

# Decanter Club

## November 2002

### Coming Events:

**Jackie: Vintage Wines** Thursday 24th October, 6 pm *cost: \$10.00*

The wonderful Browns of Pathaway are the mainstays for this tasting. I must say that we have thoroughly enjoyed this range of wines. Also some NZ whites, McGuigan and Ross Estate. We will be offering some great deals on the night.

**Brent Marris: Wither Hills** Thursday 31st October, 6 pm *cost: \$15.00*

Possibly the last time to listen and talk to Brent before the wonderful Wither Hills management is taken over by Lion. We have been huge supporters of this label and will continue to do so, if the quality is maintained, which if Brent stays on it will.

**Matt Douglas: Mt. Difficulty** Thursday 7th November, 6 pm *cost: \$15.00*

No introduction is required these days to the Mt Difficulty wines, however for those who don't know Matt, he is a good local lad, and GM for Mt Difficulty. Superb wines, from the Riesling to the Pinot Noir. I have no doubt that this will be a well supported tasting, so please book early.

**Bigger than Texas tasting** Saturday 9th November 1–5pm *cost: \$10.00*

The annual tasting is the biggest event for Munslow's with TONS of wines for you to try. It is a great opportunity to try new wines and place your orders before the Christmas rush. This tasting can get quite busy at times, so please be patient with staff who are there to ensure you get to try the wines of your choice.

**Munslow's BBQ** Sunday 10th November, from 1pm onwards *cost: 6 Harden Street, Leith Valley, Dunedin.*

We hold a bbq for clients and friends of Munslow's annually as a way of thanking you for your support. The competition is hotting up in the marketplace, and we are grateful for your continued support. We hold the bbq at Peter and Laurie's home. We have a beautiful garden for you to wander around in and if the weather is kind, the lawns are a great place for some serious petanque (traditional rules apply; i.e. a glass of vino must be in-hand while throwing the boule!). It really is a great day that we love to share with you. Of course your family are welcome, however we have a stream beside our garden, and you will need to supervise your own children. Come and join us for a day of fun, sausages and wine and Peter's glazed ham!

**Rudi Bauer: Quartz Reef** Thursday 14th November, 6 pm *cost: \$15.00*

Neither Rudi nor Quartz reef will need introductions either! We have recently tried the new releases from Quartz Reef, and the quality is as good as last year, if not better. Again please book early for this tasting

### Wines Recently Tasted:

**Ashwood Grove Shiraz 2000 13.45**

## Decanter Club Newsletter

Dense red, rich bouquet. Lots of concentrated flavours of plums and spice. A great mouthfeel, and a great finish. This wine has become our house red now because it is such a great bargain for Shiraz.

### **Browns of Padthaway Shiraz 1999 16.15**

Yes I know we have written this wine up several times over the last couple of months, and yes I hope you are not getting bored with reading it. But, it is so good. It's probably one of the most luscious, fruity Shiraz under \$20 that I have tried on a long time. If you are still unconvinced, come to the first tasting for the newsletter and try for yourself. We will be offering a magnum with every caseload sold on the night of the tasting

### **Carrick Pinot Gris 2002 19.75**

The Central winemakers I have spoken to are very excited about the quality of their '02 wines, and I know that many of our customers have been hanging out for the first Pinot Gris releases. Carrick is one of the first to hit the shelves and the wine is looking great! I've tasted this wine as grapes in the vineyard, fermenting wine in tank, and three times in bottle, and it's just getting better and better, our allocation of this wine is limited so don't delay.

### **Carrick Riesling 2002 17.95**

A new release and still showing a touch of Germanic sulphur on the nose, which will integrate well with the crisp apple and citrus characters well balanced by a little residual sugar. Off-dry, this will be a very interesting wine to watch as it evolves in the cellar.

### **Cedar Creek "Super Special" Chardonnay 8.95**

Our largest seller at a SUPER PRICE. We've managed to get a great deal and are passing it on. Buy a case for the summer BBQs. Great stuff. Usual price is 10.95

### **Forrest Sauvignon Blanc 2002 15.25**

A perennial favorite for us, looking fresh and zesty in its screwcap closure. While a lot of other Sav Blancs are creeping up in price, John has worked hard to hold the price of this wine, which is now looking better and better value. With several vineyard blocks to choose from, and a succession of picking dates, he really is building a lot of complexity into this wine with everything from the classical grassy, gooseberry notes, right through to riper passionfruit and tropical fruit.

### **Grant Burge Miamba Shiraz 2000 19.75**

The Grant Burge Filsell Shiraz made the Top Ten in Cuisine. This is the 'little brother' (though there's nothing at all little about this wine), and is a perfect example of what the Barossa Valley does so well. This is a big, powerful red, with sweet ripe fruit, touches of eucalypt, and lots of spicy oak on the finish. As a special bonus, we are offering a free magnum of this wine with every case ordered.

### **Houghton's White Burgundy 2001 11.65**

Once tried, you will be convinced that this is a serious wine and one to put in your mixed cases. I think maybe it's been bastardised over the years as a cheap, poor quality, junk wine. But who cares what others think. I love it. It's great drinking. If you are a sauvignon blanc or a riesling fan, you'll love this fruit-bound wine.

### **Isabel Dry Riesling 2002 18.85**

## Decanter Club Newsletter

Isabel Estate has been carving out quite a reputation for themselves both locally and internationally, with quite a swish range of wines. They can now certainly be looked upon as one of the 'star performers' in Marlborough. The Riesling is a personal favourite with its marvellous aromatics, intensity of flavour, and a long flavoursome finish. Certain to cellar very well, but was great with a curry the other week.

