



*G. Alderton*

**BUZZ**

**SEPTEMBER 2024**

## **2021 COMMAND - AN ABSOLUTE CLASSIC**

As we sit here in the magnificent Barossa Valley in the middle of an early and warm spring, it really is quite hard to not be absolutely captivated by the beauty of this region that has been growing grapes for nearly 200 years.

Sitting among a lush green carpet of native grasses and clovers, the thick and gnarled trunks of the 'Ancestor' 1894 Command Shiraz vines rise from this greenery, looking proud and utterly resplendent whilst waiting for budburst to occur.

Neil and Lorraine Ashmead rescued this vineyard from certain destruction after they purchased the very rundown and dilapidated vineyard in 1979/1980, as other grape growers were taking payment from the government to remove similar vinous treasures from the ground.

There may have been some naivety from the fledgling owners to the reality of the troubles that the Barossa faced through the late 70s and early 80s, but history will showcase how remarkable the

foresight was from the first generation of Ashmeads to put the effort into bringing this almost derelict vineyard back to its former glory and beyond.

Today, second generation owners Cameron and Allister are forging ahead in their family's fifth decade of making top notch wine from this now 130-year-old vineyard. The family are now celebrating the launch of the 35th Command Shiraz, since inception in 1984.

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## 2021 COMMAND - AN ABSOLUTE CLASSIC

The 2021 Command Shiraz is a remarkable wine, from a remarkable vintage.

A reasonable winter was followed by a wet spring and then a coolish summer. This provided perfect conditions for an immensely high-quality harvest.

Think of cracking vintages like 1986, 1992, 1998, 2002, 2010 and 2018 which have all well and truly performed beautifully over time.

Like the 2020 vintage, Jules and Brock have decreased the amount of time that the 2021 spends in 100% new American and French oak. Consequently, the release of Command is now six months earlier than historically.

The winemaking team are confident that they are now releasing a better wine that will still stand the test of time and drink beautifully at any stage in the next twenty plus years.

Don't take our word for it though, as the early press from esteemed Australian wine writers has been more glowing than ever.

Ray Jordan and Ken Gargett, who are two of the stalwarts of wine writing in Australia, are amongst the few people to try vintages back to the inaugural release of Command.

***“This provided perfect conditions for an immensely high-quality harvest.”***

They have both awarded the wine 98 points and have alluded to this release likely being the best they have ever tasted. Ken also went on to say the Command Shiraz easily sits among the finest and most prestigious of Barossa Shiraz but would also be the best value!

*“My first thought on tasting this wine was simply, wow, this might just be the very best Command Shiraz I can recall, since the very first release from 1984 (and remember, their 1996 won Best Shiraz in the World at the London International Wine and Spirit Competition). If one were to arrange a collection of the elite Barossa Shiraz, the prestige releases, this would sit with the finest and I suspect might well be the best value among them, bar none... This is the essence of Barossa Shiraz.”*

**- 98 points, Ken Gargett**

*“I'm not sure I have seen a better example of Command in all the years I have been tasting it... It is balanced on a fulcrum of power and finesse.”*

**- 98 points, Ray Jordan**

### AVAILABLE NOW

Available online or in Cellar Door. Throughout September, visit Cellar Door to taste Command and Ashmead (not generally on tasting.)

The 2021 Command Shiraz is also available in magnum (1.5L) and 6L bottles. Contact Cellar Door for more details.



***“...WOW,  
this might just be  
the very best  
Command Shiraz  
I can recall...”***

**- Ken Gargett**



## ASHMEAD - AN OFT UNSUNG HERO OF THE BAROSSA

It is undeniable that the Ashmead family absolutely love Cabernet and Cabernet blends.

Our first release of Elderton Cabernet Sauvignon was in 1983, which was our second vintage and the year the vineyard was devastated by a one in 200-year flood!

Then 9 years later, the 1992 vintage won the Jimmy Watson Trophy – bringing Elderton to the forefront of every Australian wine lover's taste buds.

It was this same year that our family introduced the Cabernet Shiraz Merlot blend to the world, which is now lovingly known as Ode to Lorraine.

Finally, Ashmead Cabernet Sauvignon was added in 1998, to represent the absolute best of the best of Barossa old vine Cabernet Sauvignon.

On 1 September we happily launched the 22nd release of this wine - and what a wine it is!

Produced exclusively from a single block of vines planted in the early-to-mid 1940s, this is a vineyard that has struggled to produce a reasonable

*“Vibrant and bright  
with the capacity  
for extended  
cellaring.”  
- Ray Jordan*



quantity of grapes for over 30 years. What this vineyard lacks in quantity, it overcompensates with outstanding quality.

