

Geoff Merrill Wines

Latest Reviews - September 2021

Geoff Merrill Wines is proud to be rated **“5 Red Stars”** in the 2021 Halliday Australian Wine Companion placing us in the top 10% of premium wine producers in Australia.



2006 Henley Shiraz

97 points - Sam Kim (Wine Orbit)

“A magnificent offering; the immensely complex bouquet shows blackberry, plum jam, cake spice, cocoa and cedar characters with a subtle lift of floral. The palate is superbly concentrated and sumptuous, exhibiting outstanding depth and power, brilliantly framed by velvety tannins. Seamless and impressively long on the finish. 5 stars.”

95 points - James Halliday (Halliday Australian Wine Companion)

“You can easily drink this now but the rip of integrated tannin has it set for a long future. It’s awash with complex spice and leather characters, yet forceful through the finish. Licorice, tobacco and dark chocolate continue the developed-but youthful theme. Sweeter citrus candy flavours complete the picture.”

95 points - Australian Wine Showcase Magazine

94 points - Campbell Mattinson (The Winefront)

“Tannin is the key. It’s hulking but well-integrated, firm and forceful without being over the top. It tastes quite leathery, quite developed, and yet there’s still plenty of fruit: liquorice, chocolate, tobacco, ground dry spice flavours chief among the components. The wine’s length and composure though, regardless of style, is ultra impressive.”

2007 Henley Shiraz

97 points - Sam Kim (Wine Orbit)

“Wonderfully maturing, this delectable shiraz shows dark fruit richness together with smoked meat, dark chocolate, roasted nut, leather and dark spice characters on the nose, leading to a sumptuous palate that is concentrated and gracefully opulent. Dense, silky and persistent, the wine displays awesome power as well as structure and impeccable balance. 5 stars.”

96 points - James Halliday (Halliday Australian Wine Companion)

“Matured for 33 months in French hogsheads, bottled Oct '10. Has soared above the reputation for toughness the vintage has always had. It is positively juicy on the mid-palate with plum, sour cherry and black fruits, the oak and tannins sewn into the fabric of the wine.”

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Latest Reviews - September 2021

2008 Henley Shiraz

98 points - Sam Kim (Wine Orbit)

"An exceptional offering; the gloriously complex bouquet shows blackberry, mixed berry compote, chocolate tart, charcuterie, cedar and toasted spice characters. It is equally gratifying on the palate, exhibiting outstanding concentration and intensity backed by velvety texture and supple tannins, leading to an extremely long delicious finish. Lavish yet refined and stylish. 5 stars."

96 points - James Halliday (Halliday Australian Wine Companion)

"Matured for 33 months in French hogsheads, bottled Oct '10. Has soared above the reputation for toughness the vintage has always had. It is positively juicy on the mid-palate with plum, sour cherry and black fruits, the oak and tannins sewn into the fabric of the wine."

2015 Parham Cabernet Sauvignon

97 points - National Liquor News (Annual Cabernet Sauvignon Tasting)

96 points - James Halliday (Halliday Australian Wine Companion)

"The focus is on the fruit, which needs no winemaker flourish other than 100% new oak. Blackcurrant rides high on the bouquet, oak on its postilion. Tannins make their presence felt on the palate, which will stand the wine in good stead as it ages."

96 points - Sam Kim (Wine Orbit)

"A glorious expression of the variety from grapes grown in McLaren Vale (85%) and Coonawarra (15%); the fragrant bouquet shows crème de cassis, mixed berry compote, cigar, cocoa and cedar characters. The palate is impressively weighted and concentrated with awesome fruit power and richness, wonderfully supported by stylish oak infusion and chalky tannins. A compelling rendition offering symphonic flavours. 5 stars."

96 points - Australian Wine Showcase Magazine

95 points - Huon Hooke (The Real Review)

"Deep, dark red colour with a purple rim and a concentrated, bold aroma of blackberry and cassis with a lacing of mint. The palate is full-bodied, firm and tense, with abundant firm tannins and a core of sweet berry fruit. A concentrated, well-structured Cabernet with length, power and considerable ageing potential."

