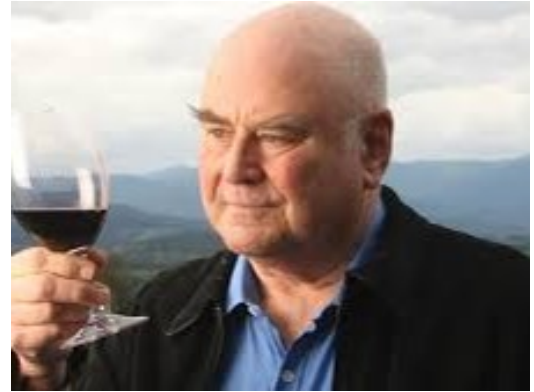


# Bruce Thiele Red Wine Club



## Halliday Challenge

Twenty five members tested their skills against those of James Halliday with a selection of wines chosen by Ian from the 'James Halliday top 100' wines published in the Weekend Australian last year.



The welcome wine was a 2016 Saltram 1859 Barossa Shiraz which was enjoyed with some cheese, Metwurst and olives provided by Graham. The Saltram was the first test to warm members up to the challenge as it has a Halliday rating. Like the wines that followed it proved to have a wide range of ratings by members. Few in fact rated it as lowly as James Halliday who gave it a score of 86.

Ian began the challenge with the first tasting asking members to identify the variety, region and maker. While the majority thought it was

a Shiraz a number had different ideas or were not sure. The wine region and year also caused some difficulty. It turned out to be a 2016 Castelli Estate 'The Sum' Shiraz from the Southern region of Western Australia. Once again there were a range of scores with few rating it as highly as Halliday—94.

Wine number two was the same variety—Shiraz but this time with a touch (2%) of Barbera, and

### Coming up:

- March: Taste of Eden (Away).
- April Red Vertical Tasting (Home)
- May Z Wines (Away)
- June: AGM Tenafeate Creek Wines (Home)
- July: Birthday at St Hallet (Away)
- August: James Haselgrove (Home)
- September : Kellermiester (Away )
- October Bruce Commemoration (Home)
- November Seabrookes (Away)
- Christmas at Lamberts

## Cellar Cabernets continued

the same year 2016. It also caused some difficulty in the region but proved to be from closer to home as a Chalk Hill 'Luna' McLaren Vale Shiraz. Again Halliday rated it at 94 but few members agreed with him.

Wine three was appreciated more than the previous two by most of the members. Once again it was a 2016 Shiraz—proving that the same variety and vintage can be distinctly different. The wine was a local one being Nietschke Barossa Valley Shiraz made by Troy Kalleske at Greenock. Generally rated higher by members, Halliday gave it 94, and it is a bargain at \$19/bottle.

The fourth wine was also a West Australian Shiraz, also of the 2016 vintage. Its origins again perplexed members. It was a West Cape Howe Frankland River Shiraz. It also earned 94 from Halliday.

Wine five was also from the 2016 vintage. It was a 'The Lane Vineyard Block 5' Shiraz and Halliday rated it higher at 95, however most of the members were not as impressed as he was.

The final wine tasted was also from Western Australia—Margaret River. It 'broke the mould' being a 2015 vintage it was a Xanadu DJL Shiraz which many of the members appreciate and rated well. The Halliday score was the highest of the evening at 96

The **'wine of the night'** was number three—the Nietschke Shiraz (17 votes) followed by number 6—2015 Xanadu DJL Shiraz (6 votes). The latter had the highest Halliday score.

Our Meal for the evening supplied by Tom's Catering was a Bar-B-Q including Salt & pepper Chicken Legs, Marinated Pork Ribs, Lamb & mint Kebabs, Scallop Potato Bake, Garden Salad with Garlic Bread.

### Door Prize Winners

The winners of our door prizes were Bob Greening, Graham Jefferey and Simon Ellis who went home with a bottle of wine.





