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Syrah or Shiraz- Enjoy!

By **Darryl Beeson**

Syrah and Shiraz are the same grape. [Australia](#) uses the term Shiraz instead of Syrah. [California](#) winemakers also use Shiraz if the wine is made in an Australian style, that being fruit-forward. Syrahs can have aromas and flavors such as pepper, plum, blackberry, herbs, and warm spice. Syrah pairs well with heavy foods. Barbequed foods as in chicken, lamb, and steak are awesome with Syrah. Spicy foods also pair well with a spicy Syrah. Syrah grows well in both cool and hot climates. A cooler climate yields a wine with more spicy aromas and flavors. Hotter climates yield a more fruity wine

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Domaine Cros, Minervois 2000

Price \$9.99

Rating 93

The nose reminds of wild fruit and hot, earthiness. The sip leads with bacon, ripe plum and mineral in the long length.

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Paul Jaboulet Aîné "Domaine de Thalabert" Crozes Hermitage, Rhone 2003

Price \$36

Rating 95

The 2003 Crozes-Hermitage Thalabert (production was one-third of normal) presents a dark purple hue as well as powerful aromas of olive/tapenade, black fruit, cherries, anise and Asian spice. There are elements of garrigue, a [Mediterranean](#) bush consisting of low evergreen shrubs and abundant herbaceous plants. Big-bodied, with low acid, balanced tannin, and concentrated fruit, drink over the next twenty years.

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Domaine d'Andezon Côtes du Rhône, 2001

Price \$14.99

Rating 93

The nose is complex with plum, black cherry and hints of roasted herbs. The sip offers an array of complex fruit, plus roasted mineral elements in the long finish. Domaine d'Andezon is a 25-acre property in Estezargues, a small village on the western edge of the Cotes-du-Rhone appellation, close to Lirac and Tavel. The floor of the organically-farmed Andezon vineyard is blanketed in large, round stones like those found in Chateauneuf-du-Pape. The estate has been in the Lamouroux family for more than thirty years and is now run by the children of the original brother-owners. They [carry on](#) their fathers' traditions and adhere to the family's mantra: "It is by the work of the ground that one arrives at quality."

Reynolds Vineyard Shiraz, South Australia 2004

Price \$9.99

Rating 90

The nose is rich with blackberry and mineral. The sip is concentrated with ripe fruit. Elements of pepper and spice follow. Blackberry and plum follow in the palate. Pair this lusty, fruit-forward red with stewed meats, wild selections such as venison, or with gourmet herbed sausage. The grapes for this wine were primarily sourced from the famed "Nanya" vineyard based in the Murray Valley (Riverland). The exact blend is 93% Syrah and 7% Cabernet Sauvignon.

Benziger Syrah, California 2001

Price \$22

Rating 93

There are very complex aromas of black fruit, smoky tar and dried herb. The sip is velvety with flavors of black plum, vanilla and black pepper. The finish is long and complex with ripe fruit. "2001 may be remembered as a comeback vintage," recalls wine maker Terry Nolan.

Columbia Valley Syrah, Columbia Valley 2001

Price \$18

Rating 92

Aromas of dark fruit and leather are followed by flavors of blackberry, leather, black pepper and firm mineral in the complex, long finish dusted by cocoa and mocha.

Delas "Les Launes" Crozes-Hermitage, Rhone 2002

Price \$18

Rating 86

The sniff reveals powerful black pepper, the calling card of the Syrah grape. The sip leads again with black pepper. The fruit elements are lean. Give this red some time to age.

Delicato Shiraz, California 2004

Price \$8

Rating 88

Blackberry and charred oak are in the nose. The sip leads with blackberry, followed by toasted oak. This producer's Shiraz has won as Best California Shiraz at the California State Fair for three consecutive years.

Hess Select Syrah, California 2003

Price \$13

Rating 90

The nose and sip are packed with jammy fruit and mineral complexity. There are floral notes of violet, along with soft pepper in the finish. The sip is long, like velvet, and concentrated.

Gallo Family Vineyards Reserve Syrah, Sonoma 2003

Price \$13

Rating 93

"The 2002 first vintage Syrah was crafted with some of Sonoma County's finest grapes," explains Alexandra (Alex) Dutzi, of The Gallo Family wine making team, Sonoma. "It is a rich and opulent Syrah displaying aromas of cassis, black pepper

spice and blackberry fruit. Powerful and succulent."

