

# Wine Spectator Insider

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## Special Report: Australia

Anyone who thinks that all Australian Shiraz is alike would have a hard time making the case after tasting these wines. Representing the best of those Harvey Steiman has reviewed in the past few weeks, they include some that seduce with ultraripe flavors and others that veer toward jazzier, brighter characters.

What they share, however, is a real sense of refinement and elegance. The best are polished, seamless red wines that would add grace to any occasion.

Shiraz plays the leading role in most but not all of these wines. Several of them add a touch of Viognier to the blend for silkier textures and hints of spice, emulating a French practice common in the Rhône Valley's Côte-Rôtie appellation, where Viognier grows alongside Syrah. Other wines use some Grenache, the dominant grape of the Southern Rhône, which lightens the texture and creates a different fruit profile. There are even a couple of straight Grenache bottlings, which has become an incipient trend in South Australia.

<p><b>Glaetzer</b> Shiraz-Grenache Barossa Valley Wallace 2005 <b>90 points   \$21   1200 cases imported   Red</b> Smooth and open-textured. A generous mouthful of blackberry and cherry flavors that hover beautifully in the airy atmosphere of the round finish. Drink now through 2011.—<i>H.S.</i></p>	<p><b>Glen Eldon</b> Shiraz Barossa Dry Bore 2004 <b>90 points   \$27   1,000 cases imported   Red</b> Firm in texture, this dense Shiraz shows a savory edge of meat and herb to the black fruit flavors, finishing with a licorice note. The tannins have some grip. Best after 2008.—<i>H.S.</i></p>
<p><b>Heartland</b> Shiraz South Australia Directors' Cut 2005 <b>91points   \$29   550 cases imported   Red</b> Velvety in texture, with bright, juicy plum and blackberry fruit up front, shaded with captivating nuances of mocha, tar and licorice. The finish rolls along without interference from the tannins. Drink now through 2015.—<i>H.S.</i></p>	<p><b>Langmeil</b> Shiraz-Viognier Barossa Valley Hangin' Snakes 2005 <b>91points   \$19   500 cases imported   Red</b> Polished and refined, this is generous with its red cherry, raspberry and floral spice flavors, which come together beautifully on the long, well-integrated finish, where they ride on refined tannins. Drink now through 2016.—<i>H.S.</i></p>

