

THE HEATHCOTE WINE REGION

Located between Bendigo and Seymour, it is recognised for its production of award-winning Shiraz wines.

The ancient Cambrian soils—deep red, enriched soils—have excellent water-holding capacity and traces of sodium. The climate is strongly influenced by the Mount Camel Range formed around 500 million years ago by the collision of the Gondwana and Zealandia Tectonic Plates that caused a fault line extending from the Murray River to Lancefield. This is known as the Heathcote Axis. Heathcote's temperature range is defined as temperate because its seasons tend to be evenly distributed. Its cooling south winds provide summer temperatures around 3 degrees lower than Bendigo's. A daily average of 8.5 hours of sunlight allows for a warm, dry, growing season.

"Shiraz" grapes originally grown in Shiraz, a city in SW Iran, purportedly comes from the word "Syrah" meaning "dark-skinned grape," cuttings of which came to Australia in 1832 with the Scottish immigrant, James Bushy.

The Shiraz grapes grown in the Heathcote region are very low-yielding with finer tannins than others of this variety. The fruit is smaller with intense flavour: its light acidity and good balance giving the wine longevity and good cellaring, according to winemaker Gary Flynn. Also according to this vigneron, Heathcote Shiraz has "terrier" quality, a term factoring in the climate, the soil, location of the vines, pruning characteristics and fermentation process, all of which combine to produce the unique Heathcote taste.

No 1 "Camelback"

Produced by Galli Estate: winemaker Lorenzo Galli. Alcohol content 14%. Price \$20.

Its name originates from the Camelback vineyard located at the foot of Heathcote's majestic Mount Camel. Fruit driven and food friendly, its distinction is the freshness and purity of the grape.

No 2 "Tellurian"

Produced by Tranter Road Wines: winemaker Tobias Ansted. A/C 14.5%. Price \$22.

Considered to be at its best in its youth, this Shiraz is produced solely from the fruit from this vineyard on Tranter Road, Toolleen, on the western side of the Camel Range.

No 3 "Lewisroad"

Produced by Flynn's Wines: winemaker James Flynn. A/C 15%. Price \$27.

Traditional winemaking methods employed in the creation of Lewisroad, include small, open fermenters, basket pressing and twelve months in French and American oak barriques, to produce ripe cherry and spice aromas.

No 4 "Bull Lane"

Produced by Bull Lane Wine Company: winemakers Simon Osicka & Alison Phillips. A/C 14%. Price \$30.

This wine received a light eggwhite fining and traces may remain. Though made with minimal fining, filtration and stabilisation, a harmless crust may form in the bottle. The grapes are grown in buckshot gravel and the ancient red soil on the Mount Camel Range.

No 5 “B”

Produced by Buckshot Family Vineyard: Winemakers Rob & Meegan Peebles.
A/C 14%. Price \$32.

It is aromatic, plush, rich in blueberries, plums and spices and has a soft, silky, long finish.

No 6 “The Monster”

Produced by Silver Spoon Estate: winemaker Peter Young. A/C 15.7%. Price \$32.

This “Monster” #2 is handpicked, basket pressed and aged for eighteen months in a combination of new and old French oak. It has blackberry, blood plum, star anise and dark chocolate flavours.

No 7 “Paul Osicka”

Produced by Majors Creek Vineyard: winemaker Paul Osicka. A/C 14.5%. Price \$39.

This distinguished, sometimes hard-to-come-by wine has been described as “big, bold and beautiful”. It is a well-balanced drop which runs seamlessly across the palate.

No 8 “Occam’s Razor”

Produced by Occam’s Razor Wines: winemaker Emily Laughton. A/C 15.5%. Price \$55.

Emily, the daughter of celebrated vigneron Ron Laughton, has trained as a Primary teacher, but now makes her own wine, Occam’s Razor.

Grapes sourced from an employer of Jasper Hill make this Heathcote Shiraz. Rich rum and raisin, prune, chocolate and white pepper aromas give way to a palate that is dense and full. With its concentration of blackberries, spice and balance, this wine will reward cellaring.

PS: *William of Ockham was a fourteenth-century Franciscan friar and philosopher. The heuristic is called *lex parsimoniae* (the law of parsimony) which states that given that all things are equal, the simplest answer tends to be the correct one. *Lex parsimoniae* is now known as Occam’s Razor, in honour of William of Ockham.*