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Latest Reviews - September 2021

2016 Parham Cabernet Sauvignon

97 points - Sam Kim (Wine Orbit)

"This opulent and stylish Cabernet offers dark fruit richness on the nose with nuances of vanilla pod, cigar box, dark cocoa and anise. The palate displays outstanding concentration and depth together with plush mouthfeel and fine chalky tannins, making it firmly structured and brooding, while remaining harmonious and flowing with grace and beauty. Stunning. 5 stars."

95 points - Ray Jordan (The West Australian)

"This is a combination of McLaren vale and Coonawarra cabernet and named in honour of Merrill's grandfather. It's another wine with Merrill's indelible stylistic stamp on it, highlighted by the 27 months in new American oak. It's made from barrel selection and then the best barrels get further new American oak. Power and opulence here but delivered with finesse. Made with extended cellaring in mind but it is still a very good current drinking wine."

95 points - Huon Hooke (The Real Review)

"Very deep, dark colour with a tint of black, the bouquet led by charred-oak and sawn-timber aromas, the palate also oaky and sweetly-ripe fruited, the tannins quite assertive. Oak has been used to the max - a style that high-end Penfolds drinkers will enjoy. It's concentrated and rich. A whopper that comes into its own with food, such as hard cheeses, where the tannin and oak are largely tamed. It's best cellared a bit longer, but it will always be a blockbuster. I ended up really enjoying it."

95 points - Steven Creber (Halliday Australian Wine Companion)

"McLaren Vale 85%, Coonawarra 15%. 27 months in new American hogsheads. The fruit has done a pretty good job of absorbing that oak, blackcurrant and blackberry just shading mocha and cedar. At present it's a densely packed wine, yet to really spread its wings, but there's impressive depth of flavour there no doubt with very high quality tannin as well. Patience required."

95 points - Australian Wine Showcase Magazine

2013 Reserve Shiraz

95 points - Sam Kim (Wine Orbit)

"This is totally delicious; showing dark fruit richness with cocoa, spicy oak, charcuterie and cake spice aromas on the nose, followed by a sumptuous palate that's velvety and lingering. It's plush and opulent, while splendidly balanced and structured by fine tannins, offering fabulous drinking. 5 stars."

94 points - Huon Hooke (The Real Review)

"Deep, dark, brooding red colour with good purple tints; youthful for its years. The bouquet is intense and bright, loaded with toast, spice, mint and coconutty oak aromas, plus some smoked-meaty overtones from bottle-ageing. Dark chocolate, too. It's powerful, concentrated, deep and penetrating, with noticeable acidity and liberal oak. The oak has been generously applied and is now starting to mellow happily into the wine."

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Latest Reviews - September 2021

2013 Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon

95 points - Sam Kim (Wine Orbit)

"A stunning expression offering seductive aromas of crème de cassis, tobacco, cedar, clove and smoked game characters. The palate displays outstanding concentration and persistency, wonderfully supported by silky mouthfeel and grainy tannins. It's multi-layered and engaging with a lengthy gratifying finish. 5 stars."

94 points - Stuart Robinson (The Vinsomniac)

"A blend of McLaren Vale (53%) and Coonawarra (47%) fruit. Released with the age on it, still retaining an element of youth, vigour and freshness. Plummy, damson, blackcurrant notes on the nose. The palate conveying an acidic freshness, tannin is firm and somewhat robust still now. Gives a firmness and provides length and depth of flavour. Somewhat older school in its presentation, an observation - nothing more. Matched this a medium reverse seared rib fillet on the bone, the tannin/protein match-up a perfect pairing to highlight the depth and even of a touch of char in the oak. In the zone now, yet still with plenty ahead of it."

94 points - Australian Wine Showcase Magazine

93 points - Jane Faulkner (Halliday Australian Wine Companion)

"A blend of fruit 53% from McLaren Vale, 47% Coonawarra, has created a neat combo of juicy blackberries dipped in spice, mint peppermint, sweet oak, new leather and earthy flavours too. Medium-bodied, supple with the tannins mellowing out. In a good spot."

