATE HEATHCOTE SHIRAZ

Region: Heathcote, Victoria - Australia

98 out of 100

Australian Shiraz has firmly established itself as one of the world's great wines, and arguably the best examples are grown in the Barossa Valley, McLaren Vale and Heathcote. That is not to say that other areas such as Great Western, Clare Valley, Yarra Valley or Margaret River produce inferior wines, but rather that the three great districts are home to Australian wine icons such as PENFOLDS GRANGE, HENSCHKE HILL OF GRACE and JASPER HILL. No doubt each district will argue vigorously that its Shiraz is the quintessential expression of the variety and terroir – that's a good debate.

Until recently Heathcote has kept a relatively low profile as a district, yet two of its wines have captured the world's imagination – Wild Duck Creek and Jasper Hill. Today the district is quietly expanding, the big companies such as BRL Hardy, Southcorp, Beringer Blass, Brown Brothers and Tyrrell's all have a major presence. There are hundreds of acres coming on stream and for the first time it may be possible to purchase Heathcote Shiraz on a more regular basis – we know that the International buyers are well pleased! A number of small to medium sized vineyards have sprung up over the last decade, many just starting to make their market presence felt. These new vineyards include Whistling Eagle, Barnadown Run, Tatiarra, Mount Burrumboot and Tooleen Estate to name a few.

The Cambrian Earth has become the most prized of soil profiles, existing in a long double band starting South of Heathcote and extending some 35km to the North of Colbinabbin. It is these 500 million year old volcanic soils that are the source of such exceptional Shiraz.

Sanguine Estate is one of the next generation of winemakers, having planted 55 acres of vines. The Estate is run by the Hunter family and in true small business fashion, Mum, Dad and the kids are involved. The Hunters were quick to realise on the potential of the district and have positioned themselves to make exceptional wines rather than become volume producers. The 2002 release is exceptional. The dry growing conditions resulted in low crops, (less than one tonne per acre) of small highly concentrated berries. Three clones of Shiraz are grown which add complexing layers to the final wine. Fermentation is partly undertaken using wild yeast cultures, some whole berries and small bunch ferments. Again the emphasis is to build layers of complexity to the wine. Winemaker Peter Dredge uses new and old French and American oak for the maturation. The Sanguine Estate Shiraz is a classic example of the Heathcote terroir. Stocks remain limited.

THE 2002 SHIRAZ ASSURES SANGUINE ESTATE'S STANDING AS ONE OF HEATHCOTE'S GREAT VINEYARDS.

TASTING NOTE: This is the third release from Sanguine Estate and it continues to build upon its reputation as one of the regions top producers. A sensational Heathcote Shiraz. Totally opaque black purple colour. Superb nose of plum, spice, liquorice, blackberry and blackpepper. A wonderful sniff. The palate is explosive – an essay of liquorice, plum, spice and blackpepper overlaid by blood plum. Outstanding length and depth of flavours – this is the sort of Shiraz that has established Heathcote as a major producer of the variety. Fine dry tannins – perfectly matched to the fruit with exceptionally long aftertaste of spice, plum and blackpepper. Outstanding!

Cellar 3-4 years (2006-2007)

Alc/Vol: 14.5%

***Max Allen Review: The Full Bottle: 2002 Sanguine Estate Heathcote Shiraz \$35
The weekend Australian Magazine pg 35 February 7-8, 2004***

One of the most impressive of Heathcote's many new wine labels, Sanguine has only one wine at this stage, but what a wine it is. Deep black purple in the glass, it exudes the distinctive blackberry wine-gum fruit concentration you can get in reds from this part of Victoria, and finishes all spicy and savoury.