

Mighty bold

With ancient vines and a never-say-stop attitude this Barossa winery delivers a range of big-gun wines.

WHAT? My background? Western suburbs, mate. Dural, Sydney.

That's where The Bogan came from." Reid Bosward is the man talking, and I would have thought Brick Outhouse was more appropriate than bogan, but there you go.

Combine that shred of opinion with the facts of Bosward's winemaking career, and you come away with an impression of a man of significant mass, wide experience, locomotive determination, and a rare winemaking intelligence.

Loose in a smorgasbord of ancient Barossa vineyards, with a smart new winery, and Edouard Peter, a backer fluent in Swiss banks, who, quite simply, loves wine. Loves it. I don't say that of many people.

This may be why Reid Bosward is one of the few winemakers around who grins nearly all the time. He's arriving at his station, right on the whistle. It's Kaesler wines, just south of Penfolds Nuri, on the opposite side. Off the tracks.

"Third year at Roseworthy you've gotta choof off and do vintage somewhere," he says.

"In the Hunter I met a bloke who knew a bloke and that was it. I was working at Tyrrells. I graduated, then went back and did 3½ more years there with Spinner (Tyrrells winemaker Andrew Spinaze) and Mike de Garis. Best experience I've ever had."

But those ahead of Bosward in the Tyrrells promotion queue looked like staying put, so off he went. To Bordeaux, no less, once "Mr Murray" (Tyrrell) made a call to the enormous house of Lurton, a family with winery interests stretching from Kangaroo Island to the Argentine.

"I learnt a lot from Jaques Lurton," Bosward says.

"Then I came back and did two years with McGuigan."

He pauses before carefully adding: "Learned a lot there, too. "By that



time, Mike de Garis had moved to the Barossa to work at Cellarmasters, at Dorrien, and he called me. That helped a lot in my career. I got hooked on the Barossa.

"We bought Kaesler's fruit. It always looked fantastic, and eventually the vineyards came up for sale. I never imagined in a million years I'd be here doing this, but I was in Bordeaux, I went across to talk to Ed in Geneva, and it finally came off."

The old and new Kaesler vineyards are right there beside the winery on Barossa Valley Way. Since the initial purchase, Kaesler has bought more adjacent vineyards to virtually reassemble the original 1890s blocks

on sticky black dirt and ferruginous sandy loam over clay.

They've added some Dorrien vines on the flat opposite, and take a wildly different set of flavours from the chaotic, more ancient geology of the ridges beyond Marananga. And now they've bought a beautiful slice of McLaren Vale vineyard near Coriole and Seaview.

If Kaesler has a hallmark, it must be the exceptional intensity of pure flavour.

With tougher pruning regimes and a lot less irrigation, Bosward has chopped his average yields to further concentrate the sheer Barossa-headedness of his wines.

High alcohol? "Sure," he says. "Because we can."

"Fifteen per cent is easy here, and provided the wines are in balance I'll keep making them. You want lean wines, go somewhere lean."

Close as Bosward gets to lean is the Kaesler Old Vine Semillon 2005 (\$15; 92 points), a fine, dry, velvety white. But it's all uphill from there, through the rather accomplished '05 Viognier (\$20; 92 points) which is mealy and hearty enough to nail fish and chicken curries down tight.

The Fave Old Vine Grenache '05 (\$40; 93 points) is like hot chocolate sauce, syrupy, sweet and then dry, like the best dark cooking chocolate. Give it pepper steak.

The Avignon Grenache Shiraz Mataro '05 (\$30; 93 points) is all metwurst and roadkill, requiring pigeon or guinea fowl.

The Old Vine Shiraz '04 (\$55; 94 points) is stunningly, silkily blackberry and licorice, with tannins as dry as licking roads. This is not food wine. This is mountain climbing.

Need more? Want to recall the sharp acidity of rain on the hot tractor exhaust? Try the aforementioned Bogan '04 (\$50; 93 points).

These are mighty wines indeed. There's a heroes-only cabernet that weighs in at 16.5 per cent alcohol, and then the WOMS (Weapon Of Mass Seduction), an ultra-slick, supercharged Margeaux-style which recalls the old Special Bin Black Label Kaiser Stuhl reds of the late '70s and early '80s, or maybe Johnny Glatzer's Black Label Wolf Blass reds of the '70s. It's the faithful old Shiraz Cabernet blend (\$70; 94 points), which my notes mischievously suggest is the future of the Barossa. Mmm.

Then, for blessed release, save \$160 in time for the June launch of the breathtaking Kaesler Old Bastard Shiraz '04 (94 points now; more later) with its crazy Ralph Steadman label, and a myriad of exquisite, vibrating, living flavours from 1893 vines to light up your innards, from the brain clear through the gizzard to the soul.

Winemaker Reid Bosward and, below, the Kaesler label.

Main picture: BEN MACMAHON



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Morambro Creek 2002 Cabernet Sauvignon

89 points from Robert Parker and 4 stars from Winestate this wine reeks of Blackberries, Mint and Vanilla. The palate has berry fruits, chocolate and deep fine grained tannins with a powerful and concentrated finish.



Vasse Felix 2005 Classic Dry White\$14.99 ea.

From a very savvy producer, this wine is a classic Western Australian Semillon/Sauvignon Blanc blend with a touch of Chardonnay thrown in for viscosity. Essentially unoaked, it does contain however a portion of Semillon that is oak fermented, it exhibits beautiful floral tones along with lime and lemongrass. Fresh and lively on the palate where the intensity increases with gooseberry, lime sherbet and passionfruit dominant, will drink well over the next two or three years.

Linfield Road 2002 Shiraz\$27.99 ea.

Linfield Rd 2002 Limited Release Shiraz Blue/Gold Award, Sydney International Wine Competition 2006, Gold Medals at Melbourne 04 and Adelaide 03, 92/100 in James Hallidays Australian Wine Companion 06, Highly Recommended by Winestate speaks volumes for this luscious offering from a small but quality Barossa Producer!

Penfolds 2002 Kalimna Bin 28 Shiraz\$19.99 ea.

GIFT BOXED AND BONUS WAITERS FRIEND
Best In Class and Gold at the International Wine and Spirit Competition in London, Robert Parker says "The antithesis of Bin 128 is Penfolds' 2002 Shiraz Bin 28 Kalimna, which comes from warmer vineyards. A fuller bodied effort, it possesses sweet berry and plum like fruit, notions of white chocolate and pepper, a deeper, fleshier feel in the mouth, good exuberance, and a chunky personality. It should age for a decade or more." 89 Points.

O'Leary Walker 2004 Clare Valley Cabernet Sauvignon\$16.99 ea.

A big fruit number, this Cabernet is made from a combination of low yielding fruit from the Armagh and Polish Hill regions in the Clare Valley. 20 months in French Oak, new and seasoned, sees this wine slowly developing with the bouquet showing massive cassis aromas whilst the palate endorses the nose and then adds fruits of the forest, very fine tannins and a long and complex finish. Buy half a dozen but don't even think of opening one for at least five years and then the next another five after that, this wine is a snip at the price.

Stonehaven 2002 Hidden Sea Shiraz\$14.99 ea.

A deep crimson red greets the eye followed by ripe berry fruits and fragrant spicy aromas of Cinnamon, Cloves and Pepper. The palate is intense with blueberries, raspberries and plums combining with subtle oak and fine grained tannins.

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