

S C Pannell Grenache Rosé 2006 McLaren Vale

6 Feb 2007 by JR

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Stephen Pannell was head red winemaker at Hardy's before he, like colleague Larry Cherubino whose debut release of The Yard is noted below, went solo. His parents and brother run Picardy in Pemberton, Western Australia, source of a [wine of the week](#) back in 2003. Pannell is now resident in Adelaide, although he took his young family off to Vajra in Barolo for the 2004 harvest, and to judge from my conversations with wine producers on my last two trips to Australia, he seems to be consultant to just about everyone.

He is developing his own label however, starting with McLaren Vale reds of unusual grace. His **S C Pannell Shiraz/ Grenache 2004 McLaren Vale** is delicious now: broad, sweet, flattering and mouthfilling but with its own intrinsic excitement and energy too. It retails for just under £20 in the UK chez such stockists as Noel Young and Wimbledon Wine Cellar. The more expensive **S C Pannell Shiraz 2004 McLaren Vale** at £26 is still very youthful and tough. Shut it away for five years, I would.

But this full bodied **S C Pannell Grenache Rosé 2004 McLaren Vale** is just the job for reminding those of us who have forgotten what summer is like that there is another hemisphere where the sun shines so brightly that Grenache grapes can be ripened to produce just such a refreshing yet super-ripe wine as this. This is a pink wine with character, and clearly demonstrates what so many French vigneronns know, that Grenache can make great rosé. It is big and fat and and pretty sweet – but unlike the Mitolo pink 2006 Sangiovese reviewed [here](#) yesterday, another Liberty Wines import, it has a really tangy core of crackling juicy fruit, as opposed to the aromas of winemaking. As an aperitif this wine should bring a smile to your face. As a wine for food, I think it should be pretty versatile, happily partnering anything from adventurous salads, through Thai dishes to spaghetti with clams.

In the UK its suggested retail price is £8.99 per bottle but Andrew Chapman Fine Wines (www.surf4wine.co.uk) is offering it at £7.64 at present. Other stockists include Wimbledon Wine Cellar and Nickolls & Perks are offering it by the case at a decent price. For once it's rather heartening to see an Australian wine that seems to cost less outside Australia than in.

As for Larry Cherubino's debut **The Yard, Powderbank Vineyard 2005 Frankland River**, I found this Western Australian very lively and fresh - lightyears from South Australia's heft. Dry rather than sweet with zesty tannins, it could easily be overlooked as at the moment it's no charmer with its bone dry finish but it has refreshment in spades. It's a claret of a Shiraz, though not as luscious as many of his past wines which display what John Edwards of Starvedog/ Ravenswood/ The Lane in Adelaide Hills calls Cherubino's trademark 'slithery boy' texture. I suspect it needs time for the tannins were a little rasping when I tasted it last November. It's imported into the UK by Novum Wines.

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