



"One of the best Commands I've tried."
96+ POINTS, ROBERT PARKER WINE ADVOCATE

*"Wears its heart on its sleeve,
but there's no shame in that when
it has a proud record of success..."*
97 POINTS, HALLIDAY WINE COMPANION

G. Elderton

BUZZ
MARCH 2020

A TRULY REMARKABLE WINE

2016 COMMAND SHIRAZ

There is no doubt in our minds that 2016 was an exceptional year for grape growing and winemaking in the Barossa. Pretty much right across the board, from dry to sweet, and from white to red, conditions were favourable for making super delicious wines.

The 2016 Command is the last wine of this vintage to be released by us; and is one of those wines that we hope

to showcase as one of the best of the Barossa for generations to come.

Made from grapes sourced exclusively from Shiraz vines on our Nuriootpa Estate vineyard (which turned 122 years old in 2016) as it has been since the inception of this wine in 1984. This vineyard sits on great dirt and just knows how to produce fruit at the highest level.

With deft handling in the winery and some judicious use of top-quality oak,

the Langton's listed Command is rightly regarded as an authentic Australian superstar. With some amazing scores for this new vintage shown above, and with plenty more accolades to come, we think lovers of fine Barossan wines would be crazy to not have this in their cellar.

It is certainly a wine of which the Ashmead family is immensely proud.

LABOUR OF LOVE

SMALL IN SIZE BUT HUGE IN HEART

The Ashmead Cabernet Sauvignon vineyard takes up only a small slice of the Elderton estate in Nuriootpa. It is a small plot of vines that we believe was planted in the early 1940s and they are very much showing their age. Unlike Shiraz and Grenache, Cabernet is not a variety that particularly likes getting old (Ed: I know the feeling!) anywhere around the world.

Even before Phylloxera (the horrible louse that kills vines by eating their roots) spread around the world from the USA in the 1890s, growers in Bordeaux pulled their Cabernet vines out at 40 to 45 years of age simply because their yields dropped so dramatically in old age and often due to a susceptibility to trunk diseases.

THE FIGHT TO SURVIVE

Luckily for our old vines, for the Barossa and for South Australia, we have never

had phylloxera. This is, incidentally, the reason we are reasonably militant in trying to stop tourists walking through our vineyards and potentially causing accidental infection. Our vines therefore have not been stopped in their tracks by any noxious invader, and instead stand proudly as some of the oldest and most remarkable Cabernet anywhere on the planet.

Our vines have also survived because of the water-holding red and brown clays that allow the old roots to get access to water throughout the year. And finally, they have survived, because of the Ashmead family's absolute and resolute commitment to extend the life of these remarkable but struggling vines, and in the meantime creating a wine that is slowly winning the attention and the hearts of fine wine drinkers in Australia as well as around the world.

The 2017 Ashmead Cabernet being released in this edition of the Elderton

Buzz is by no means a cheap bottle, but we believe it is value within its category and among its peers. The Ashmeads are unwavering in our belief that it stands up remarkably well against the best of the rest and proof of this is that the wine has represented Australia favourably in the Six Nations Wine Challenge on several occasions.

OUR LABOUR OF LOVE

At the core of this wine is a remarkable old vine storyline. We hope it continues to be appreciated and supported, to inspire everyone at Elderton to do everything possible to make sure the vines survive through every obstacle thrown their way – a long way into the future.

The Ashmead Cabernet is an absolute labour of love, and proudly carries our family name and crest.





VINEYARD AND WINERY UPDATE

Command vineyard, captured by Rene Kammeier

2020 - A TRICKY YEAR IN THE VINEYARD

At risk of potentially sounding like a broken record, we have endured another underwhelming winter where the rains again failed to hit historical averages. Luckily the rain that did fall was well timed, ensuring that budburst showcased some potentially impressive numbers for a fruitful harvest.

Unfortunately, it does not look like this fruitful harvest is eventuating. The early onset of heat in December combined with high winds gave us a relatively small fruit set, that will mean our yields are again down on averages.

Peter, Conrad and Steve have been hugely proactive in the vineyards, and are mulching, composting and using our scarce water resource to ensure the fruit we do get is absolutely stellar.

Veraison occurred in early February and from the small bunches of small berries we are expecting wines of great structure and flavour.