# Photos





# Photos continued



# The wines

## Welcome Wine: Saltram 1859 Barossa Shiraz 2016

About This Wine: Historic label, but a most contemporary wine. Subtle oak lets the fruit do the talking, and it's saying: 'vibrant redcurrant and dark cherry flavours; hints of clove and spice.

Wine Companion tasting note—Steven Creber - Published on 01 Aug 2017

An unpretentious 'fighting brand' label but it delivers on its modest promises. Ripe, sweet fruit aromas have both a regional and varietal identity, and offer some honest character. Soft and candy fruited on the palate, it has enough flavour to get by, although it does fall away a little too quickly. If you open a bottle of this, it's generally not about the wine, anyway.

Rating: 86 Price: \$21.00 Alcohol: 14%



## Wine 1: Castelli Estate 'The Sum' Shiraz 2016

**The Season:** 2016 was one of the most varied vintages in years for the Southern Regions in WA. An early budburst followed by a relatively hot dry Spring and mild Summer saw early flowering and fruit set, every indication was for one of the earliest and quickest vintages on record. However heavy rain mid-January and onset of cold night time temperatures slowed sugar accumulation but in turn helped flavour development. Crop levels were up on 2015, but still relatively low. Selection of picking date and fastidious vineyard management was crucial in 2016 with narrow ripening windows and some disease pressure.

**Winemaking:** Pre-fermentation cold soaking followed by a clean, warm (25-30 degrees C) ferment. Twice daily pump-overs, using specialised gentle tannin extraction method, also two rack-returns during ferment. Yeast strains used were RC212 and FX10, with time of skins totalling 15 days to retain maximum fruit intensity and soft tannins. Aged in two, three and four year old French barriques.

**Tasting Notes:** The Great Southern region produces outstanding examples of Cool Climate Shiraz and this wine is no exception. Deep maroon with purple hues gives a suggestion of what's to come. The wine displays aromas of ripe blueberries with some savoury complexity adding spice and freshly ground pepper notes. These flavours continue onto the medium to full bodied palate and are supported by fine grained, earthy tannins and interwoven oak. Drink now or cellar with confidence for 6-8 years.

Wine Companion tasting note—James Halliday - Published on 01 Nov 2017

Bright crimson-purple; the complex, yet fresh, bouquet draws you into the wine where dark cherry fruit is riddled with cool climate spice and black and white pepper. While no more than medium-bodied, it has vibrancy and freshness, and is very hard to resist at this price.

Rating 94. Region: Great Southern – Western Australia, pH: 3.59, Alcohol: 13.7%, RRP: \$19.00

## Wine 2: Chalk Hill Luna McLaren Vale Shiraz 2016

**Variety:** 98% Shiraz, 2% Barbera

**Colour:** Deep purple with bright red hues

**Aromatics:** Perfumed nose of dark berry fruits, floral notes, with a hint of roasted nuts and spice.

**Palate:** A textured wine with good balance, it shows flavours of dark berry fruit, with dark chocolate notes. A long lingering finish.

**Vineyard Notes:** 2016 was a warm vintage producing concentrated Shiraz fruit. Selected from three of our premium vineyards aged between 10-20 years.

**Wine Maker Notes:** The Shiraz grapes were harvested at flavour and tannin ripeness, then destemmed to fermenters to keep many whole berries in the ferment for fresh fruit flavours and to maintain soft tannins.





## The wines cont.

The Barbera component was treated similarly to the Shiraz, although it had 10 days on skins and was matured in older barrels.

**Cellaring:** Will reward cellaring for 5 years or more.

Wine Companion tasting note—James Halliday - Published on 01 Nov 2017

Includes a dash of Barbera. Starts ticking the boxes with its bright colour, and continues to do so through the fragrant, gently spicy dark berry bouquet, thence the medium-bodied palate. It derives its quality through its freshness, the purity of its fruit flavours, and its supple mouthfeel.