With this vineyard now being an octogenarian, it is among the oldest and rarest old vine Cabernet on the planet.

Early reviews of this 2022 release have been glowing. 95 points from Halliday was a pretty good start, mirrored by Ray Jordan mentioning, “Elegant and restrained” and “vibrant and bright, with the capacity for extended cellaring.”

Ken Gargett commented, “A rich and powerful Cabernet from a very fine year... A superbly crafted wine...”

It is the Elderton team's desire that Cabernet gets more attention and recognition from wine drinkers all over the globe.

Our family certainly believe it belongs. We will continue to farm this vineyard with world's best practices and hope you enjoy this beautiful old vine Barossa Cabernet as much as we all do.

Available now, online or in Cellar Door.



# OUR WINES

If you have questions about our wines, please contact our Cellar Door team on 08 8568 7878.

## ELITE SINGLE VINEYARDS

### 2021 COMMAND SHIRAZ \*NEW VINTAGE\*

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.

*My first thought on tasting this wine was simply, wow, this might just be the very best Command Shiraz I can recall...*

**98 points, Ken Gargett, winepilot.com**

*I'm not sure I have seen a better example of Command in all the years I have been tasting it...*

**98 points, Ray Jordan, winepilot.com**

### 2022 ASHMEAD CABERNET SAUVIGNON \*NEW VINTAGE\*

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.

*...elegant and restrained, yet you know those 78-year-old cabernet vines will deliver plenty as it ages...Vibrant and bright with the capacity for extended cellaring.*

**95 points, Ray Jordan, winepilot.com**

*A rich and powerful Cabernet from a very fine year... Good concentration, the structure offers direction and focus, with power and a firm, long finished. A superbly crafted wine,*

**94 points, Ken Gargett, winepilot.com**

### 2022 HELBIG 1915 SHIRAZ

Only 1414 bottles produced, from the 1915 Shiraz block at our Greenock vineyard. Magnums also available.

*It's no wallflower and is a wine for those who seek power and sheer grunt and ripeness. Pop it away safely.*

**96 points, Dave Brookes, Halliday Wine Companion**

## EXCEPTIONAL SITES

### 2021 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.

*Beautiful wine with intense blackcurrant pastille, cedar, vanilla aromas with hints of panforte... Builds up firm with seductive juicy dark berry fruits and savoury complexity.*

**95 points, The Vintage Journal Barossa Guide 2023 by Andrew Caillard MW and Angus Hughson**

*...sense of elegance as the wine flows across the palate finishing long and fruit pure.*

**94 points, Dave Brookes, Halliday Wine Companion**

### 2022 NEIL ASHMEAD GRAND TOURER SHIRAZ

A tribute to an amazing individual who was always willing to push the boundaries of expectations. Neil drove firelessly from city to city with a car loaded with wine, doing tastings and dinners with whoever would listen, and generally spruiking the Barossa. It was his love of fast cars that made this pursuit a little easier, thus the unusual choice for the name of this Shiraz.

**Gold Medal, Royal Melbourne Wine Show 2023**

*Full bodied yet energetic and vital with deep, pure fruit, a tight, fine tannin frame and a regional thumbprint that is long and true.*

**94 points, Dave Brookes, Halliday Wine Companion**

*In the mouth, the wine is supple and spicy, loaded with red and black fruit flavor and lit up by a constellation of exotic spice. This is delicious drinking here, really good.*

**94 points, Erin Larkin, Robert Parker Wine Advocate**

### 2021 ASHMEAD FAMILY RESERVE ANCESTOR VINE SHIRAZ

**\*CELLAR DOOR & MAILING LIST ONLY\***

*A wine that celebrates the Ashmead family's 40th harvest...*

**95 points, Dave Brookes, Halliday Wine Companion**

*It's full-bodied, rippling with tannin and chewy grip, still tastes fresh and lively, even though its a wine of heft with the volume turned up to eleven... It'll be nectar to lovers of this style in the years to come. **95 points, Gary Walsh, The Wine Front***



# ESTATE FAMILY VINEYARDS

## 2022 BAROSSA SHIRAZ \*NEW VINTAGE\*

A heady waft of ripe red berries and a freshly mown meadow framed by eucalyptus trees sets the stage for a grand red berry entrance – plush, opulent and proud. This has rich redcurrant and blackberry speaking in a loud, clear voice, with the solid fruit platform propelled by a firm acid seam. It finishes tight, aided by a cluster of fine-grained tannins, which suggests a long, fruitful life in the cellar.