VINTAGE READY IN THE WINERY

Things are also busy in the winery, with Jules Ashmead and Brock Harrison preparing for their first vintage together! They are in charge of our assembled young crew of local and international Cellarhands, all working together to make the best wines possible.

Both Cam and Al are very excited that these two are holding the reins and know from the many tastings and planning meetings that the wines will not only continue to be the best of the Barossa, but hopefully even improve on the best we have done.



Hand-picked bunches ready to head to the winery



Pump-over on an open ferment

OUR WINES

March is a highlight in the Elderton calendar, with the release of the new vintages of Command and Ashmead. We are also releasing the 2017 Fifteen Shiraz in this edition of the Buzz. This is alongside recent new vintage releases that we've shared by email or in Cellar Door including the Neil Ashmead Grand Tourer Shiraz and Western Ridge Grenache Carignan.

We would also like to share that 2019 was a tiny vintage (less than 50% of our 'normal' production). If you are interested in our 2019 wines, please stock your cellar as the wines are released so that you do not miss out. We expect that there will be a number of months where some wines will be sold out, until the next vintage becomes available. If you have any questions about our wines, please contact our Cellar Door team on 08 8568 7878 or by email elderton@eldertonwines.com.au.

ELITE SINGLE VINEYARDS

2016 COMMAND SHIRAZ

Command is truly an expression of place, and we are proud to be the current custodians of a rare piece of Barossa Valley viticultural heritage. Single vineyard, planted 1894, the Command block is celebrating 126 years in 2020, and is considered an Ancestor vineyard by the Barossa Old Vine Charter.

Wears its heart on its sleeve, but there's no shame in that when it has a proud record of success...

97 points, Halliday Wine Companion

One of the best Commands I've tried.

96+ points, Robert Parker Wine Advocate

2017 ASHMEAD CABERNET SAUVIGNON

In 1997 the family sat down to discuss the viability of a 1944 Cabernet block - its saving grace was simply the pure brilliance of the fruit. It was, and is, always the standout Cabernet block on our Nuriootpa property. The eighteenth release of this continues our pursuit of making the Barossa's best Cabernet Sauvignon.

Full-bodied, rich and opulent...

95 points, Halliday Wine Companion

...a fine, elegant example of Barossa Cabernet.

92 points, Robert Parker Wine Advocate

2017 FIFTEEN SHIRAZ

Only 1428 bottles produced, with each bottle individually numbered and signed by Cameron and Allister Ashmead.

...full-bodied, concentrated and rich, densely packed with layers of slowly unfolding flavor, notes of cracked pepper and licorice and hints of mocha on the long finish. The fruit is from a parcel of vines planted in 1915 in the Greenock subregion of Barossa.

97 points, Robert Parker Wine Advocate

EXCEPTIONAL SITES

2016 ODE TO LORRAINE (CABERNET, SHIRAZ, MERLOT)

Named in honour of Lorraine Ashmead, co-founder of Elderton, the winemaking team at Elderton believe this is truly the hidden gem of our premium reds and one we know cellars brilliantly.

Sophisticated winemaking weaves the three varieties into a medium-bodied palate perfectly framed by oak and fine, ripe tannins.

95 points, Halliday Wine Companion

...a lot of elegance and promising to age well. A little cellaring will bring rewards. It's fresh and young and should build complexity with time. A delicious blend, benchmark for the style.

95 points, Huon Hooke

2017 NEIL ASHMEAD GRAND TOURER SHIRAZ

A tribute to an amazing individual who was always willing to push the boundaries of expectations.

...a rich, ripe blackberry aroma, the palate rich and fruit-sweet, ripe and fleshy, with a juicy middle and soft-tannin finish. Lovely wine, rounded and cuddly. Delicious.

95 points, Huon Hooke

The flavours are strongly regional...Salacious, but delicious!

94 points, Halliday Wine Companion



2017 WESTERN RIDGE SHIRAZ

Special Release Available through Cellar Door or our online shop only. With only 350 bottles still available, order yours today before you miss out!

...flamboyant, oaky aromas of vanilla, patisserie and baking spices, but there's also plenty of raspberry and mulberry fruit... finishes with attractively soft, dusty tannins and terrific length.

94 points, Robert Parker Wine Advocate

2018 WESTERN RIDGE GRENACHE CARIGNAN

It's utterly mouth-coating, though no blockbuster, sinewed and intense with tannins and oak forming a subtle and important structural element... Innovative and excellent winemaking.

