

The Key Review - The Key Review of Wines (KROW) issue 12

18th April, 2008

Pinot Noir

Tony Keys

Shelmerdine Yarra Valley Pinot Noir 2007

Lacks the 'down & dirty' Pinot character on the nose, this is more sour cherry but intriguing enough to be a pleasure. Smooth on entry and surprisingly rather quiet - not a lot happening. However chew on it and 'bang' - a multitude of great classic Pinot flavours are released filling all parts of the mouth; a quality wine.

Aus \$33 UK£ 12 USA\$ Not Available www.shelmerdine.com.au

Kurrajong Downs 'All Nations' Tenterfield Pinot Noir 2005

Defined Pinot nose, the back label says 'mushroom' and I'm happy to go along with that. Sour cherry on the palate, light in style but Pinot Noir all the way. Just falls away slightly at the end and lacks the after-kick 'Pinot perfume'. Good mouth feel.

Check availability & price with vineyard www.kurrajongdownswines.com

Nepenthe 'Charleston' Adelaide Hills Pinot Noir 2006

This is an absolute beauty and for such a good price! Nose is more red fruit than feral Pinot, but very much Pinot on the palate, It has all those sour notes that denote Pinot Noir; I would have liked it to be tighter but that's nit-picking.

Aus \$25 UK£ USA\$ www.nepenthe.com.au

Giant Steps 'Sexton Vineyard' Yarra Valley Pinot Noir 2006











Very 'earthy/ damp leaf' pinot nose; it's challenging in the mouth - flavours bust to the fore intermittingly along its journey. Good weight and mouth feel ending with a fantastic aftertaste.

Aus \$35 UK£16 USA\$30 www.giant-steps.com.au

Giant Steps 'Tarraford Vineyard' Yarra Valley Pinot Noir 2006

Like its partner from the Sexton vineyard, earthy Pinot nose and something there I cant put a name to – it's savory and dark and rather wonderful. It's tight on the palate and needs to be worked on to get the flavours released, but worth the effort. It's a little wayward at the moment but will come together as a truly great wine.

Aus \$40 UK £18 USA Not Available www.giant-steps.com.au

Shelmerdine Pinot Noir 2007	
Value	
Kurrajong Pinot Noir 2005	
Value	
Nepenthe Pinot Noir 2006	
Value	
Giant Steps 'Sexton Pinot Noir 2006	
Value	
Giant Steps 2006 'Tarraford Pinot Noir	
Value	

Some very smart Pinot Noirs being made nowadays - drink and enjoy.

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Chardonnay

Tony Keys

Giant Steps 'Tarraford Vineyard' Yarra Valley Chardonnay 2006

Let's not worry about words here - this is great Chardonnay ('nuf-said). It's also far better value than the Sexton at only \$5 more

Aus \$40 UK£18 USA\$ Not Available www.giant-steps.com.au

Fox Creek McLaren Vale Chardonnay 2007

The notes say 'white peach' on the nose - before reading the notes I had put nectarine. Tight flavors and still a lingering hint of oak that hopefully will dissipate over the next couple of months. Slightly disjointed at the time of tasting, but that will settle. It's a good wine.

Aus \$17 UK£ Not Available USA\$ Not Available www.foxcreekwines.com

Shelmerdine Yarra Valley Chardonnay 2006

Elegant, defined Chardonnay nose with a hint of peach; very tight on entry and travels very slowly unfolding tight knit flavours. It drops away in the centre, but a little more bottle age should sort that out. Ends crisp and with pleasing length.

Aus \$27 UK£ 11 USA\$ Not Available www.shelmerdine.com.au

Windowrie 'The Mill' Cowra Chardonnay 2007

Light but defined Chardonnay nose, sits well in the mouth; travels a straight line across the palate dispensing good but not exciting flavour. Very sound, good value wine.

Aus \$15 UK£8 USA\$ Not Available www.windowrie.com.au

Howard Park Chardonnay West Australia Chardonnay 2006

Beautifully crafted wine from the rich but not ostentatious nose through the initial tight palate format that opens slowly revealing many layers of flavour ending with a good lingering finish

Aus \$38 UK£14 USA\$30 www.howardparkwines.com.au

Robert Oatley Mudgee Chardonnay 2007

This sits on the edge of 'great' and for \$25 it is a steal. It's extremely well put together by winemaker James Manners from three different vineyard sites. Plenty of flavours that excite, I just found it lacking in depth.

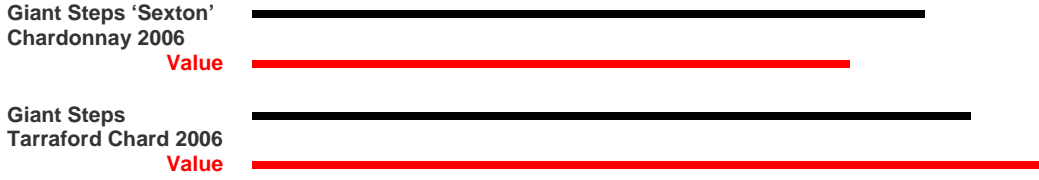
Aus \$25 UK£ Not Available USA\$ Not Available www.oatleywines.com.au

Oxford Landing Riverland Chardonnay 2007

I tasted this on the bench then took it to the lounge and drank the rest of the bottle or rather kept tasting the bottle - no clever witticism here. I was just blown away by this wine - it's \$8 for goodness sake! I just kept going back to it to make sure I had it right. Like the Kiss Shiraz, this is a wine that can be taken to the world and shown with great pride - there isn't anything I've tasted out there that will come close. The winemaker is Teresa Heuzenroeder; I've yet to meet her but I'm looking forward to

doing so.

Aus \$8 UK £6.20 USA \$9-\$10 www.yalumba.com



Fox Creek Chardonnay 2007	
Value	
Shelmerdine Chardonnay 2006	
Value	
Windowrie Chardonnay 2007	
Value	
Howard Park Chardonnay 2006	
Value	
Robert Oatley Chardonnay 2007	
Value	
Oxford Landing Chardonnay 2007	
Value	Off the scale

Nine Chardonnays and only one not performing to its price point and that was a surprise as it normally does. The \$8 Oxford Landing is a truly amazing wine at one point in the Chardonnay spectrum whilst the Tarraford Vineyard is a global player.