

# Decanter Club

## February 2000

Happy New Year to you all. I hope Santa was good to you and that the New Year celebrations were as awesome as you were hoping for.

### Coming Events:

**Chris and Peter: Around the world with Riesling** Wednesday 2nd February *cost: \$25.00*

Riesling is one of the classic grape varieties and is a native of Germany. It is a reasonably hardy vine and is able to be grown throughout the wine-growing world, including Australasia and Europe. Riesling from each area in the world has a quite distinctive style, unlike Chardonnay where the difference is often only slight. Australia and German Rieslings have a quite distinctive kerosene characteristic (which NZ winemakers often strive for) whereas the French Rieslings are very intense and pungent, and in New Zealand our wines usually have a ginger flavour and higher acidity. Can New Zealand foot it with Germany, Australia and France? You be the judge when we take you for a tiki-tour around the world of Riesling.

**Lyn's HOT Tasting** Thursday 17th February *cost: \$15.00*

The wines in this tasting will be Lyn's picks. I'm sure there will be a few surprises here even if Lyn makes up your mixed case of wines. She will select both quaffers and goodies to tempt your palate and credit card.

**Cuisine Tasting Bargains** Wednesday 24th February *cost: \$15.00*

You'll need to check your Cuisine to find out what's in this tasting. It is due out in the next week or so. For any wines that are not available to the retail trade we will supplement them with what we think ought to be in the tasting.

**Peter Cowley: Te Mata Estate** Wednesday 1st March *cost: \$25.00*

Peter Cowley has been the chief wine maker for Te Mata since the early 80's and can be accredited for creating Te Mata into the giant (with respect to its reputation as New Zealand's foremost winery) it is today. This tasting marks the release of some of their 1999 whites and the 1998 reds of which John Buck says are the finest they have ever made. Book early for this tasting.

**Astrolabe Chardonnay 1998 \$ 22.95**

This is brilliant Chardonnay. Made by Simon Waghorn, proud maker of those fantastic Corbans PB chardonnays. This wine rocks and rolls with ripe sweet fruit.

**Bladen Riesling 1999 \$ 17.95**

One of my favorites. Packed with nectarine and peach flavours in a medium-dry style. Another wine by Simon Waghorn (Astrolabe and Whitehaven).

**Bollinger R.D. 1981 \$212.95**

**Bollinger R.D. 1988 \$144.95**

Flagship wine from an immensely prestigious French Champagne houses. R.D stands for 'recently disgorged' which means that yeast lees (sediment) is removed from the wine while the neck of the champagne bottle is frozen. Bollinger only make RD's in the best vintages and are released after a minimum of seven years of aging. The 1981 as an absolute classic, glorious yeasty nose with great intensity an almost over-powering fruit. Superb now or over the next few years. The 1988 is also a classic vintage. A very stylish wine with heaps of power and flavour and heavy yeast.

**Casa de Calcar 1995 \$22.95**

We are getting a reputation here at Munslow's for having somewhat eclectic tastes in wine. Well here is one for the books. It is a Merlot from Romania. Dry and liquoricey and firm tannins, but with good ripe fruit. After the bottle had been open for 3 days it still had excellent form. Try this one, but please not on me as a blind option!

**Cedar Creek Chardonnay \$9.95**

Best value chardonnay in the shop. Lovely toasty flavours and nice ripe fruit. A steal! Coopers

**Creek Hawkes Bay Riesling 1999 \$14.95**

Coopers Creek claim to be have been awarded the most medals and trophies than any other small winery. This riesling is simply gorgeous. It's luscious with fruit and flavours abounding.

**Coriole Shiraz 1998 \$25.95**

Rated very highly by James Halliday in his latest book, this has been a favorite at our place for a while. It has wonderful cherry, plum and mint flavours that means putting down the bottle hard. Be careful with whom you share this one with!

**Dennis Shiraz 1997 \$ 23.95**

Impressive McLaren Vale winery. Full of spice and American oak, this is more than a mouth full. This works superbly with lamb. Will cellar well for about 5 years.

**Fox Creek J.S.M. 1998 \$33.95**

Fabulous wine made of a blend of Shiraz, Cabernet and Cabernet Franc and aged in a super blend of both American and French oak. This wine is simply gorgeous. Juicy plums, cassis and chocolate and made to age.

**Fox Creek Reserve Shiraz 1998 \$66.95**

Bob Campbell wrote of this wine in Cuisine "Amazing wine! Dense but not heavy. Elegant with power. The wine appears to have so much aging potential it is practically immortal." What more can you say.