2017 Reserve Chardonnay

95 points - Sam Kim (Wine Orbit)

"Gorgeously complex and engaging, the splendidly lifted bouquet shows golden peach, Gala apple, nougat and cedar characters, leading to an opulent palate that's superbly weight and expansive. The wine is complex and persistent with a multi-layered mouthfeel, making it hugely appealing. 5 stars."

92 points - Australian Wine Showcase Magazine

2018 Reserve Chardonnay

95 points - Sam Kim (Wine Orbit)

"Wonderfully composed and styled, the inviting bouquet shows apricot, rockmelon, baked fig and vanillin oak characters. It's equally satisfying on the palate with excellent concentration and weight, beautifully supported by creamy texture and refreshing acidity. It's graceful and elegant with an impressively long refined finish. 5 stars."

93 points - Australian Wine Showcase Magazine

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Latest Reviews - September 2021

2013 G & W Cabernet Sauvignon

95 points - Sam Kim (Wine Orbit)

"Beautifully expressed and immediately appealing, the wine shows crème de cassis, spiced plum, subtle tobacco and vanillin oak characters on the nose, leading to a concentrated palate that's richly textured and expansive. It's gorgeously flavoursome and persistent with lingering seamless mouthfeel. A blend of grapes from Coonawarra and McLaren Vale. 5 stars."

2014 G & W Cabernet Sauvignon

2015 Jacko's Shiraz

94 points - Sam Kim (Wine Orbit)

"Wonderfully ripe and inviting, the bouquet shows blackberry, cedar, tapenade, cocoa and charcuterie notes. It's equally attractive on the palate with gorgeous fruit richness backed by velvety texture and rounded tannins. The wine combined gorgeous fruit flavours with matured nuances, making it highly appealing. 5 stars."

2014 Bush Vine Shiraz Grenache Mourvèdre

95 points - Sam Kim (Wine Orbit)

"A gorgeous wine showing gloriously attractive aromas of dark fruit, cedar, smoked game, dark chocolate and mushroom on the nose, leading to a concentrated palate that is plump and fleshy. The wine offers terrific fruit power and generosity, brilliantly structured by fine, chalky tannins, finishing impressively long and seductive. 5 stars."

92 points - Andrew Graham (Oz Wine Review)

"I always like how Geoff Merrill's wines lob with a bit of bottle age. Aged and built to age. Here, it's a riff on a McLaren Vale GSM blend. The Shiraz dominance works too - chocolatey rich purple fruit, with Grenache adding the red fruit highlights. It's medium to full bodied, chunky, and ultimately fruit drenched. Old school heartiness rather than modern swish and polish, with surprising life for its age. Entirely solid wine. Best drinking: good now and for another decade if you want. But I'd drink in the next five."

92 points - Ned Goodwin (Halliday Australian Wine Companion)

"52/42/6% shiraz/grenache/mourvèdre. This is drinking very well. Attractive Rhône-inspired aromas: sandalwood, smoked game and a porcini/bracken/bouillon note, earthy and shrouded in umami. Herbal tannins, gently ferrous, ply a straight path across the palate while mollifying shiraz's sweet tendencies, billowing in the background. But in all, solid value and very good drinking."

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Latest Reviews - September 2021

2021 'by Merrill' Dancing Queen Riesling

2020 'by Merrill' Dancing Queen Riesling

★★★★★ **96 points** (GOLD MEDAL) - 2020 Royal Adelaide Wine Show

5 Star Rating (Equal Top Of Category) - Winestate Magazine

"Love this! Declared one judge. So pretty and so elegant. Lovely lime and bath salt-like aromas with loads of spicy lemons on the chalky textured palate with minerally acidity."

92 points - Mike Bennie (The Winefront)

"I never pegged Geoff Merrill as an ABBA fan, but hey, that moustache does work well for the era. Minerally, fennel and anise characters, some citrus. Strong anise. Like this. Tense and refreshing, composed and direct, refreshing and bright. Great texture, firm and puckering with dribbles of clean, fresh acidity. A very well put together Riesling here."

