

PENFOLDS MAGILL ESTATE  
SHIRAZ



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**OVERVIEW:** The historic and heritage-protected Penfolds Magill Estate is one of the few single vineyards in the world located within city boundaries (8 kms from the Adelaide Town Hall). It was here that Dr Christopher Rawson Penfold and his wife Mary settled in 1844, just eight years after the founding of Adelaide. Today the vineyard comprises only 5.2 hectares (12 acres), but it remains a highly evocative piece of South Australian winemaking history. The original cottage, built in 1845, still stands among the vines. Penfolds’ turn-of-the-century bluestone cellar complex is an important landmark. The cellar door, located in what was once Penfolds ‘Still House’ (distillery), and the critically acclaimed contemporary Magill Estate Restaurant (2003 South Australian Restaurant of the Year), are both important drawcards for all wine lovers. Max Schubert, Penfolds Chief Winemaker from 1948 to 1973, worked at Magill Estate and lived nearby. This is where the experimental and early Granges were first made. In 2001, the South Australian Heritage Council recognised Grange as a heritage icon of South Australia. Penfolds decided to return the winemaking and maturation of Grange to the Magill Estate winery and cellars from the 2002 vintage onwards.

Penfolds Magill Estate Shiraz was developed after the vineyard was saved from being engulfed by urban development. Magill fruit had always been used for premium Penfolds table wines including Grange, but a single estate wine was a compelling justification for the continued use of this vineyard (by then, just 5.2 hectares of the 120 hectares which once covered an entire hillside). Max Schubert, who remained a director of Penfolds and kept an office at Magill, and Don Ditter, Penfolds current Chief Winemaker, wanted to make a wine which showed the character of the vineyard but was more elegant in style than most Penfolds reds. Don Ditter comments, “Magill Estate needed to be something completely different from Grange, almost the complete opposite in style. While Grange has plenty of opulence and power, Magill Estate would show elegance, finesse and restraint”.

The Magill Estate style has evolved over the years. The early vintages were quite lean and tight. From the early 1990s the wine shows greater fruit definition and palate vitality. The leaps and bounds in viticulture have also helped. Winemakers are particularly interested in flavour development and tannin ripeness, resulting in wines with supple structures and more fruit richness.

## **PENFOLDS MAGILL ESTATE SHIRAZ**

*First Vintage: 1983*

*Variety: Shiraz*

*Origin: Single vineyard wine using selected parcels of fruit from the 5.2 hectare (12 acre) Magill Estate, Adelaide, South Australia.*

*Fermentation: Wax-lined, open cement fermenters with wooden header boards. Components complete fermentation in barrel, following a traditional basket pressing.*

*Maturation: 12-14 months in two thirds new French and one third American oak.*

*Comments: Approximately 1500-3000 cases. Packaged in laser-etched bottles since the 1997 vintage.*





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### SHIRAZ

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Penfolds Magill Estate is vinified in open, wax-lined concrete tanks at low temperatures. Towards the very end of fermentation the wine is drained and gently basket pressed. Once fermentation is complete, the wine is now matured in a combination of two thirds new French and one third new American oak for a period of 12 to 14 months. It is a medium-to-long term cellaring wine which builds up further complexity over time. In exceptional vintages like 1996, 1998 and 2002, the optimum cellaring potential is around 15 years. In a lesser vintage the wines develop more quickly and should be consumed earlier.

James Halliday says, "The Magill Estate style turned a corner in 1990 with riper fruit and better tannin structures. The early-picked low alcohol strategy of the 1980s did not pay long term dividends. Since the 1998 vintage the style seems to have moved in another direction completely, with more intense, powerful fruit and persistent tannins". Joseph Ward describes the 1996 and 1998 vintages as "truly outstanding" and Huon Hooke says the 2002 has "beautiful modulated ripeness".

Retired Penfolds winemaker, John Bird, who still plays a role in the classification and blending of the wine, comments, "For a single estate wine we have to employ a very focused approach to winemaking. It is not dissimilar to the way a Bordeaux Grand Cru Classe is produced. We batch vinify to optimise our blending options. One part of the vineyard will bring perfume and structure, another concentration and ripeness, and a third complexity and finesse. When it comes to assembling the wine, we can blend the best of these characteristics to make a wine in the Magill Estate style, within the constraints of the vintage".