**Jamieson's Run Reserve 1995 \$33.95**

Big brother to the more famous Coonawarra Jamieson's Run. This is a very stylish Bordeaux type wine. The spice and berry aromas are enticing followed by blackberry and plum fruit backed by expensive oak. Very impressive wine that will cellar well for at least 8 years.

**Lanson Black Label Champagne \$49.95**

The only gold medal non-vintage champagne at the International wine Challenge. Great fizzes. I'm overstocked, so out it goes at this great price!

**Penfolds Kalimna Bin 28 1996 \$20.95**

The 1992 (last vintage tasted and written up) gets 5 stars from James Halliday of which he writes "classic Penfold's style with lots of fruit, lots of oak and good tannins all surrounding an attractive rich and sweet mid

palate". The 1996 is considered a better vintage than the '92.

**Penfolds Old Vine 1996 \$21.95**

A blend of the Rhone grape varieties Grenache, Mouvedre and Shiraz, this is a wee beauty. Full-bodied rich, ripe and succulent, The grenache fills out the mid-palate with raspberries and spice.

**Magliere Vintage Shiraz \$29.95**

A really yummy 'fortified' Shiraz, perfect for finishing the night with. If you love sparkling shiraz wines then this is the next thing for you to get your head around. Personally I think they are wonderful and this is the best in the style.

**Mildara Chardonnay 1998 \$8.95**

A great quaffer. Full, rich and ripe fruit. Why buy a cask when you get quality like this from a bottle at this price.

**Moculta Cabernet Merlot 1997 \$14.95**

Wait for it; yes it is another of Lyn's favorites. If you ask Lyn to mix a case for you, you are bound to get a bottle of this wee beauty. Fantastic value.

**Nobilo Mendoza Cabernet Sauvignon \$9.95**

Very Bordeaux style wine from Argentina. Great food wine. Stocks limited, what we have is it. Nobilo is not bringing the fruit into NZ again.

**Rosemount Pinot Noir 1998 \$15.95**

You can't go wrong with the Rosemount Diamond label wines, and the Pinot Noir makes drinking Pinot's more affordable. Not the enormous style of Martinborough or Felton Road Block 3, but then again you aren't paying through the nose for this. Excellent wine, excellent value.

**Saltram Classic Shiraz 1998 \$15.95**

Another of Lyn's favorites, I know this because she often takes it to Mrs. Yip's. The flavours of black cherries and spice are a wonderful match with both the plum duck and Peking duck.

**Saltram No 1 Shiraz 1996 \$46.95**

Top of the range for Saltram, this wine is full, rich and solid. The wine takes no prisoners. Excellent fruit, firm tannins and fabulous American oak makes this an excellent proposition for the cellar. This is one of the classic Barossa wines that will fetch a few more pennies than you paid for, if you cellar it well and for about 10 years. Excellent vintage.

**Sanctuary Riesling 1999 \$12.95**

A whisker off a gold medal. Medium style with great stonefruit flavours – ideal for warm summer days when they finally arrive.

**Sanctuary Sauvignon Blanc 1999 \$12.95**

The best sauvignon on the shop in this price range. You can't go wrong. Great on a hot day while playing petanque.

**Tennyson Cabernet Sauvignon 1998 \$11.95**

I really like this wine. Good berry flavours and a long dry finish. Made for early drinking (meaning soon after release rather than first thing in the morning!).

**Vasse Felix Heytesbury 1997 \$51.95**

This is the flagship wine from one of the Margaret River's best wineries. Very Bordeaux like in its blend of cabernet, franc and malbec and in its style. Huge on the palate with sublime fruit, spice and mint balanced superbly with generous oak. Will cellar well for 10 years or more.

## Wines of the Month

### **Eden Crest Merlot Cabernet 1996 \$24.95**

Irvine Grand Merlot at about A\$80 a bottle has a reputation as being the Chateau Petrus or Le Pin of Australia. Eden Crest is their second label, offering a richly fruited wine at a fraction of the price of the winery flagship label. Hailing from the Barossa Valley, the nose is of plums and spices and leads to a supple palate with further hints of tobacco and leaf and a nice crisp finish. A previously unknown label for me, but a very pleasant surprise package.

### **Tatachilla Keystone 1998 \$16.95**

See notes above in the Grenache section. We last had a bottle of this last week and I had forgotten how much I really enjoy it. Rich, smooth and seamless with heaps of flavour. Try it with rare lamb.

