

Shobbrook, Seppeltsfield Syrah 2009 Barossa Valley

27 Apr 2011 by Jancis Robinson

1 May - The minimum order from the UK retailer has been reduced from 24 to 12 bottles.

From £25, Aus\$40

[Find Shobbrook wines in Australia](#)

As the Australian wine business seems almost to be sinking under the weight of [bad news](#), a new generation of very exciting, very different young winemakers is emerging. Just how different Tom Shobbrook is from the mainstream can be seen by his decision to label this wine Syrah rather than the usual Shiraz – a nod to the ‘European’ nature of this very fine wine. (Although I see from this picture that the 2008 vintage was labelled Shiraz...)

His name first came to my attention when he won Australian Gourmet Traveller Young Winemaker of the Year, as reported in [Glory for Grosset, Wynns & Shobbrook](#). I lamented the fact then that his wines were not available outside Australia but now John Baum of the UK-based online wine retailer www.thewinemakersclub.co.uk assures me that they have stock and are offering three of his wines from their website – although they insist on a minimum order of 24 bottles and he claims he would prefer people to order in units of six bottles.

The Winemakers Club was set up by veteran British wine merchant, now resident in Tuscany, Graham Chidgey and John Baum's father, Robert. It has a very good selection of fine Italian and Slovenian wine but the website is not that user-friendly. You have to email orders rather than being able to order online, and I couldn't spot any prices - though that may be my fault.

The connection between Shobbrook and Baum is that they met while working together at Riecine in Chianti Classico. When Tom moved back to Australia he agreed to appoint the Baums the UK distributor of the wines he planned to make in South Australia. ‘Although not surprising to us,’ reports John Baum, ‘Tom has started to take the world by storm, winning the Gourmet Traveller Young Australian Winemaker of the Year and Max Allen’s wine medal for best new talent. Alice Ferring in New York has described him as the saviour of the Australian wine industry. Farmed biodynamically, with minimal intervention and very low levels of sulphur, these are particularly complex wines with great freshness.’

Under the name Didi, Shobbrook also makes a range of Italian-influenced natural wines.

I don't think you and your friends would be disappointed by the exceptional Syrah. Here are my tasting notes on the three Shobbrook wines currently available from www.thewinemakersclub.co.uk.

Shobbrook, Seppeltsfield Syrah 2009 Barossa Valley 17 Drink 2010-16

Lustrous crimson. Very sweet and rich and beautifully balanced. But great freshness on the finish. Vibrant finish. So very different from most Barossa Valley Shirazes. Ah, I see it's a Syrah! Really very fine. Meaty, savoury finish. But with a great ‘smoothed’ texture. Ambient yeast. A caressing wine. 14.5%
£25

Shobbrook, Ebenezer Mourvedre 2010 Barossa Valley 16.5 Drink 2010-14

Dark rusty ruby. Very sweet nose with a medicinal streak and more than a suggestion of cough syrup. Pure, slightly fusty thickness. Very broad and oddly ready but with some structure hidden down there. Some real life in here, though you need to love these bold, rather wild flavours. Less appetising than the Syrah. 14.5%
£28

Shobbrook Riesling 2010 Eden Valley 16.5 Drink 2010-14

Ambient yeast. Oddly advanced. Herby, even slightly oily. Lots of fun to drink now. I can only assume that the winemaker is thumbing his nose at the accepted South Australian Riesling norm. Bone dry with marked acidity but quite waxy/honeyed. Interesting! I feel as though I should award extra marks for fighting the over-austere orthodoxy (though see my tasting notes on Grosset's 2010s such as his delicious [Watervale](#)). 12.5%
£18

The wines are also available in Australia of course, and direct from the [Shobbrook website](#).

[Find Shobbrook wines in Australia](#)