

U3A Castlemaine Wine Appreciation Group
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Wines presented by Trisha McG and Suzan R
Food presented by Gayle G

Tahbilk Winery

Established in 1860, Tahbilk is one of Australia's most beautiful and historic wineries with National Trust classification and the historic cellar door has the original underground cellars are still in use.

It is located in the Nagambie Lakes region of Central Victoria and one of the nation's premium viticultural areas, unique in the effect of the Nagambie lakes that moderates heat up to 3kms from the water, helping to prevent frosts (in particular), in softening the heat spikes, and moderating the low temperatures.

Tahbilk claims to be the oldest continuously family-owned winery in Victoria and a founding member of Australia's First Families of Wine. In 2016 Tahbilk was Halliday's Winery of Year. The vineyard comprises 200 hectares of vines and Tahbilk is further blessed with an abundance of 'old vine' plantings - including shiraz from 1860, cabernet back to 1949 and marsanne from 1927.

The winery was founded in 1860 by a group of 3 Melbourne gentlemen... Messrs. Bear, Glass and Holmes with society investors. In May 1860, one the company's founders, Sinclair, was found dead in Brighton from an overdose of morphine administered by persons unknown, with a list of shareholders in the then Goulburn Vineyard Company ... found sewn up in the pocket of his coat. John Pinney Bear assumed control and progressively bought out the other shareholders; by 1876 he was sole owner. In 1889 Bear died at Tahbilk, and Chateau Tahbilk, as it was known, went into decline. With the vineyard shrinking to half its size 46 ha (110 acres) by 1925, it was purchased by the Purbrick family in 1931 and remains in their ownership. Reginald Purbrick purchased Tahbilk with a plan to subdivide into dairy farms. Fortuitously he was convinced by his son Eric to continue operating Tahbilk as a winery. Eric was then handed the reins in 1931, a role that continued for over 45 vintages. This mantle was handed to John (Eric's son), and then his son, Alistair, after the 1978 vintage. Eric remained a strong influence on the direction of Tahbilk until his passing in 1991.

One of the first to place his faith in the future of Australian table wines, Eric was at the forefront of varietal labelling in Australia – perhaps his greatest legacy was to create the 'Special Bin' range of reds, beginning with a Shiraz in 1948. Traditional wine making values and large format oak is still the key to Tahbilk wines like the Cabernet Sauvignon and Shiraz. The Tahbilk style is from old vines which have lower yields but their fruit flavours are more concentrated, resulting in bolder, fuller very age-worthy wines, with many of the 90s wines still having a decade or more in them.



1. 2014 Coueslant Marsanne 11.5% Sold Out \$23.35

Francois Coueslant was winemaker and manager at Tahbilk from 1877 to 1886. Tahbilk has over 100 acres planted to Marsanne, which is apparently the largest single Marsanne plantings in the world, complete with some of the oldest vines. The sparkling Marsanne has its distinctive bouquet of lemon, lime, pear and honeysuckle fruits. The primary fruits of subtle peach, melon, red berry and savoury notes is supported by mineral and herb hints on a fresh and lingering finish. come from its secondary fermentation. 24 months ageing in the bottle on yeast lees adds background yeasty/biscuity characters and another layer of complexity. A deliciously enjoyable aperitif-style now or look for additional character to be realised with careful cellaring out to 2020/2022

2. 2012 Marsanne 1927 Vines 11% \$40.45

Balance, concentration and vibrant varietal integrity are the cornerstones of this '1927 Vines' release. This has an extra degree of complexity and concentration from vine age, extra years in the bottle and the cool vintage

Brilliant straw-green in colour, although lighter when younger, Marsanne isn't an aromatic variety and has only a light bouquet. It is beautifully balanced, with honeysuckle, lime, lemon, honey and ginger playing with a subtle net of acidity. The heightened complexity from ancient vines is crafted into a wine that's built to age beautifully to 2048.

97 Points and in the TOP 100 WINES 2018 - James Halliday Wine Companion

This wine continues to claim a breathtaking number of significant trophies, dozens of gold medals and countless accolades from the industry press, including Trophy for Best Australian Dry White Wine, Other Varieties; Rutherglen Wine Show 2017; Gold Medal KPMG Sydney Royal Wine Show 2017; Award Winner Royal Queensland Wine Show 2017

3. 2016 Roussanne Marsanne Viogner 13% \$25.15

With Pale straw to lemon-yellow hues this wine is composed of rare French Rhone Valley whites 44% Roussanne ~ 32% Marsanne ~ 24% Viognier .

A seamless textural wine, this fifth in line blend of the three delivers a fragrant bouquet of spice and ginger notes, rose petal florals and lifted citrus fruits; the medium bodied palate has persistent lemon zest and stone fruits with a crisp acid line and delicious mineral edge, before a delightfully clean, gorgeous finish.

Further complexity will be realised with medium-term cellaring to 2023.

4. 2010 Museum Cabernet Sauvignon 13.5% \$24.25

A gloriously old-fashioned Victorian "claret.