### **Rosemount Diamond Label Shiraz 1999 \$15.95**

The perfect wine to pull out when you want to share a bottle with a group of friends. Halliday gives these wine 4 stars, and no wonder with the quality of fruit and excellent balance of oak and tannins. We have been alternating this with the Cedar Creek Chardonnay 98 (\$9.95) for excellent quaffing. Lovely spicy fruit and a wine that suits most palates. Jim and I have enjoyed several of these good quaffers over the holiday period.

## Grenache

Grenache is one of the grape varieties that make the great Rhone wines. Planted mainly in the Barossa and McLaren Vale (now in every wine growing area) the grape has an auspicious past in Australia. It was widely planted to be a bulk fruit for fortified wines as early as the turn of last century. It was not regarded as a table wine variety until Charlie Melton found 50-year-old bushes close to his new winery. He added Shiraz and from that created the wonderful Nine Popes, and created a new fashion in wine. The wines are often described as having berry, predominantly raspberry and strawberry flavours along with plum, sweet capsicum, spicy, fruitcake etc. We seem to have been drinking a few grenache wines recently with the Mediterranean style of food we have been cooking at home over the holiday period. Grenache by the way is fabulous with eggplant dishes and I have included this fabulous Italian salad for you to try. Here are a few Australian wines to try:

### **Peter Lehmann Grenache 1998 \$13.95**

Deep garnet colour with good depth and quality. Soft and very berryish with spice and plums. Made for early consumption.

### **Tatachilla Keystone Grenache Shiraz 1998 \$16.95**

A good blend with no dominant varietal characteristics, although raspberries and cherries come through on the palate. Good wine with depth

### **Temple Bruer Cornucopia Grenache 1997 \$17.95**

Excellent deep red colour with full grenache floral flavours on the nose. Vibrant, high in alcohol and

made for drinking now. Excellent example of Grenache.

**Red Ochre Grenache 1997 \$13.95**

One of the most popular in the shop this season. Well priced and equal to any. Made by d'Arenberg Wines. Great food wine, but heh, just forget the food and enjoy the wine!

**Garden Gully 1997 \$24.95**

One of the few grenache from Victoria. Dark, deep colour with strong tannins and oak.

**Cranswick Grenache 1996 \$22.95**

This wine is a wee surprise in a bottle. Gutsy with fine tannin and oak. From New South Wales.

**Turkey Flat Grenache 1998 \$31.95**

These grapes used to go to Charles Melton, St. Hallet and Rockford vineyards, but in the last 5 years or so have gone into the Turkey Flat label. This is a serious grenache, raspberry and plum with rich and very ripe fruit. Balanced well with oak and tannins and excellent finish.

**Galah Grenache 1996 \$20.95**

Soft spicy and plummy. Has loads of flavour. A gutsy wine. This wine would be fabulous with the eggplant recipe below.

**Mitchell Growers Grenache 1997 \$21.95**

A Clare Valley wine with loads of fruit on the nose, a firm dry tannic finish and with good use of French oak. Probably the heaviest of the wines in this selection making it a good food wine.

## **Favorite Recipe**

### **Gratin of eggplant with tomato and basil vinaigrette**

**Ingredients:**

*2 medium eggplants sliced 1.25cm (1/2 inch) thick*

*Flour*

*Olive Oil*

*2 medium ripe tomatoes*

*2 large garlic cloves, thinly sliced*

*Sea salt black pepper*

*1 cup fresh basil leaves*

*1 garlic clove, crushed*

*2 teaspoons red wine vinegar*

*2 teaspoons balsamic vinegar*

**Method:**

Preheat the oven to 180C/350F.

Season the eggplant and dredge very lightly with flour.

Heat cup of oil in a large non-stick frypan over a medium heat. Add the eggplant slices and saute until browned on both sides. Drain on paper towels.

Continue to saute the remaining eggplant, adding more oil to the pan as necessary.

Transfer the eggplant to a baking dish, layering it with tomato and sliced garlic (optional). Season with salt and pepper.

Bake for 10–15 minutes or until tomatoes are heated through.

To make the vinaigrette, puree the basil, crushed garlic and vinegars (if you prefer a sweeter taste try miren the Japanese alternative) in a blender. Add 6 tablespoons of olive oil, taste and season with salt and pepper. This can be served at room temperature (without cooking in the oven) or hot.

Recipe from Catherine Bell's "Everyday Epicurean" 1999, Tandem Press, Auckland

Munslow's would like to welcome Mark Henderson on board full-time. This will ensure that there will always be someone with a wealth of wine knowledge and expertise.

Don't hesitate to see Peter, Lyn or Mark about your regular case orders. There is no charge for delivery anywhere in Dunedin and the courier rates we have contracted for are very reasonable.

Cheers, Peter, Lyn, Mark and the Crew