96 points and rated #1 out of 34 2018 Grenache blends from SA, The Real Review

A wolf in sheep's clothing, it is at once savoury and fruity, the mouthfeel that of the grapes ex very old vines, an intangible thing.

95 points, Halliday Wine Companion

ESTATE FAMILY VINEYARDS

2017 BAROSSA SHIRAZ

You get what you come for. Blackberryed fruit flavour, coffee-cream oak, whispers of earth and a sound, satisfying finish. It's dark and bold... Reliable as ever.

92 points, Campbell Mattinson

It's medium to full-bodied, lush and creamy on the palate, with soft, dusty tannins on the finish.

91 points, Robert Parker Wine Advocate

2017 BAROSSA CABERNET SAUVIGNON

The mint-accented, medium to full-bodied 2017 Cabernet Sauvignon is a blend of Nuri and Greenock fruit. Aged in French oak, it's a quieter, less flamboyant wine than the Shiraz, with cassis, cedar and mint notes lingering on the soft, elegant finish.

90 points, Robert Parker Wine Advocate

2018 BAROSSA MERLOT

The 2018 vintage shows how superb Australian Merlot can be, showing a vibrancy and juiciness. It is cool fermented and has retained its fruit forward flavours.

2018 BAROSSA GSM

Great work at the blending table. Delicious.

95 points, The Real Review

2019 BAROSSA ROSÉ

It is hard to argue that the world isn't going through a Rosé revolution at present. Perfect for backyard barbecues through to fine dining restaurants, this is a sophisticated dry Rosé that has been wonderfully crafted to enjoy in any setting.

2019 EDEN VALLEY RIESLING

A stunning wine from a tiny vintage, this delicious wine was awarded **Gold** at the **Barossa Wine Show**. With aromas of enticing white florals and fresh lime leading to a delicious palate featuring fresh lemon zest and lime juice, with savoury nuances.

2018 EDEN VALLEY CHARDONNAY

A full and rich style with buttery peaches and cream, as well as mangoes, which really fill out the smooth, soft palate.

90 points, JamesSuckling.com

2018 BAROSSA SEMILLON

2018 gave us good conditions to make this very small batch wine, made using traditional Barossan techniques. We are working to protect and promote the history and traditions of this amazing Barossa varietal which has a very long and proud history in the Barossa Valley. Less than 20 dozen available.

2019 GOLDEN SEMILLON

With a stellar history including gongs at the 2012 South Australian Wine of the Year Awards and 2016 Best Sweet Wine at the Barossa Wine Show, this wine flies out of Cellar Door. With a palate of dried pear and apricot marmalade and a balanced acid finish, this is the perfect end to a meal.





UPCOMING EVENTS

visit our website for more details eldertonwines.com.au/upcoming-events

Tasting Australia: Elderton - Vineyard To Table

Enjoy a vineyard tour, followed by a winery tour to get a rare insight into our winemaking processes. At Cellar Door enjoy five wines matched with canapes.

First Taste of Vintage 2020 @ the winery, 25 April 2020

Join the winemaking team at the winery to celebrate, taste and discover Vintage 2020. Then sit down with the crew for a rustic, shared long table meal featuring fare cooked in our wood oven accompanied by current release Elderton Wines and a few rare bottles from the Ashmead family cellar.

Mother's Day High Tea @ Cellar Door, 10 May 2020

In collaboration with Winni from Mirror Mirror patisserie, we invite you to enjoy a decadent high tea menu featuring nine hand-crafted sweet and savoury dishes paired with a carefully selected tasting flight of five wines.

Melbourne Elderton Event, 28 May 2020

Email karli@eldertonwines.com.au to register your interest

Melbourne Good Food & Wine Show, 29-31 May 2020

Ribs & Red @ Elderton's Barrel Hall, 5 June 2020

A day when glasses are filled and fingers get sticky. It is not for the faint-hearted, but for those who like to indulge in some of the finest red wines the Barossa has to offer. Limited tickets still available.

Sydney Elderton Event, 18 June 2020

Email karli@eldertonwines.com.au to register your interest

Sydney Good Food & Wine Show, 19-21 June 2020

Adelaide Elderton Event, 7 August 2020

Email karli@eldertonwines.com.au to register your interest

Seasonal Lunch @ Cellar Door, 4 September 2020

Featuring a guest chef, Matteo Carboni from Casa Carboni in Angaston. Tickets available now.