**1983** **Now – Past**

Brick red. Cedar/cigar box aromas and some old leather nuances. The palate is smooth and mature with some sweet mocha fruit. Finishes a touch short. Beginning to dry out.

**1984** **Past**

Medium brick red. Leather/gamy aromas, but a very lean austere palate.

**1985** **Now – Past**

Brick red. A fading, overdeveloped wine with leather/chocolate/mushroom aromas and flavours. The fruit has dried out and the tannins are firm and chalky.

**1986** **Now**

Brick red. Gamy/chocolate/cedar aromas. The palate is medium concentrated with gamy/cedar flavours and fine grainy tannins. Still holding up.

**1987** **Now**

Medium red. Leafy/dusty/leather aromas with some minty notes. The palate is quite austere and builds up tannic and firm at the finish. Drink up.

**1988** **Now**

Medium red. Meaty/leather/earthy/driftwood aromas. A well concentrated palate with some dark fruit/meaty/leather flavours and firm tannin structure.

**1989** **Now**

Medium red. Cherry/blackberry/tobacco aromas with some stewed characters. A leanly structured wine with some ripe cherry stone/tobacco fruit and fine tannins. Finishes chalky dry.

**1990** **Now**

Medium red. Plum black cherry aromas. The palate is sinewy and dry with some spicy characters. A very muscular wine.

**1991** **Now** **2010**



Medium deep red. A stark contrast to 1990. Meaty/chocolate/blackberry/plum aromas with some liquorice/leather notes. A rich mellow wine with plum/leather/cigar box flavours and fine savoury tannins.

**1992** **Now** **2006**

Medium red. Paneforte/mulberry/gamy aromas. The palate is rich and ripe with paneforte/red fruit flavours, fine grained tannins and good length. Drink soon.

**1993** **Now** **2008**

Medium red. Dried herb/raspberry aromas with some cedar/vanilla notes. Well concentrated, slightly soupy palate with some plum/berry flavours but firm grippy tannins. Unlikely to improve.

**1994** **Now** **2014**



Medium deep red. A classic Magill Estate with cedar/dark plum/chocolate aromas and flavours. The palate is smooth and concentrated with plenty of fruit sweetness and fine soft tannins.

**1995** **Now** **2012**

Medium deep red. A surprising wine. Intense dark cherry/plum/blackberry aromas. A fresh, well-balanced palate with plenty of ripe cherry/plum/mocha fruit, fine tannins and excellent flavour length. Finishes a touch bitter.

**1996** **Now** **2015**



Medium deep red. Smooth supple stylish wine with blackberry/plum/meaty aromas. A beautifully proportioned palate with concentrated plum/chocolate fruit, ripe slinky tannins and superb flavour length. A great vintage.

**1997** **Now** **2008**

Medium deep colour. Restrained wine with blackberry/raspberry aromas and some dusty/earthy complexity. The palate is rich and deep with red berry/chocolaty fruit and plenty of savoury/leafy tannins. A medium term wine.

Outstanding vintages



# PENFOLDS MAGILL ESTATE

## SHIRAZ

1998  2005 2025 ★

Deep red-purple. Intense blackberry/smoky/meaty aromas. A powerful, concentrated palate with dense dark cherry/blackberry/dark chocolate flavours and ripe ample smooth tannins. A wine with layers of fruit and tannins. A long lived creature.

1999  2005 2015

Deep red. Deeply concentrated wine with plenty of blackberry comfit/vanilla aromas and some spicy/earth nuances. The palate is very powerful and concentrated with plenty of juicy fruit and mocha oak. The tannins are firm and bristling but well-integrated into the wine at this stage.

2000  Now 2010

Medium red. A very Rhône-like style with raspberry/pepper aromas and savoury/nutty oak. A lean medium-bodied wine with sweet ripe fruit and savoury tannins. An early drinking style.

2001  2005 2015

Deep red-purple. Intense youthful perfumed wine with black cherry/plum/licuorice/violet aromas and some savoury/malty oak. The wine is rich and deep with plenty of plum/dark fruit flavours and chocolaty tannins. Finishes long and flavourful.

2002  2005 2018

Deep red-purple. A fresh intense elemental wine with plum/dark cherry fruit, plenty of underlying malty oak and persistent chocolaty tannins. An elegant style with balance and charm.

Outstanding vintages ★