

Bilancia

Stephen Tanzer

2008 Syrah/Viognier Hawke's Bay (\$45) Bright, deep red. Sexy, fruit-driven aromas of redcurrant, red plum and smoky red cherry, with notes of pepper and herbs building with air. Smooth and lush in the mouth, but with the herb and pepper notes currently restraining the wine's fruit sweetness. Nicely textured and structured wine with a youthfully dry finish that calls for a bit of patience. **88**

2008 Syrah La Collina Hawke's Bay (\$110) Saturated bright red-ruby. Crushed currant, sour cherry, dark chocolate, minerals, pepper and flowers on the nose, with a liqueur-like red berry nuance; reminded me of Hermitage. Fuller on entry than the 2008 Syrah/Viognier, then large-scaled and densely packed in the middle, with a nearly roasted quality leavened by strong peppery acidity. Not a sweet style but this really saturates the entire mouth. Finishes with substantial tongue-dusting tannins and a distinct peppery quality. This requires cellaring but is built to age. **90(+?)**

2007 Syrah La Collina Hawke's Bay (\$110) Deep red-ruby. Sexy aromas of plum, licorice, smoke and pepper. Then quite ripe but not at all overly sweet or lush in the mouth, with penetrating peppery lift and a tactile saline character: much less exotic and more serious than the nose suggests. This suave, classically dry syrah finishes with noteworthy energy and length, and gripping tannins that call for at least two or three more years of cellaring. The plum and berry fruit began in the deep background but emerged slowly with extended aeration. Vine Street Imports, Philadelphia PA) **91(+?)**

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