**94 points, David Sly, Decanter (Vintage report Barossa 2022)**

## 2022 BAROSSA CABERNET SAUVIGNON \*NEW VINTAGE\*

This is splendidly fruited and varietally expressive, showing cassis, violet, thyme, game and assorted nut aromas on the nose. The palate delivers terrific weight and fleshy texture, wonderfully framed by finely infused tannins, finishing sturdy and robust.

**94 points, Sam Kim, Wine Orbit**

The brightness and juicy energy of this Barossa vintage has been beautifully captured in this pure and expressive cabernet. Blackcurrant and swirling chocolate and juicy plum to open on the nose. Then the palate delivers its vibrant fruit load with a refreshing purity and energy. It's succulent and juicy but with structure and poise. **92 points, RayJordan**

## 2023 BAROSSA MERLOT

This Merlot has great fruit vitality with a lovely fine line of tannin to balance, adding a serious note to the finish.

**Jules Ashmead & Brock Harrison, winemaker notes**

## 2022 BAROSSA GSM

**Gold Medal, Royal Adelaide Wine Show**

The conversation here is less about the carpentry and more about the fruit, which just so happens to be super fragrant and pure... **93 points, Dave Brookes, Halliday Wine Companion**

I really enjoyed this modern expression of Barossan Grenache blend. It showed that natural generosity of fruit seen in quality Grenache but also impressive underlying complexity that will build over time. **92 points, Angus Hughson, WinePilot**

## 2024 EDEN VALLEY RIESLING \*NEW VINTAGE\*

For our 2024 Eden Valley Riesling, we blended the vibrant character of our Craneford vineyard with the austere depth and remarkable drive from our new Mengler Hill site. The resulting blend of the two parcels demonstrates how Mengler fruit enhances our Riesling, adding to the fragrance of our Craneford vineyard while giving the wine a more serious edge and layers of complexity. This blend promises to deliver a unique and compelling expression of Eden Valley Riesling.

## 2023 EDEN VALLEY CHARDONNAY

As a single site wine, our Eden Valley Chardonnay will always show typicity of the vineyard, whilst varying with what each season brings. We are on a constant learning journey adapting to what the season brings.

*This vintage showcases fresh lemon citrus and white peach, subtleties of rockmelon, with a soft supportive acid and enticing crème brulee texture. The well integrated toasty oak profile carries the delicate fruit across the palate to seamless finish.*

**Jules Ashmead & Brock Harrison, winemaker notes**

## 2022 GOLDEN SEMILLON \*LAST STOCKS EVER\*

Our Golden Semillon is not produced every year - only when vintage conditions are considered favourable for a later harvest of our Semillon, allowing the development of the unique characters required in this luscious style.







Command Shiraz at budburst

## WINERY AND VINEYARD UPDATE

### VINTAGE 2024 WRAP FROM JULES

Despite the mild conditions of 2023, spring 2023 didn't arrive with abundant rainfall.

Budburst came upon us quickly, and much to the delight of some rogue sheep who were able to snack on a few early shoots in the season! Fear not, gates were promptly shut and the sheep were back to their grass.

Early season we needed to respond quickly to water demand with the sudden surge in active shoot growth. Getting water at depth was crucial to establishing a healthy canopy and hence crop load. Careful canopy management incorporating shoot thinning and catch wires helped to stabilize the vines and allow for some sun penetration to growing bunches without over exposing fruit.

Maturity wise, the season was far from normal. Yields were harder to predict as a result of the early start and varied water demands, coupled with a longer than usual flowering period. We had a single hot burst in the middle of March after which our unharvested blocks took

a few days to bounce back. Otherwise, mild temperatures prevailed giving us the luxury of easy harvest planning.

We are really happy with the quality from vintage 2024, low yielding with some really exceptional wines. Grenache is a standout, from both Greenock and Mengler Hill. Riesling and Cabernet Sauvignon also super. Shiraz is very solid, with an amazing fruit depth and length of tannin. We have so many delicious small parcels of Shiraz that it is impossible to pick favourites as yet! Our Chardonnay is still in oak and promising to be delicious, ready for bottling towards the end of this year.

### IN THE VINEYARD

Despite decent rainfall in late July, it was such a dry winter, with only 32% of our 10 year average rainfall to the end of July. This meant we were irrigating throughout winter to ensure the vines have enough water as they came out of dormancy.

We've been establishing a permanent sward cover crop in the mid-rows at Nuriootpa with a blend of grasses, medics and clovers. These shade out

weeds in the mid-row and supply most of the nitrogen the vines need when we mow them.

In June Conrad planted over 300 natives behind cellar door. This is on top of what we've already established along the fence line around the young cabernet blocks. There are several different trees, shrubs, grasses and ground covers, which will encourage beneficial insects, birds (that don't feed on grapes) and pollinators.