Perth Elderton Event, 27 August 2020

Email karli@eldertonwines.com.au to register your interest

Perth Good Food & Wine Show, 28-30 August 2020

15CLUB @ Cellar Door, 17 October 2020 *invite only*

Brisbane Elderton Dinner, 22 October 2020

Email karli@eldertonwines.com.au to register your interest

Brisbane Good Food & Wine Show, 23-25 October 2020

The Elderton Tennis Classic (a Fast4 event)

@ Nuriootpa & Cellar Door, 8 November 2020

Join us for a great day of social tennis. Compete in mixed doubles to win \$1000 of wine, as well as other fun prize categories, culminating on the grass court at Cellar Door!

2021 - Elderton celebrating 40 years

Watch this space as we prepare events to celebrate our 40 years of winemaking!

MAKING GREAT WINE

In the October Buzz, we discussed that great wine comes from great fruit which comes from great vineyards (which is undeniably true). Following this, we wanted to write a piece addressing the factors, aside from great dirt and amazing vineyards, which we think contribute to a wine being classified as one of the great wines of the world – such as our Command Shiraz and Ashmead Cabernet Sauvignon.

Wine is a unique and remarkable thing, in that it connects and is connected with people and their community. It represents history and reflects talents in both art and science. Wine is all this, as well as being a delicious beverage with a true sole intention of making people happy.

WINE IS PEOPLE AND THEIR COMMUNITY

Make no mistake, people make wine. At heart, the families that make great wine are largely generational farmers who continue to make wine from their own understanding of their little piece of the earth. They are connected and committed to their community and respectful of their surroundings and environment in general.

Community is a big part of making great wine. It is rare that a great wine stands in isolation. Instead, it is likely that the community that the winemaker is a

part of has influenced and helped form the ideology of the wines they make.

In the Ashmead family, great wine is a family commitment and a responsibility to the place we love.

“The world’s greatest winemakers have a respect for history, in both the successes and the failures.”

WINE IS HISTORY

Life constantly evolves, but lessons can be learnt from the past. The world’s greatest winemakers have a respect for history, in both the successes and the failures. This allows them to be much better equipped to cope and succeed in the future, and also to be able to adapt and embrace what the seasons may provide.

We also believe that great wine is not a one off. The best producers have shown through history that they are able to attain a remarkable standard year after year much more often than those

vintages they miss.

It is remarkable that the Barossa has a very proud 180 year history of grape growing and winemaking. Continuity of this successful history is our goal.

WINE IS UNIQUE

For a wine to be considered great, it needs to have a uniqueness and have its own sense of place. Copying what others do around you or trying to make wine like somewhere else in the world does not set the precedence of great wine.

Wine needs to be genuine and come from the heart. Making wine for a purely commercial reason is never a good way to make something iconic.

SCIENCE OF WINE VS ART OF WINE

This one is a tightrope and will surely raise some debate among our readers! There is little doubt making great wine requires love and attention that is second to none. It requires a knowledge of science that ensures you are one step ahead of the game, but also an understanding that for things of beauty often a small imperfection can make a wine a touch more intriguing.

In essence, though, wine needs to be handled well at each stage from the vineyard through to bottling, to ensure that great fruit is turned into great wine!



Brock and Jules inspect the Neil Ashmead Grand Tourer Shiraz block during budburst

OUT AND ABOUT WITH ELDERTON

Send your snaps of Elderton out and about to jess@eldertonwines.com.au



1. The perfect playground at Cellar Door;
 2. Angus (3rd generation) on a recent family trip to Canada;
 3. Commander Adam with his magnum prize for winning the footy tipping last year;
 4. Sophie, Charlotte and Annabel (3rd generation) at the Elderton Christmas party;
 5. Commanders, and now in-laws, Ron and John with celebratory wine at the wedding of their children;
 6. Justin took his Elderton t-shirt on tour to Europe and we love it!;
 7. Jules, Cam, Bec and Al in a great new 2nd generation family photo;
 8. Cameron with the Barons of Barossa Grand Council at the 2020 Declaration of Vintage celebration in mid-February;
 9. The lads having fun at our staff Christmas lunch.

