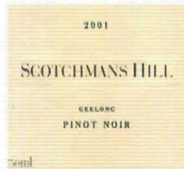


Spending: Five Pinot Noirs from 2001

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1 PUNT ROAD is the big brother of Sticks, one of Australia's best cheap pinot noirs (\$18). Punt Road (\$22), from the Yarra Valley, is a drink-now wine. A little chariness (barrel ageing) adds to the complexity, and makes it suited to char-grilled game, fish or meat.

2 SCOTCHMAN'S HILL (\$26), from the Bellarine Peninsula (near Geelong), is a classic contemporary Australian pinot noir, with cheery red berry fruit character, although it is a slightly lighter style.



3 NEPENTHE (\$27) hails from the Adelaide Hills, and is a big-red drinker's pinot noir. It has an oily, heavy mouthfeel (which is a good thing), complexity and a lengthy finish.

4 SCORPO (\$35) is the new kid on the Mornington Peninsula block. It polarised my tasting panels: the first found it thin, harsh and chalky; the second loved it for its power, complexity and subtle fruit. It benefited from breathing, and should age well.

5 MOORILLA ESTATE near Hobart makes three pinots — in ascending level of price, Black Label, White Label and Reserve (which, confusingly, has a black label). Reserve (\$45) is rich, complex and classy, with all elements totally in balance. **JAMES OMOND**