





# WINE REVIEWS

Words and photos by Krystina Menegazzo

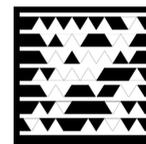


## ABOUT KRYSTINA MENEGAZZO

La Donna del Vino is the pseudonym of this young lady from Melbourne who worked in wineries throughout Australia and Italy. After years of gallivanting she returned to Melbourne to market wine and share her love of all things vinous. In her spare time she enjoys cooking, gardening, drinking good vino and is a self-confessed Neb Head (someone really into Nebbiolo).

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## FOWLES WINE Stone Dwellers Arneis 2013

**Strathbogrie Ranges, Victoria. RRP \$21**

I have noticed over the last decade or so that there is a concentration of grape growers in central and north-eastern Victoria who have become adventurous in their plantings. Especially with varieties hailing from Italy. It is fortunate for us consumers who have even more options when going to our local wine store. A bottle of this wine from the Strathbogrie Ranges in central Victoria landed in my lap recently and I was pretty eager to take a look as it was made from the Arneis grape.

This particular white grape variety hails from north west Italy and is known for its cleansing acidity, which gives you that lip-smacking effect after each sip. The Stone Dwellers example made by Fowles winery in the Strathbogrie Ranges pays a fine tribute to the Arneis grape. This zippy little number has delicate aromas of grapefruit, kiwis and white nectarine, that played nicely against the subtle flavours of a Middle-Eastern flavoured roast chicken I prepared. The palate is uber fresh with cleansing zesty citrus flavours, balanced acidity, a hint of slipperiness to the texture and a spicy note at the finish. For an Arneis, it also has particularly good length on the palate. In summary, I refer to my partner who succinctly said the wine was 'ultimately a little too drinkable'.

**Stockist:** Contact cellar door directly at [cellardoor@fowleswine.com](mailto:cellardoor@fowleswine.com)

## CRITTENDEN ESTATE Geppetto Cabernet Merlot 2012

**Port Phillip, Victoria. RRP \$23**

One of the first Disney films I watched as a child was *Pinocchio* and as such, I have always held a soft spot for anything related to the movie, even donkeys. Crittenden Estate recently sent me their range of wines called Geppetto. To take on the name of Geppetto, the wines are designed to be honest, not overly complex and of good quality – something that Mister Geppetto, the creator of *Pinocchio*, would have been proud of. Winemaker Rollo Crittenden has succeeded in this task.

The Cabernet Merlot was my personal pick of the bunch, being a classic blend of grapes that I grew up tasting with my father. This blend is 60 per

cent Cabernet Sauvignon and 40 per cent Merlot and spent three weeks on skins prior to maturing in older French barriques. The wine pours as a beautiful, deep purple and black hue, with aromas of cassis, spice, plum and red liquorice emanating from the glass. The palate has dominating flavours of blackcurrant and woody herbs, complemented by a medium to full tannin profile. As a wine from the 2012 vintage, the overall effect is dark, blackberry fruits at the fore with hints of vanilla and spice presenting themselves at the finish. The range of Geppetto wines are well worth seeking out for quality/value purposes, each with their own little critter on the front label. You will identify the Cabernet Merlot by the chook.

**Stockist:** Carwyn Cellars in Thornbury

## LUIS CAÑAS Crianza 2008

**Rioja, Spain. RRP \$35**

Bodegas Luis Cañas is a large family-owned winery dating back to 1928 and located in the heart of the renowned Rioja wine region. Rioja is famous for wines made from the red Tempranillo grape and this is exactly what Luis Cañas has created here. Crianza means that the wine has spent one year in oak barrels. In the case of this wine, it also spent another year maturing in tank prior to bottling.

Many years ago I was once referred to as the Tempranillo Goddess at a winery I worked at because during the harvest, it was my role to look after all the little experimental batches of Tempranillo. Apparently the lads thought I needed a fancy name for such a task. Having said that, I am far from an expert when it comes to Tempranillo, but I do enjoy tasting the different styles Spain has to offer. The Crianza from Luis Cañas pours with a deep burgundy and brick red hue. The aromas are super dark fruited – think black cherry and black plums – with hints of earthy spices like clove and pepper. In the mouth it has no fruit sweetness and instead offers savoury elements like black olive and a bitter chocolate finish on medium to full strength drying tannins. Different and interesting? Yes. Enjoy this dark expression of Tempranillo over the next few years with all manners of grilled meats.

**Stockist:** King & Godfree, Carlton