Trademark Tahbilk medium deep red colour of bright hue, starting to lighten off.

This medium bodied wine offers blackcurrant, capsicum and mint aromas, on a full flavoured palate of dark and elegant red berry fruits with background savoury hints. Sturdy, yet elegant, tannins and 8 months in French oak will carry this Tahbilk 2010 'Museum Release' Cabernet Sauvignon along on its extended journey. Tannins define Tahbilk Cabernet and account for its great longevity. When drinking with food the protein strips away the tannins to reveal the ripe, blackcurrant-like varietal flavour.

92 James Halliday Drink Now to 2027

5. 2016 Winemakers Selection Cabernet Sauvignon 13.5% \$44.95

Every year vine blocks are selected to create one Premium release red. This is the 2016 wine makers selection cabernet sauvignon. The fruit for this wine was sourced from a variety of Estate Cabernet Sauvignon blocks with the final blend being 91% 'Plains Block' (planted in 1984), 7% 'Guggers Block' (1989) and 2% from our 'Old Block' planted in 1949. Maturation across all components saw 30% in small, one and two year old French oak barrels with the balance in one and two year old 500 gallon American oak casks. The final wine was then blended, bottled and aged for a further 12 months before its release in September 2018

A lifted elegant character of herbal and violet aromas is followed by a palate of cassis and dark cherry fruits with spice and eucalypt notes. Fine grained tannins, supportive without being dominant; complete a wine of distinction. Further complexity will be realised with extended bottle ageing out to 2026/2031.

6. 2014 'Eric Stevens Purbrick' Cabernet Sauvignon 14.5% \$62.95

Fermentation takes place in original open vats over 155 years old, with maturation then in similarly aged large French oak prior to bottling. Smaller French and American oak barrels are also used, with the wine from these blended back during the final filtering and bottling. The resultant releases are noted as being fruit-driven wines of much flavour and substance, proven over the years to develop added character when cellared.

Cabernet Sauvignon vines go back to 1949.

A bright Cabernet with a savoury, herbal midriff, neatly defined by delineated, fine-boned tannins for a brisk bite and definition.

A beam of dark currant, piercing the wine from attack to liting finish, scatters a potpourri of herbs across the mouth – sage, dried tea and eucalyptus are all there; a paean to straight-laced, elegant domestic Cabernet.

Halliday 94 Drink to 2024

7. 1998 Cabernet Sauvignon 13% Unavailble since Feb 2019 \$39.60 now \$109
Donated - courtesy of John Tozer

On its 21st birthday, this wine has a clear medium garnet colour, and is clean on the nose with a medium intensity of cherry, leather and earthy aromas.

On the palate the wine is big and berried with a firm, dry palate. By now the astringent tannins will have mellowed the high acidity, for medium - tannin, alcohol, body, and flavour intensity; there should be enough balanced top quality fruit remaining in the finish, with good mouthfeel. Flavour notes include cherry, black pepper and cocoa

92 points Drink 2018 Among top 8% of wines in the world

8. 2015 'Old Vines' Cabernet Shiraz 14% \$40.45

The selection of this wine was inspired by the 3L 2012 Old Vines Cabernet Shiraz we enjoyed courtesy of Trevor at our December dinner in 2018. Tahbilk created Australia's first 'Estate Blend' in 1972. Drawing on the Estate's extensive older vine plantings, this 2015 vintage blend of 60% Cabernet Sauvignon and 40% Shiraz is deliciously expressive of the character borne of its mature vineyards' sourcing. A deep ruby red colour with a crimson tinge. The fragrant sweet and spicy nose exhibits ripe dark berry and cherry fruits, with mint, plum, earth and spice notes. Judicious use of some 50% new French and American oak (alongside older barrels) brings cedar, herbal and vanillin notes into an overall package of some distinction. Velvety tannins placate the avalanche of fruit and integrate with the layered palate to offer a savoury edge,

culminating in in the wine in a captivating finish generous and full-bodied on the palate. This will age very well. Drink to 2030-35

9. 2014 'Eric Stevens Purbrick' Shiraz 14.5% \$62.95

Selected from the most outstanding casks produced on the Estate from a particular vintage, this wine became a 'new' legacy with its roots firmly planted in the history of the Estate. The wine is from old vine plantings from 1933, the prime source for Tahbilk's 'Eric Stevens Purbrick' Shiraz releases.

Known as 'Reserve' in 1985, from 2002 they fittingly carry his name and signature: 'Eric Stevens Purbrick'

A deep ruby colour, the attractive bouquet effortlessly shifts from the medium, with eucalyptus and licorice splashing across the mid-palate to a full-bodied palate containing juicy flavours of red, purple and blackberries and spice, with underlying anise fruit characters, some mocha note. Tahbilk's calling card of impeccably manicured grape tannins and oak, balance these flavours culminating in a wine in an enticing long and flavoursome finale. This delightful Shiraz has been crafted for consumption upon release but can also be cellared for a decade - drink to 2035. Halliday 94 points.