

## WILLIAM DOWNIE

*Victoria, Australia*



### Products

William Downie represents the pinnacle of minimal intervention, site-specific pinot noir in Australia. No one has done more work in the vineyard than he has, spending his days meticulously caring for his home and leased vineyards, as well as seeking out the best sites for pinot noir across Victoria. Bill started out in wine near the top: a two-year stint with the legendary pinot noir producer Phillip Jones at Bass Phillip in Leongatha, Gippsland. He went on to work for De Bortoli, eventually becoming their senior winemaker in 2006. In the meantime, Downie launched his own label in 2003, quietly sourcing and making some of the best pinot noir in Yarra Valley, Gippsland, and the Mornington Peninsula. In the early 2000s, Bill also snuck off to Burgundy for harvests, honing his craft with Domaines Fourrier and Hubert Lignier. When Romain Lignier died unexpectedly in 2004, it was Downie who was brought in by the Domaine to lead the winemaking team for the 2004 and 2005 vintages. So if you're lucky enough to encounter some 2005 Domaine Hubert Ligniers floating around, those wines were made in large part by William Downie. Bill eventually left De Bortoli to focus on his own label. He also abandoned his grape sources in other parts of Victoria to focus solely on Gippsland, a sprawling region of untold potential east of the Yarra Valley. He and his wife Rachel (a talented wine professional in her own right, not to mention an expert yogurt and cheese maker) own their own farm called Guendulain, in addition to tending to other plots all over Gippsland. Pinot noir is the only grape cultivated, a nearly unheard-of level of dedication in this day and age.

Owner : William Downie

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