92 points - Sam Kim (Wine Orbit)

"Bright, fresh and fragrant, the bouquet shows Granny Smith apple, rock melon and lime zest aromas on the nose, leading to a finely expressed palate that's juicy and vibrant. It's fabulously supported by lively acidity, making it lingering and mouth-watering."

91 points - Australian Wine Showcase Magazine

2019 'by Merrill' Georgie May Chardonnay

90 points - Sam Kim (Wine Orbit)

"It's elegantly expressed on the nose showing Gala apple, nectarine, lemon pith and subtle floral notes, followed by a gently weighted palate that's nicely rounded and offers delicate fruit intensity. Crisp-dry and lingering."

90 points - Australian Wine Showcase Magazine

88 points - Mike Bennie (The Winefront)

"Seems to be a bit of innovation going on at McLaren Vale stalwart Geoff Merrill. This label feels very un-Merrill, but that's ok with me. Good to see this stuff happening around the classic wines. Light and fine, simply done, green apple, peach, some nutty-creaminess, a little buttered popcorn through palate and bouquet. Soft texture, spritely finish, a little gummy in texture but the finish sorts that out with lemony tang. Good drink."

"OUTSTANDING FOR THE SUMMER!!" - Dan Traucki (Wine Assist)

"Alluring, soft creamy stone fruit aromas, delicious palate with great peach & citrus-lime flavours, with a refreshing crisp slightly steely finish."

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Latest Reviews - September 2021

2021 'by Merrill' Charley Rose Dry Grenache Rosé

2020 'by Merrill' Charley Rose Dry Rosé

96 points (GOLD MEDAL) - 2020 Royal Adelaide Wine Show

92 points - Sam Kim (Wine Orbit)

"Finely scented and bright, the wine shows crunchy apple, sweet strawberry and lemon zest characters with a hint of flinty note. The palate displays delicate fruit flavours and fine texture, backed by firm acidity, finishing persistent and attractively dry."

92 points - Australian Wine Showcase Magazine

2018 'by Merrill' Grumpy Gramps Grenache

93 points - Australian Wine Showcase Magazine

92 points - Sam Kim (Wine Orbit)

"Sweetly fruited and gorgeously lifted, the bouquet shows dark plum, spiced cherry, thyme and warm spice aromas, leading to a supple palate that's finely textured and lingering. It's flavoursome and beautifully rounded, backed by grainy tannins, finishing long and silky."

"RARING TO GO!!" - Dan Traucki (Wine Assist)

"Great label, bright purple/red colour, fragrant bouquet of red berries a tinge of dried herbs, full berry flavours on the delightful, smooth gentle palate with an elegant lingering finish."

2017 'by Merrill' Saint Nic Shiraz Cabernet

94 points - Australian Wine Showcase Magazine

92 points - Sam Kim (Wine Orbit)

"A lovely friendly offering, the fragrant bouquet shows dark plum, mulberry, clove and roasted nut characters, followed by a succulent palate that offers soothing mouthfeel and a lingering silky finish. Upfront and immediately appealing."

"CLASSY!!!" - Dan Traucki (Wine Assist)

"Attractive red/purple colour, plenty of plum aromas on the bouquet along with a smidge of spice, tasty, well rounded palate with a good depth of flavours & an appealing, lingering finish."

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2016 Pimpala Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon

95 points - Sam Kim (Wine Orbit)

"It's fabulously expressed on the nose showing blackcurrant, cigar box, clove and nutmeg characters, followed by a concentrated palate that's mouth-filling and lingering. The wine offers terrific fruit richness combined with silky texture and polished tannins, making it immensely appealing. 5 stars."

91 points - Huon Hooke (The Real Review)

"Deep, dark colour with a tint of purple. The bouquet has rich black-fruit aromas and charred, toasted oak nuances, traces of mocha and dark chocolate. It's full-bodied and slightly chewy, fleshy. Full-bodied and satisfying in weight and flavour."

