



Penfolds

2004 PENFOLDS GRANGE SHIRAZ

“IS ANY WINE WORTH AU\$550 TO AU\$600 OR MORE, WHICH IS WHAT YOU’LL PAY FOR PENFOLDS’ LATEST VINTAGE OF GRANGE, THE 2004 VINTAGE?

There are extra costs in the kid-glove treatment lavished on those grapes by the winemakers, the cost of the best oak barrels, and a big cost for Grange is the cost of holding it back, for longer maturation than most red wines.

But the cost of the metal and plastic in a Ferrari have little to do with its price. You pay for the workmanship, the experience and history of the maker, and the 54-year tradition of what is regarded as one of Australia’s greatest wines – if not its greatest. It’s also one of the world’s greatest, capable of ageing gracefully for more than 50 years.

And the 2004 is a great Grange, one of the very best, on the same level as the ‘96, ‘90, ‘86, ‘76, ‘71, ‘66, ‘63, ‘62, ‘55 and ‘53. Ultimately, it is worth what people are prepared to pay, and if the world’s wealthiest are paying thousands for Domaine de la Romanee-Conti, then AU\$600 for ‘04 Grange could be seen as reasonable. To an ever greater extent, the market sets the price, not Penfolds.

At least if you buy the ‘04 vintage you will have bought a very great vintage of Australia’s icon wine. I have had the privilege to drink many great old bottles of Grange. They are truly exquisite drinks, and I would rank them with the greatest wines of any type I have drunk, including the best bordeaux, burgundy and Rhone Valley.

The 1990 was probably the most hyped previous vintage of Grange. I rate the ‘04 above that wine. I like its spectrum of flavours and I think it is one of the best balanced vintages yet.

Long gone are the days when young bottles were overtly oaky and fearsomely tannic. The ‘04 is a masterpiece of harmony.”

—*Huon Hooke, SYDNEY MORNING HERALD, MAY 2, 2009*

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99 POINTS [Drink: 2017-2050]

“I’m not sure that ripe, South Australian Shiraz gets any better than this – in terms of depth and complexity... Perfect structure, depth and length.... If you are ever going to buy a new-release Grange, this is the one. It’s a fifty-year wine.”

—*Campbell Mattinson, THE WINE FRONT REVIEW (WWW.WINEFRONT.COM), APRIL 22, 2009*

19.5 POINTS+ [out of 20]

“Much more harmonious than ever before, at this age, and more communicative, too, this is a terrific wine and the crescendo of flavour never seems to stop. Amazing length and perfect balance make this a near perfect wine and my joint highest scoring Grange ever.”

—*Matthew Jukes, TASTED ON MARCH 16, 2009*

“‘It’s a benchmark wine, a very, very fine vintage,’ Langton’s Wine auctioneers’ Andrew Caillard, an authority on Penfolds wines, said of the wine. ‘It certainly has the potential to be one of the greats.’”

—*ADELAIDE ADVERTISER, APRIL 21, 2009*

“WINE collectors will have to pay almost AU\$600 a bottle for the new release of Australia’s top wine, the world-renowned Penfolds Grange. But they will be getting a wine tipped to be one of the greatest Granges made since the first vintage in 1951.... ‘We’re expecting the 2004 to be incredibly sought after,’ said Grant Ramage, liquor merchandise and marketing manager at Coles, owner of Vintage Cellars.”

—*Chris Snow, HERALD SUN, APRIL 21, 2009*

96 POINTS +++

“Of all the Granges released in the modern era, this vintage is surely the most respectful of the wine’s original style. This is like the 1991 and 1983 models: it’s huge, almost impenetrable wine set for a mighty future.”

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“After Schubert, Grange became a polished, sanitised, blended-to-perfection postmodern beauty—perhaps a little too much so. But in the new release, from the great 2004 vintage, the only part of Schubert’s recipe to be abandoned is the compromise. All his quirky passion is back in the bottle. It should set the traditionalists giggling with awe as they stack their cellars.”

—*Philip White, THE INDEPENDENT WEEKLY, APRIL 24-30, 2009*

“Penfolds chief winemaker Peter Gago reckons it will keep well in a cellar for at least 60 years, although it will start to reach optimal drinking some time before then.... So is it worth the hype and is it worth the money? On both counts: yes. It is Australia’s greatest wine and this vintage will go down as one of the greatest. In fact, if you are even a casual accumulator of the odd vintage of Grange, your collection will be incomplete without it.”

—*Ray Jordan, WEST AUSTRALIAN, APRIL 22, 2009*

“For many, it’s more than a top drop; it’s a quality investment.... This drop is already being rated at 98 and 99% by critics across the country. If it ages like they hope, it could eventually become one of the most valuable wines on a collector’s rack.”

—*CHANNEL TEN, A NATIONAL AUSTRALIAN EVENING NEWS PROGRAM, MAY 1, 2009*

19 POINTS [out of 20]

“It is tempting to drink this intense yet sumptuous wine now, as many Americans would, yet its glory is its ability to age for, as Penfolds’ greatest Granges do, up to 50 years. Drink 2012-30.”

—*Linda Murphy, JANCISROBINSON.COM, MAY 1, 2009*

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