



# primavera

– S E L E C T I O N S –

## Praeter.

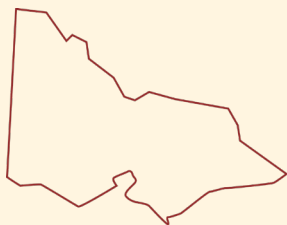
**LOCALITY:** La Morra,  
Barolo & Victoria

**WINEMAKER:** Matt Large

[praeterwine.com.au](http://praeterwine.com.au)



**PIEDMONT**



**VICTORIA**

### PRAETER

Matt Large is a busy man, but at the core of his pursuit is his own brand, Praeter, the name of which is a nod to the idea that wine is an extension and amplification of the expression of nature.



Matt is an intuitive winemaker, always seeking to create precise and sensitive wines that clearly express a sense of place, while employing best-practice sustainable viticulture. This talent was recognised early in his career and led to a relatively rapid ascension through the winemaking ranks. Having previously worked as Assistant Winemaker and Vineyard Manager at Shadowfax Winery – across their Macedon Ranges sites – Matt has recently accepted a role as senior winemaker at Shaw + Smith and Tolpuddle Vineyard under Adam Wadewitz.

For a long time, Matt had a desire to work in Piedmont and grasp the intricacies of the vineyards, as well as learn the traditional techniques of Barolo and Barbaresco. Enter Peter Johns, who introduced Matt to ex-Bruno Giacosa winemaker Francesco Versio in 2017, creating a watershed moment in the development of the Praeter brand. Matt worked vintage with Francesco in 2017 at Figli Luigi Oddero in La Morra and was asked to take on a permanent Assistant Vintage Winemaker role – a position he still holds today. Using fruit from Luigi Oddero's vineyards, Matt also made his first wine there, the 2017 Vino Rosso.



At La Morra in 2019

After that first vintage stint, in 2018 Matt managed to secure a parcel of Nebbiolo from the Malakoff vineyard in Victoria, and the Praeter offering was fleshed out a little more. That story was strengthened further when Matt was given access to a parcel of Riesling fruit from Austin's vineyard in Geelong, a vineyard he had worked with previously.

2019 saw the release of Matt's first trio of wines, and 2020 will see the release of his first Langhe Nebbiolo, the 2018, a DOC wine from an adventurous young Aussie winemaker.

## THE WINE



### 2019 'Sun Steps' Riesling

'Sun Steps' is sourced from a vineyard in Sutherlands Creek, 15 minutes north-west of Geelong. Near Bannockburn, and a site that Matt had his eye on for some time, it has proved to be the ideal place for Riesling. All fruit is whole-bunch pressed, with half going into steel for a cool ferment to retain aromatics, while the other half goes into old barrels using wild yeast to kick off the fermentation and help build texture and subtle weight. Towards the end of fermentation, the steel component is blended in with the barrel component and left on lees for about 9 months to build complexity. Even with the use of oak and the time on lees, this is a Riesling showing beautiful finesse and elegance, with a wonderful line of acidity. Aromas of musk, lavender and citrus blossom with a soft pithy texture and a mineral core.

### 2019 'Strange Fog' Nebbiolo

Nebbiolo can be a challenging grape to grow in the Langhe, let alone here in Australia! Matt's experience gained both here and more recently in the Langhe has given him a decent head start. What is quickly becoming known as the 'Nebbiolo site', the Malakoff vineyard in the Pyrenees is arguably producing some of the finest Nebbiolos in the country, and Matt's section of this vineyard is wonderfully positioned. A great strength of the Malakoff site is the long stable tail to the season around harvest time. Coming to the last few weeks of ripening, the diurnal range is also pronounced, making a difference with warm stable days and very cool nights – and not actually too dissimilar to Piemonte in terms of temperatures. Sitting at around 320 metres, the low rain pressure in autumn allows for full phenolic ripeness. Soils there are made up of hard schist and red ironstone, ideal for aromatics, of which there are loads in this wine. 100% destemmed, aiming for as many whole berries as possible, the fruit is thrown into an open fermenter with gentle pump-overs for 18 days. Once pressed, the wine is moved into large, neutral barrels for 10 months. Dark fruits and floral notes immediately jump out of the glass, supported by fine but present tannins.

### 2018 Vino Rosso IGT

As mentioned in the intro, Matt's journey has taken him to the Langhe in Piedmont for the past 3 years. He has spent 10-12 weeks each vintage at Figli Luigi Oddero, based in La Morra in the north-western section of the Barolo zone. For years, Luigi Oddero has been growing a little parcel of non-DOC grapes – Syrah and Petit Verdot. As a trial in 2017, Matt blended these two grapes along with a third of Nebbiolo and although some of the locals questioned what he was doing, the end result was mouth-wateringly delicious! This year's Vino Rosso blend is a third of each variety – 100% hand-picked, destemmed and co-fermented in an open fermenter for 16 days. To break each component down: Syrah adds an earthiness, soft ripe tannins, and builds structure and depth; Petit Verdot adds violets and body and lifted floral aromatics; while the Nebbiolo completes the wine with a line of acid and tannin, and high-tone rose notes.