Over the next couple of years we will continue to expand on these plantings so there are connected strips throughout the vineyard acting as a wildlife corridor around the site.

We look set for an exceedingly early budburst across all four vineyards, with Greenock emerging mid-August.

We finished pruning at Greenock and Mengler Hill in mid-July and moved onto Nuriootpa in late July with Craneford pruned last. We prune Nuriootpa and Craneford late as it inhibits budburst on the lower buds that are left after pruning, so they are protected for more of the frost period.



# COMMANDERS HONOUR ROLL

Making great wine is what we do, but sharing our wine with people who appreciate what we do and continue to contribute to our success is truly remarkable.

In 2012, we decided that it would be great to acknowledge our most loyal customers, with the introduction of the Elderton Commanders.

Commanders receive great rewards including:

- First access to new vintage Command Shiraz and Ashmead Cabernet Sauvignon
- Exclusive access to museum releases
- Priority invitation to special events at the winery or your capital city of residence, including Commander special pricing for event tickets
- Access to the Commander Concierge service
- 20% discount on current release Estate and Exceptional Sites wine ranges via Commander login on the website
- One complimentary night in the Elderton Guest House, in Nuriootpa
- Complimentary, structured Masterclass at Elderton's Cellar Door, for up to six people

We take this opportunity to acknowledge this year's 10 year Commanders:

|                   |                |
|-------------------|----------------|
| Gordon Hill       | Ross McKay     |
| Steven Keyser     | David Cross    |
| Neil Willoughby   | Ashley Tiplady |
| Len & Judy Conway |                |

Thank you for your continued support of our family business!

# UPCOMING EVENTS

Please visit our website for more details on each of these upcoming events:

## **New vintage Command Vertical Tastings @ Cellar Door Daily throughout September**

Enjoy a hosted tasting of four vintages (2018-2021) of Command Shiraz in a private tasting room at our Barossa Valley Cellar Door. Book via our website.

## **Brisbane dinner - 24 October 2024**

Join the waitlist by emailing [karli@eldertonwines.com.au](mailto:karli@eldertonwines.com.au)

## **Brisbane Good Food & Wine Show - 25-27 October 2024**

## **Retrospective Tasting @ Cellar Door - 2 November 2024**

Join the waitlist by emailing [jodhi@eldertonwines.com.au](mailto:jodhi@eldertonwines.com.au)

## **Blush + Bloom @ Cellar Door lawns - 9 November 2024**

Small Victories Wine Co are teaming up with Seppeltsfield Road Distillers to host a spring garden party with wine, gin and cocktails. More details on [smallvictorieswine.com/events](http://smallvictorieswine.com/events).

## **15CLUB lunch (invite only) - save the date - 1 March 2025**

## **Barossa Vintage Festival - 23-27 April 2025**

## **Helbig Retrospective Tasting @ Cellar Door - 17 May 2025**

Celebrating the release of the 2023 Helbig 1915 Shiraz, taste six vintages of Helbig 1915 Shiraz in this intimate tasting. Bookings are open online.

## **Melbourne Good Food & Wine Show - 30 May-1 June 2025**

## **Ribs & Red @ our barrel hall - save the date - 6 June 2025**

## **Sydney Good Food & Wine Show - 20-22 June 2025**



Brock and Jules in the Old Vine Shiraz that forms part of the Neil Ashmead Grand Tourer Shiraz



# OUT AND ABOUT WITH ELDERTON

Send your snaps of Elderton out and about to [jess@eldertonwines.com.au](mailto:jess@eldertonwines.com.au)



1. Shane received a special birthday present recently - happy birthday to you, Shanel! 2. Steve and Paul enjoying a bottle of Command Shiraz; 3. Our Ashmead Cabernet Sauvignon travels the world, enjoyed earlier this year in Switzerland; 4. Corey and Heather, visitors from Texas, with Jodhi at Cellar Door; 5. Matt and his mother Lorraine celebrated her birthday with a bottle of Ode to Lorraine; 6. Cameron and Conrad hosted a vineyard tour with some visitors from Sydney in July, pictured here in the Helbig 1915 Shiraz vineyard block at Greenock; 7. Cam with Mitch Docker at the launch of our collab wine with Mitch's podcast Life in the Peloton at the MAAP store in Melbourne; 8. Brock and Damo present Marthinique with the Broken Shovel award for the hardest working cellar hand over vintage; 9. Jess and Karli took Elderton and our Small Victories Wine Co wines to Sydney for the Good Food & Wine Show in June.