2015 Pimpala Vineyard Cabernet Merlot

95 points - Sam Kim (Wine Orbit)

"This is brimming with dark fruit richness together with dried herb, vanillin oak and dark chocolate notes on the nose. The palate exhibits awesome fruit power and depth with plush texture and fine chalky tannins, offering classic structure as well as opulence. 5 stars."

94 points - Australian Wine Showcase Magazine

92 points - Huon Hooke (The Real Review)

"Deep, dark red colour with a good trace of purple. The aromas are nutty with some char-oak notes and background blackberry aromas, a hint of mint. The varietal character is there, and the palate is very fruit-sweet and ripely rich, the tannins ample but soft and the almost luscious fruit coming through strongly. Acidity is prominent. Very good flavour and already very approachable."

2015 Pimpala Vineyard Shiraz

95 points - Sam Kim (Wine Orbit)

"Superbly fruited and richly expressed, the gorgeous bouquet shows black/blueberry, toasted spice, cedar and dark chocolate characters, leading to a concentrated palate that offers excellent weight and density. It is fleshy and silky, backed by polished tannins, finishing impressively long and delicious."

93 points - Mike Bennie (WBM Magazine)

93 points - Australian Wine Showcase Magazine

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2018 Botham Merrill Willis Chardonnay

94 points - Sam Kim (Wine Orbit)

"Stylish and complex, this gorgeous chardonnay shows white flesh stone fruit, fig, spicy oak and brioche characters with a hint of flinty overtone. The palate offers excellent weight and persistency, together with silky texture and focus, leading to an impressively long structured finish. 5 stars."

2013 Botham Merrill Willis Cabernet Sauvignon

95 points - Sam Kim (Wine Orbit)

"It's deeply coloured and richly expressed on the nose showing cassis, Black Doris plum, toasted spice, vanilla, cedar and cigar notes, followed by a wonderfully weighted palate that's plump and silky. The wine offers terrific intensity backed by rounded tannins, finishing long and immensely satisfying. A blend of grapes from Coonawarra and McLaren Vale. 5 stars."

2015 Botham Merrill Willis Shiraz

94 points - Sam Kim (Wine Orbit)

"It's superbly fruited on the nose showing dark fruit richness with spicy oak, tapenade, cured meat and dark chocolate nuances, leading to a concentrated palate displaying excellent weight and intensity together with plush mouthfeel and silky tannins, making it immensely appealing. Splendidly complex with ripe fruit flavours with matured spicy / savoury notes. 5 stars."

2014 Mount Hurtle Shiraz

94 points - Sam Kim (Wine Orbit)

"Offering terrific fruit richness, the wine shows black and purple fruit characters combined with vanillin oak, toasted hazelnut and dark spice notes on the nose. The palate exhibits excellent concentration and depth, wonderfully enhanced by velvety texture and refined tannins. Deliciously lingering. 5 stars."

2016 Graymoor Cabernet Sauvignon

95 points - Sam Kim (Wine Orbit)

"A magnificent rendition of the variety; the bouquet shows blackcurrant, cedar, tobacco and subtle spice characters on the nose, leading to a wonderfully weighted palate that's flavoursome and persistent. It's refined and sumptuous at the same time, finishing impressively long and delicious. 5 stars."

93 points - Australian Wine Showcase Magazine

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Latest Reviews - September 2021

2016 GM Barrel Select Chardonnay

92 points - Sam Kim (Wine Orbit)

"It's beautifully ripe and inviting on the nose showing grilled peach, nougat, oatmeal and roasted cashew characters, leading to a generously expressed palate displaying expansive mouthfeel and creamy texture. The wine is elegant yet flavoursome with plenty of attractive flavours."

2016 GM Barrel Select Sangiovese

94 points - Sam Kim (Wine Orbit)

*"It's gorgeously fruited and fragrant on the nose showing blackcurrant, sweet cherry, mixed spice, vanilla and roasted nut aromas, followed by a wonderfully ripe palate displaying excellent weight and velvety mouthfeel well supported by fine-grained tannins. Harmonious and delectably styled. **5 stars.**"*