95 points, Alcohol: 14% RRP \$19

### Wine 3: Nietschke Barossa Valley Shiraz 2016



In 1838 two ships are sailing bound for Australia, aboard the Zebra is Samuel Johann Nietschke and on the Prince George is Johann Georg Kalleske. They are both pioneering grape-growing families who make the Barossa their new home. Now step forward 130 years in time to 1968 and these two families join when John Kalleske marries Lorraine Nietschke. Their sons Tony, Kym and Troy run the vineyard and the more recently established winery. However it was Lorraine's forbears who originally made wine well before the current Kalleske boys decided to try their hand. The Nietschke family established a winery on the banks of the Jacob's Creek soon after they planted vines in the 1840's. To honour Lorraine's lineage and the inspiration they have bestowed this wine proudly bears the Nietschke name.

#### Growing Season

Vintage 2016 was hot and dry resulting in grapes ripening earlier than average. Winter and Spring rainfall was down by 38% whilst growing season temperatures were up by 3 degrees. Some welcome rain came at the end of January refreshing the vines and giving them good moisture to ripen to maturity. Yields from 2016 are solid and importantly quality is stunning. 2016 is certainly a star vintage with bright intense wines of great flavour intensity and inherent balance.

#### Vineyard

Nietschke is a modern Shiraz with a twist. There's a little something extra with a dash of Petite Sirah (13%) blended in for added complexity. All grapes are from the Barossa Valley including the renowned Greenock sub-region where vines are low-yielding and are grown in shallow, sandy loam soil over deep red clay, providing ideal conditions for these varieties.

#### Winemaking

The grapes were harvested in numerous batches from mid to late March. Following fermentation for 7 to 10 days on skins in open top fermenters with hand pump-overs twice daily, the grapes were pressed and the wine was aged in hogshead barrels for 14 months. Both seasoned and new American and French oak was used. The wine is bottled unfinned and unfiltered.

#### Tasting Notes

Nietschke 2016 Shiraz is deep purple-red in colour. The aromatics are very lifted and inviting displaying ripe plums, blackberry jam, Christmas cake, spice, florals, chocolate and subtle toasty oak.

The palate is full-bodied and generous in rich dark fruit flavours. Tannins are evident but mild and integrated adding structure and depth. The ripe black fruits are complimented by classy oak barrel ferment characters adding another layer. This is a complex wine that is smooth, full-flavoured and is completed with a very lengthy finish. Nietschke is a fine Barossa Shiraz that will cellar gracefully in the medium term.

Wine Companion tasting note—James Halliday - Published on 01 Nov 2017

Dense crimson-purple hue; rises above the odd challenge from the vintage and its (very moderate) price. This is a quintessential Barossa Valley shiraz, with its red, purple and black fruits calmly supported by ripe tannins and enough oak to satisfy the hardest critic. Bargain.

Rating: 94, Price: \$19.00, Alcohol: 14.5%

## The Wines continued

### Wine 4: West Cape Howe Frankland River Shiraz 2016

This first release of the Frankland River Shiraz is a showcase of what this isolated sub-region of the Great Southern can achieve. The fruit was harvested, fermented and matured as a single batch in a combination of new and used French oak over 14 months. Minimal fining and manipulation assisted in preserving the true Frankland River characters, allowing the fruit to speak for itself. Colour: Deep plum with a purple hue. Aroma: Dark, brooding fruits with cherry choc and lifted sweet oak Palate: Rich Fruits of the Forest supported by dusty tannin and sweet, spicy oak with lingering cocoa nib on the finish

TECHNICAL INFORMATION: pH: 3.62 T.A: 5.9 g/L Alcohol: 14.5% Price Cellar Door \$22

[Wine Companion tasting note](#)—James Halliday - Published on 01 Nov 2017

Matured in new and used French oak - not much at this price, and no more needed. It has bright, fresh flavours of plum, black cherry and blackberry, with a liberal sprinkle of black pepper and spice, tannins a feature of a wine worth twice the price.

