



# The Penfolds Collection 2024 something special

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JUL 18, 2024

HUON HOOKE

In NEW AND NOTEWORTHY

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Penfolds celebrates its 180th anniversary this year, and what better way than to release an extraordinary new wine.

This one-off celebration wine is the [2021 Penfolds Bin 180 Coonawarra Cabernet Shiraz](#), its bin number obviously chosen for a reason. Served immediately after the [2020 Grange](#) at the annual Collection media tasting in the Barossa Valley, this wine was both a contrast and a trump card. It's not often I score a wine 99 points and I never go to 100, but this wine scored a hands-down 99 points. Sadly, it's not going to be affordable to most wine lovers, as it's AUD \$1,180 (there's that number again) a bottle\*. But a great wine it certainly is, displaying a stunning array of aromas and flavours on a seamlessly elegant palate structure.

Part of its allure for me was the absence of oak character—it was all aged in French hogsheads, the critical factor being that none of those barrels were new. All were one year old—at least 'second fill' in winemaker jargon. Oak doesn't show. The grapes were sourced from two of the most prized blocks of Penfolds' Coonawarra vineyards, Block 5 and Block 10.

[The 2020 Grange](#), itself an exceptional wine, is priced just below [Bin 180](#) at AUD \$1,000.

[Grange](#) is right on form, the biggest differences to my palate being the [Bin 180](#) is gorgeous right now whereas Grange, in typical style, needs more time, its tannins being more blocky and grippy, and its oak being much more assertive (the usual 100% new American oak hogsheads). It's a blend of grapes from McLaren Vale, Barossa Valley and Clare Valley, and includes 3% cabernet sauvignon, in keeping with a tradition begun by Max Schubert in the 1950s.

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impressed me, especially the [Howell Mountain cabernet sauvignon cabernet franc](#), a first for [Penfolds](#). Sourced from the Steinhauer Vineyard, this wine incorporates 22% cabernet franc and shows the harmony and elegance allied with power typical of cabernets from this area of the Napa Valley.

Of the French wines, the [Penfolds x Dourthe II 2022](#) impressed the most. It's a Bordeaux/Coonawarra blend, 64/32% (they don't say what the other 4% was), and is a marvellous wine, a tribute to the blender's art, perhaps. The third in the series, it's the first to be 100% cabernet sauvignon (no merlot), which I think is a plus.

The Chinese wine, [2022 CWT 521 Cabernet Sauvignon Marselan](#), is from Ningxia, and of special interest is the inclusion of 23% marselan, which is one of the varieties newly approved for planting in parts of the Bordeaux region. Marselan is a cross between cabernet franc and grenache and is said to bring some of the character of cabernet franc but be better suited to hotter, drier conditions.

The regular [Penfolds](#) reds released annually in the Collection are all as we might expect: very good and typical, while two of the chardonnays were an exception. In my view, the [Reserve Bin A 2023](#) and [Yattarna 2022](#) were unready to be shown, the Reserve Bin in particular seeming completely out of sorts. The [2024 Eden Valley Riesling Bin 51](#) also seemed to have been

rushed into the bottle and I'm pretty sure it will be tasting much better in a year or two. The track record of these wines indicates that given adequate time, they will not disappoint, but they were not ready, in my view. The Reserve Bin A was especially disappointing and some tasters were even more critical of it than I was.

By way of contrast, the cheapest chardonnay on show, [Bin 311 Chardonnay 2023](#), was looking very good, and value at AUD \$55.

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Lastly, is there a value buy in reds this year?

The [2021 Bin 600 Cabernet Shiraz](#) (AUD \$90), a Californian wine blended from 85% cabernet sauvignon and 15% shiraz, from Napa Valley and Paso Robles, was one of the highlights of the tasting and one of the cheapest of the top bottles.

And [2022 Bin 407 Cabernet Sauvignon](#) (AUD \$130) struck me as being one of the best of this line that I could recall. It's a blend of Coonawarra, Padthaway, Wattonbully, McLaren Vale and Barossa Valley. It reminded me of one of chief winemaker Peter Gago's comments, hidden away in the exhaustive notes on the Collection wines: something to the effect that the word Coonawarra in any 2022 wine is a clue that it will be special. "A terrific year for the region".

Penfolds Collection 2024 Australian release date: August 1.

*\*magnums \$3,500, double magnums \$18,000*



Penfolds Peter Gago introduces the Penfolds 2024 Collection. [PENFOLDS WINES](#)

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## PENFOLDS COLLECTION 2024

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### Penfolds Bin 180 Cabernet Shiraz 2021

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### #1 of 16 2021 Cabernet Sauvignon blends from Limestone Coast

Very deep, dense purple-red colour; the bouquet wonderfully clear, deep cassis cabernet, bell-clear and unencumbered by new oak. Traces of nutmeg and violet, lavender and rose. Extreme intensity of flavour, the concentration is other-worldly. A great wine! (57% cabernet, 43% shiraz, from Penfolds vineyard blocks 10 & 5. 16 months in French oak hogsheads, all one year old and none new.)

99/100

DRINK 2028-2051 HUON HOOKE

AUD 1180



## Penfolds Grange

2020

### #11 of 429 2020 Shiraz from South Australia

Very deep, dense red-purple colour; aromas of earthy terracotta, dried meats, blackberry/plum jam and mocha/coffee grounds. The wine is massively full-bodied and dense in the mouth, rich and robust, extremely concentrated and the chewy tannins stick the tongue to the roof of the mouth. The finish lingers for a very long time. It's an assault on the senses and demands a lot of cellar time. (McLaren Vale, Barossa Valley & Clare Valley. 20 months in 100% new American oak hogsheads)

97/100

DRINK 2028-2050 HUON HOOKE

AUD 1000



## Penfolds Bin 311 Chardonnay

2023



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**#86 of 282** 2023 Chardonnay from Australia

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Light to mid yellow hue; smoky reduction and nutty aromas, palate medium bodied and rich, with big flavour for its size and a lot of secondary complexities from oak and lees. A fuller flavoured Bin 311. Smart chardonnay indeed. Already showing well. (Tasmania, Tumbarumba, Henty & Adelaide Hills)

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**92/100**

DRINK 2024–2032 HUON HOOKE

AUD 55



## Penfolds Bin 407 Cabernet Sauvignon 2022

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**#7 of 68** 2022 Cabernet Sauvignon from South Australia

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Very deep, dense purple colour; intense sweet floral blackcurrant aroma, cassis, blueberry and violets. The wine is intense and full-bodied, robustly structured and ripe, with masses of tannins and concentrated flavour and texture. Quite powerful and long, a very serious Bin 407. (Coonawarra, Padthaway, Wattonbully, McLaren Vale, Barossa Valley. Aged in French oak—25% new—and American—11% new)

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**95/100**

DRINK 2027–2044 HUON HOOKE

AUD 130

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