



Cobaw Ridge Chardonnay 2023

Rated : 97 Points

The biodynamic stalwarts. Alan and Nelly Cooper, grow outstanding chardonnay. This we know.

The endorphin rush. It's there. A palpable joy drinking this. It's the chiseled texture and juicy, bright, saline minerality that sticks around as the memory. Medium to full in character but very, very refreshing. A distinct yellow stone fruits thing going on with a lemon verbena and lemongrass character in that mix. It's awesome. In this, very light honeycomb notes, a touch of white chocolate, vanilla bean, green almonds and hazelnut savouriness. So even, so persistent, if not gently palate-sticking in character.

Complex. Compelling. Complete. Double down on proper character of chardonnay, not tricks and chicanery, just so. Jittery and excited as I sip.

THE WINE FRONT – Mike Bennie

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Cobaw Ridge Original Pinot Noir 2023

Rated : 95 Points

The Original naming refers to the 1995 plantings that first went in the ground at Cobaw Ridge but also aptly describes the Cooper family behind the vines.

As with many great wines, the more time spent with it, the more the journey is cinematic, which is particularly apt here. On opening, a seamless, svelte and lighter weight red with dark cherry, caraway seed, Aussie bush elements and white pepper dusted in. The more time open, the more big swirls, the build of savoury elements in hazelnut, garam masala spice, spearmint and amaro-like qualities. The texture opened up somewhat too, more expansive, a spread in the palate on guiding trails of gossamer. There are wines that deliver strict bounds of Olympic performance, precise and at the apex, and then those that build as an expressive performance. The latter here, and we're better for it.

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Cobaw Ridge High Density Pinot Noir 2023

Rated : 95 Points

High fidelity, high density, high tension. All happening. It's a wine on the edge, and for personal preferences, that's mostly where I want my wine to be. It keeps you alert, it keeps you seeking out more information. This wine is imbued with fine, elegant pinosity and shows off refined tannin profile and a sense of complexing minerality. The rub is that it's a marginal site, a cool place that delivers a nervous freshness at times, and with that mint, Aussie bush/alpine elements that could irk some who approach this wine. I bet most who do know what they're in for, know the quality potential inherent, and look for the distinct personality even in the more edgier years. Amongst all this, dark cherry, pitch perfect in freshness and bite, some sweet spice too. Just shy of medium weight. Very compelling.

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Cobaw Ridge Lagrein 2022

Rated : 96 Points

This historical tasting here was instructive for this wine. Biodynamic farmed to nth degree. Visionary stuff. From a cool year, there was only 400 kg harvested and it was picked mid May. A portion was bled off and the rest spent three weeks on skins. My tasting companion just said “lock the door, close the blinds, turn off your phone and just enjoy this bottle of wine. A perfect recipe for that”. Amen.

Lots of cassis and black jellybean, alpine herbs, a bit of higher toned violet floral notes, Chinese five spice too. Beautiful perfume. Sink in deep. The palate is sinewy and refreshing, succulent and fine boned, superb tannin flex that’s so Italianate, and shows so much detail in dark fruits, that pretty, floral herbal lift, maraschino cherry, blood orange and amaro. Wow. This is bloody fantastic. So much character, so much deliciousness, so much drinkability, so much to savour. Got better and better with air. A twenty minute wine, if you get my drift, but resist if you can. Stellar

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Cobaw Ridge l'altra 2023

Rated : 93 Points

This syrah styled as a lighter, fresher expression, with a dash of pinot noir and lagrein as seasoning.

It has that shimmering, garnet glow in the glass, a vibrant ruby hue of frisky intent. It crackles and crunches in the palate, tart cranberry, pomegranate juice, blood orange, watermelon and dashes of sage and minty herbal inflection. Live wire stuff, a sweetness, almost verging into Ribena territory but for the herbs and high tensile acidity lending the freshening factor that makes it soar. With time open, things settle down and savoury up too. It's a delicious expression.

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Cobaw Ridge Pyrenees Syrah Rose` 2023

Rated : 94 Points

The journey further afield from the Cobaw estate continues and the well-loved, oft-plundered Chapoutier organic vineyard in Pyrenees is the quarry here. This is whole bunch pressed and sent to oak and terracotta amphora for its pre-bottle life. It relaxed for a year and then got sent to its glass prison. Unleashed, a special pink wine.

It's very fine, lightweight but glossy, raspberry and cherry juice, rose hip tea, sour-sweet in a way with some green almond, light sugared almond characters, subtle curry spice notes, some alpine herbs in the mix. Cool, restrained yet flavoursome and with exceptional length and persistence of fresh, briny minerality. It's straight up delicious and wildly drinkable stuff.

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Cobaw Ridge Pyrenees Syrah 2023

Rated : 95 Points

From the Chapoutier organic vineyard in Pyrenees. This off-site exploration for Cobaw Ridge a worthy project diversifying the interest in that wonderful estate and winery. It sort of suggests that things are good for sales of the estate wines and that this is interesting gravy – a good thing in an industry where woe is often a byword. The wines of course made with same care, attention, vessels and concern as per the estate wines. There is 25% new French oak employed here, though you couldn't tell.

It's one of those somewhat lighter weight wines yet distinguished by savoury, game meat characters and distinct crushed-rock minerality. It soars with perfume, dark fruited, stony, herbal, meaty, the palate an echo of this with streaks of pulverised pumice tannin and gently sweet fruit tempered by alpine herb and lavish black pepper. It's a serious syrah, yet has refreshment factor and lift too. It has an edge, a cockeye and hip thrust, it is the wink of Alan Cooper and the laugh of Nelly Cooper and wholly Cobaw in derring-do and distinction. It invokes difference and charisma and charm. I'm so in.

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Cobaw Ridge Pyrenees Grenache 2023

Rated : 92 Points

From the Landsborough Vineyard which feels somewhat put in lights by Owen Latta of Latta wines but of course there's others who have been there before and around and done well. Just my compass. Now, Cobaw Ridge has a crack, and it's exciting to see the family extending their reach and interpreting sites that a reel of others do now, to see their take on things. This has around 15% whole bunches in wild ferment, with the wine pressed off and then chills out in larger format oak after. It's a sweeter, riper fruit profile but not rich, indeed, just a few rungs up the ladder from fuller, bold rose wines and frisky as all get out. That being said, lots of flavour, sense of sweet fruit, raspberry, red cherry, sweet cranberry, blood orange and a swirl of sweet spices and minty, herbal elements. A touch of chocolate in there too. It flows well, it feels smooth with just a faint grip. That ripeness perhaps gets away a little in the wine, but charm here for sure. Some malt and gentle grip of tannin comes in late but appreciated. Easy.

THE WINE FRONT – Mike Bennie

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