Rating: 94 Price: \$20.00



### Wine 5: The Lane Vineyard Block 5 Shiraz 2016



The Lane Vineyard Block Series show true varietal character and the influence of the terroir of The Lane Vineyard. Block numbers indicate the patch within the vineyard where the fruit is grown, as do the 'Google Earth' coordinates on each label. Minimum intervention wine-making allows the vineyard to do the talking. The Block Series are stylish, fresh, fruit driven wines with a true sense of place;

WINEMAKER: Michael Schreurs

VARIETALS: Shiraz 97.2%, Viognier 2.8% (Co-Fermented)

VINTAGE: Early season with an ideal balance between ripeness, acidity and flavour.

ALCOHOL: 13.5% , TOTAL ACIDITY: 5.8 grams/litre , pH: 3.46

COLOUR: Vibrant black cherry, purple hue

BOUQUET: Perfumed violets, lifted forest fruits, rhubarb, sage and black pepper

PALATE: Medium body, rich brambly fruit entwines a core of savoury spices and fine-grained tannin with granitic minerality.

ALTITUDE: 450m above sea level , ASPECT: North facing. SOIL: Ancient soils, mostly gravel with limestone / calcium silicates and ferrous pebbles spread throughout

[Wine Companion tasting note](#)—James Halliday - Published on 01 Nov 2017

Deep crimson; an estate-grown, medium-bodied shiraz that combines elegance with considerable depth and complexity. Black cherry fruit, spice, pepper and liquorice sit comfortably in a chair of oak, tannins providing the seat. The postscript is a dash of cleansing acidity.

Rating: 95, Price: \$25.00.

### Wine 6: Xanadu DJL Shiraz 2015

REGION Margaret River, Australia

GROWING CONDITIONS: A relatively mild, warm winter resulted in an early budburst to kick-start the growing season. This was followed by some relatively wild spring weather however with wet, windy conditions affecting fruit set and resulting in low yields across most varieties in the region. Beautiful, warm weather returned in summer which saw flavour ripening accelerate quickly, bringing about our earliest vintage on record. A lack of Marri blossom leading up to and during harvest meant bird pressure was extreme, with netting absolutely vital this season. The early start to the season ensured all of the red varieties were able to be harvested at optimum maturity offering a great opportuni-



## The wines cont.

ty to produce a fortified wine. Fruit for this blend was entirely Estate grown on our Boodjudup and Stevens Road vineyards in the Wallcliffe sub-region of Margaret River.

### TASTING NOTES

COLOUR: Deep red with purple hues

NOSE: Dark berry fruits and fragrant floral notes spiced with hints of peppercorn, redskins and subtle toasty oak influences.

PALATE: A full-bodied wine, offering ample depth with plenty of ripe forest fruits; blackberries, red-currants and spice. The moreish, jubey fruit and approachable tannins combine to produce a generous wine with a supple structure and a wonderful persistence of flavour.

ALCOHOL: 14%, PH: 3.5

WINEMAKING NOTES: The fruit was destemmed and then crushed with open rollers to introduce whole berries into the ferment. The core component was fermented in static fermenters at 26oC for 6 days. One portion, which made up 35% of the blend, was pressed early and finished fermentation in predominantly new French oak. After fermentation, the various batches underwent MLF and 14 months maturation in a selection of fine French oak barriques (35% new oak in total) prior to assembling the blend and bottling.

[Wine Companion tasting note](#)—James Halliday - Published on 01 Nov 2017

Deep crimson; continuing a line of distinguished wines at bargain basement prices, it is elegant, full of life, and brings together a stream of juicy black cherry fruit, balanced and integrated tannins, and some cleverly handled oak inputs. It is particularly exceptional value.

Rating: 96, Price: \$24.00,