

# Fortune favours leap of faith and love for land

**Katie Spain**

**P**adthaway is a curious place. It is cute as a country button and a must stop from Adelaide to Coonawarra if wine tasting is your jam. The little Limestone Coast township is about 253km southeast of Adelaide (when you pass Naracoorte you're nearly there). Apply brakes when you spot the sign for Farmer's Leap, a cellar door on a hill overlooking the vineyards below.

The community is powered by a love of the land and, in addition to mixed farming and veggies, the region is home to thousands of hectares of vineyards. Farmer's Leap started as an onion, sheep and cattle farm. Owner Scott 'The Farmer' Longbottom's family has farmed the Padthaway patch of terra rossa over limestone for four generations (since 1938). The first vines were planted on the land in 1993 and 400ha are now under wine. In typical modest farmer form, he'd much rather fix the spotlight on winemaker Renae Hirsch, who is tasked with turning the fruit into the good stuff. She's quite the talent (she also makes wine for Chalk Hill and took our Bushing Monarch brag rights at the 2020 McLaren Vale Wine Show).

The Farmer's Leap offering includes a premium range including The Brave Shiraz and The Fortune Shiraz. The Farmer's Leap range (all of which clock in at an affordable \$25 a bottle) and The Pillar Box and Random Shot ranges which are an affordable \$18/bottle. Since COVID restrictions eased, the cellar door has been busier than ever. A seat on the balcony is a beautiful spot to breathe deep, enjoy a light meal and forget the worries of the world for a while.

If you're in the region for more than just a fly-by visit, the tradition Friday pizza and pasta nights are a great way to soak up some of that special community spirit. Booking is advised.

Keep your eyes peeled for new premium wines and labels in 2021. Heart and soul in a bottle.