Penfolds

Unlike most premium wines, St Henri matures in large, seasoned vats , allowing the fruit to shine without overt oak influence.

St Henri Shiraz 2020

, Australia

Region and Vineyards

Sourced from top sites in **McLaren Vale, Barossa Valley, and Clare Valley**, the 2020 vintage draws from three of South Australia's most distinctive Shiraz-growing regions. Each contributes its hallmark: McLaren Vale brings plushness and dark fruit, Barossa provides depth and warmth, and Clare Valley lends structure and a cooler-climate aromatic lift.

Vintage 2020 was defined by climatic adversity. Winter and spring were dry, especially in Barossa and Clare Valley, with record-low rainfall and poor root-zone moisture. Flowering was delayed, and yields were reduced due to frost, wind, and a significant summer heatwave. However, a shift to cooler conditions in early 2020 allowed vines to recover and finish the season strongly. Despite small yields, the resulting fruit was intensely flavoured and ideal for the St Henri style—**a true example of low yields delivering high quality**.

Winemaking

100% Shiraz (with occasionally minimal Cabernet inclusion, not declared in 2020), the wine is fermented in stainless steel before **maturation for 12 months in large seasoned oak vats**. These old vats, neutral in character, allow the wine to evolve slowly and gently, developing complexity and textural depth without overt oak flavour.

This minimalist approach enhances **the wine's regional and varietal integrity**, offering an authentic, unadorned portrait of Shiraz—a style first produced by Penfolds in the 1950s and revived to acclaim in the 1990s.

Alcohol :14,50 %

Composition: 100% Syrah

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Tasting Notes

- **Color**: Garnet red with a deep purple core.
- **Aroma**: Perfumed and expressive, with no oak interference. Forest berries, strawberry flan, rhubarb tart, and red glacé cherries lead the fruit profile. Savoury aromas unfold—spiced sausage, roast lamb drippings, cured beef, and crushed black pepper. Mineral undertones of iron filings and stone dust complete a complex bouquet.
- **Palate**: A savoury, umami-rich palate with flavours of nori, olive brine, and soy reduction. Blueberry and mulberry leaf form the core, wrapped in exotic spice—turmeric, toasted cumin, and pimento. The tannins are tactile and fine, reminiscent of Dutch cocoa. Poised and powerful, this vintage promises longevity and graceful evolution.

Did you know?

St Henri is unique among Australia's finest reds for its **deliberate omission of new oak**, letting Shiraz speak for itself. First released commercially in **1957**, it stands as a philosophical counterpoint to **Penfolds Grange**, showcasing finesse over force.

Wine Pairing Ideas

- **Braised lamb shoulder with rosemary and anchovy**: The umami and savoury profile of the wine melds beautifully with rich, slow-cooked meat.
- **Chargrilled eggplant with tahini and pomegranate**: Echoes the earthy and spiced notes while soft tannins complement the texture.
- **Seared duck breast with cherry reduction**: The berry notes and gentle acidity complement the richness of duck.
- **Hard-aged cheeses (e.g., Ossau-Iraty or mature Comté)**: The salt and umami of the cheese align with the wine's savoury depth.

Robert Parker (RP) : 93 Points (2020)

Routinely my favorite red cuvée in the Penfolds Collection (matured in large-format seasoned French oak), there is always a freshness and suppleness to the fruit that is most elegant in the glass. Here, the 2020 St Henri Shiraz shows the warm and low-yielding season from whence it came in the splay of roasted beetroot, red fruits and meats on the mid-palate. A chunky, meaty iteration of this wine, the tannins are grippy and full in the mouth. You get aniseed and clove through the finish. 14.5% alcohol, sealed under screw cap.

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James Suckling (JS) : 99 Points (2019)

A great St. Henri and, although multi-regional, this is very much a wine that speaks of the Barossa Valley, with aromas of ripe blackberries and red plums that are so fresh, together with tobacco, young-leather, earth, chocolate, coal-smoke and tarry accents. Effortless depth on the palate with summer berries, framed in fine, alabaster-like tannins that are underscored with discreet power. So long and captivating. A blend of Barossa Valley, McLaren Vale, Port Lincoln, Robe, Padthaway, Clare Valley and Adelaide Hills. Drink over the next decade or more. Screw cap.Immediately spicy and complex, this has a rich blackberry and dark-plum nose, together with dark-chocolate and tarry, earthy elements. The palate has a very rich, fleshy feel with such ripe dark-plum, dark-chocolate, blackberry and mulberry flavors on offer. Generous, yet balanced. A South Australian blend of McLaren Vale, Barossa Valley, Padthaway, Wrattonbully and The Peninsulas. Drink or hold. Screw cap.

Decanter (DCT) : 96 Points (2019)

So much comfort comes from each sip of this graceful, understated Shiraz, boasting a meld of all the essential elements: bright, crunchy fruit freshness and satisfying savoury grip, all bound together in an intriguing textural tussle. There's much to contemplate, with olive, plum, mulberry, cocoa and cranberry all rolling and pitching on a king tide in the mid-palate. Such a luxurious sum of the parts makes you want to dive in for more. (DS)