

Odd One Out Cabernets

Wines like this give cabernet blends a great name. It's a blend of cabernet sauvignon, cabernet franc, merlot and petit verdot from various regions in Victoria, and it has been blended to perfection.

2006 RELEASE

This gets the high points for straight-up class and old-fashioned yum factor. It tastes of blackcurrant, black olives, coffeed vanilla and blueberry. It might not sound extraordinary, but these flavours have vibrancy and punch, and show no signs of alcohol heat or over-oaking. If you can find any of this, buy with confidence.

DRINK 2009–2013.

Price	\$20
Region	Victoria
Alcohol	14.5
Seal	Screwcap
Value	◆◆◆◆◆
Auction	N/A
Score	93

Optimiste Cabernet Sauvignon

Mudgee is a beautiful place to visit, especially in spring, but the region seems to be losing traction in today's crowded wine marketplace. Pity, because its reds can be very good.

2005 RELEASE

This is fairly light for a cabernet, and you certainly need to serve it with food to get the best from it. It smells of dusty old wood, mint, blackberry and blackcurrant with the odd earthy, gamey note. Acid is fresh but a little jarring – you need to sit back and just drink this without thinking on it too hard. **DRINK** 2009–2010.

Price	\$18
Region	Mudgee
Alcohol	14
Seal	Screwcap
Value	◆◆◆
Auction	N/A
Score	86

Oxenberry The Bullocks Shiraz Cabernet

Oxenberry Farm dates back to the 1860s, though as a wine label it's brand spanking new. The wines are well packaged and generally well priced.

2007 RELEASE

The cabernet sauvignon in this wine has helped to give it a dry, robust character, which, coupled with the juicy power of shiraz, makes for a winning combination. The flavours are a touch too tarry, but there's still a good dose of sweet, blackberried fruit flavour before a twiggy bitterness slips through the finish. Lots of weight and impact. **DRINK** 2010–2014.

Price	\$20
Region	McLaren Vale
Alcohol	14.5
Seal	Screwcap
Value	◆◆◆◆◆
Auction	N/A
Score	88