Penfolds Koonunga Hill Shiraz, South Eastern Australia 2003

Price \$12

Rating 90

The sip is rich, luscious, leading with blackberry and plum. More black fruit and soft velvet down the throat, then classic pepper and hints of aromatic leather. The tannins are soft. The oak shows restraint. The Koonunga Shiraz took the "Great Value Red Wine of the Year" at the 2001 International WINE Challenge in [London](#).

Wolf Blass "President's Selection" Shiraz, South Australia 2003

Price \$17.99

Rating 90

The nose is spicy with eucalyptus and concentrated fruit. The sip is rich with concentrated fruit. Think ripe plum and gentle pepper.

Graffigna Shiraz, Argentina 2003

Price \$12

Rating 89

The huge, worldwide demand for Australian Shiraz has other regions in the world competing for some of the action. This Argentinean "Shiraz" showcases ripe red fruits in the nose, along with a small touch of earth and oak complexity.

Wild Horse Syrah, Paso Robles 2003

Price \$22

Rating 92

Earthy mulberry leads in the nose, along with notes of bacon. There are flavors of leather and mineral, along with gamy red fruit throughout the long length, ending with pepper and menthol.

Qupe Syrah, Central Coast 2004

Price \$16.99

Rating 93

This producer wrote the book on California "Rhône Ranger" Syrah. Complex and earth-driven flavors of plum, pepper and freshly sliced bacon are all within the glass.

Francis Coppola Green Label Syrah-Shiraz, California 2003

Price \$16

Rating 93

There are hints of smoky bacon in the nose. The sip begins with chewy, coarse black fruit with black pepper and plum. The length is long with mineral, tar and black fruit.

McPherson Winery Syrah, Texas 2004

Price \$15

Rating 90

The flavors are lush and true to form, with hints of pepper and leather. Kim McPherson is a native of [Lubbock](#), Texas. After graduation from Texas Tech with a degree in Food-Nutrition Science, Kim completed the enology and viticulture program at the University of California at Davis and worked in [Napa](#) Valley.

Charles Shaw Shiraz, California 2004

Price \$3.99

Rating 87

This wine is in limited distribution, primarily at Trader Joe's stores. This was once famously known as "two buck chuck." The nose is delicate. The sip is light, almost grapy with plum and soft mineral inthe good length.

Penfolds "Koonunga Hill" Shiraz, South Eastern Australia

Price \$12

Rating 90

This Shiraz is concentrated and assertive. Ripe plum, black pepper and dark, jammy fruit lead the way.

Hugh Hamilton "Jim Jim" Shiraz, McLaren Vale 2004

Price \$9.99

Rating 91

There are notes of Asian spice in the nose. The sip is vibrant and rich with complex fruit.

Hugh Hamilton "Jekyl & Hyde" Shiraz/Viognier, McLaren Vale 2004

Price \$26

Rating 93\

The nose starts with menthol, plum and black fruit with hints of pepper. The sip has layers of plum.

Lulu B. Syrah, France 2004

Price \$8.99

Rating 89

The flavors or complex and fruit-forward. There are floral notes within the lilting finish. This great value of a screw-top red is imported by Boisset America. Learn more at www.luluBwine.com.

Rosenblum Syrah "Fran's Vineyard" Dry Creek 2002

Price \$30

Rating 93

This lovely perfumed and very inky dark Syrah has aromas and flavors of smoke, black cherry and wild blackberries with a core of minerals. This is a reflection of the mountain terrior that fostered the grapes. This vineyard is owned by Fran and Jack Florence, Sr.

Houghton Shiraz, Western Australia 2004

Price \$14

Rating 92

The color is almost purple. There are aromas of ripe plum and pepper. The sip offer ripe plum, dark fruit andmocha in the finish.

Angoves "Vineyard Select" Shiraz, McLaren Vale 2004

Price \$12

Rating 86

This Shiraz is big and ripe with jammy fruit. There could be less jam and a little more

complexity. An enjoyable red, nonetheless.

Darryl Beeson travels the world looking for great wine finds. Says writer Roy Blount, Jr., "Wine is tough, but I know Darryl can do it."

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