### **Kingston Cabernet 2000 13.45**

No relationship to either Jamaica or 'the Flyer', unless you count the depth of colour in the wine, or the touches of smokey oak. The Shiraz stablemate to this wine has just gone silver in the Top 100 Show, and at this price, the Cabernet is a steal. The lifted blackcurrant fruit is overlaid on chocolate and liquorice notes, finishing with soft tannins. Great BBQ red for the days and weeks ahead.

### **Konrad and Conrad Sigrun Noble Riesling 375ml 34.15**

The Konrad wines are being made by Brent Marris (of Wither Hills fame) and are already showing their class. The grapes for this wine were picked at 40 Brix, which puts them into the Trockenbeerenauslese level, and it is indeed a sumptuous wine on the palate. It doesn't quite ooze out of the glass, but is thick and mouthfilling and the sweetness is balanced by good acidity. Try this with some good blue cheeses.

### **L'Arbiola Barbera 1999 21.55**

This is the perfect pasta wine. Full of ripe berry flavours and fresh currants, this is what the Italians so really well. Try with portobello mushrooms and fettuccine or pizza.

### **Maxwell 4 Roads Shiraz 2000 22.45**

A lovely big, robust wine from one of my favorite areas in Australia, the McLaren Vale. Packed with spice and a hint of chocolate. Great with lamb racks.

### **Mt. Edward Riesling 2002 17.95**

The best yet from Alan Brady. Very ripe and peachy. Lovely now but will cellar well. One of my favourite Rieslings. Match it with Thai food or enjoy on its own.

### **Mt. Maude Pinot Noir 2001 32.35**

Top shelf Central Otago Pinot sensibly priced compared to other relative newcomers. Just a touch of spicy oak adds complexity to the layers of berry fruit flavours on the palate. Lovely long finish.

### **Nobilo Icon Pinot Noir 2001 19.75**

This is as good as many of the Central Pinots at twice the price. Sourced from a well-known winery in Otago, full of ripe cherries and a hint of sweet oak.

### **Spencer Hill Coastal Ridge Chardonnay '01 30.55**

Trophy and gold at the top 100. A gorgeous drop from Nelson. Elegant and complex with a lovely hint of complex leesy flavours and great fruit. I like the fact that the oak stays nicely in the background.

### **Spy Valley Pinot Gris 2002 17.95**

We built a large following for this wine last year, and the follow-up vintage also looks pretty tidy. Once again, the wine has lovely texture, a richness on the palate reminiscent of Alsace, and notes of pineapple and pear (sounds like an advert for West's for those in the know) with warmth on the finish. Quite different in style to the central Otago Pinot Grigio styled wines.

**Te Whare Ra Riesling 2002 12.55**

One of the shop's best buys. Lovely now with a delicious mouthfeel and texture. Packed with ripe peach flavours. Will age well. Buy a case...I have.

**Valli Baldhills Bannockburn Pinot Noir 2001 41.35**

Grant Edmonds own label. Great Pinot cropped low for intensity. Full of charm, elegant yet powerful. Still a baby. Cellar for 18months, but wonderful now.

**Whitehaven Pinot Gris 2002 17.95**

Due instore mid month, this wine is made by Simon Waghorn; ex Corbans, and also making wine successfully under his own label Astrolabe. Showing lovely texture with peach and stonefruit elements we found a sample of this to be moorish. Very attractive drinking in its youth and competitively priced.

## Wines of the Month

**Mark's choice:**

**Pisa Range Black Polar Pinot Noir 2001 38.65**

Pisa range is a new label for us from central Otago. Owned by the Hawkers, their fruit was original going into Quartz Reef; this wine, the '01, is their second vintage under their own label, with the wine being made by Rudi Bauer. We found it to have a lovely richness and depth of fruit with touches of cherry and ribena. The palate is silky in texture with a lovely finish. All in all, a very lovely expression of Central Otago Pinot.

**Peter's choice:**

**Falesco Merlot Umbria 2001 35.95**

You will be confused when you try this wine initially. After all it is a merlot and it is from Italy, and quite frankly, the two don't normally go together. But hey, this works...well, very well in fact. Full of fabulously ripe plum flavours and clean new oak. This quite frankly, is one of the finest merlot's I have ever tried. Awesome bouquet with intense perfume of raspberries and new oak. It has extravagant richness of fruit, full body, great depth and remarkable complexity. Lovely complex spice flavours and very rich berry palate with great length, a beauty! Definitely a celebration wine.

### Mutterings from Mark---Chateauneuf du Pape

The most important appellation in the Southern Rhone in France. The wine takes its name (which means 'Pope's new castle') from the relocation of the Papal court in Avignon in the 14th Century, and in particular from the construction of summer quarters just north of the city in a village once called Calcerniers (due to its limestone quarry), but now known as Chateauneuf du Pape. Pope Clement V

arrived in Avignon in 1309, but it is his successor John XXII who is credited with developing a papal vineyard in the area.

Leaping forward six hundred years in time to 1923, an historic event in French wine law took place in the area. The adulteration and fraud that was widespread and rife throughout France in the first two decades of the 20th Century concerned Baron Le Roy of Chateau Fortia. He successfully drew up and implemented a set of rules for the production of Chateauneuf du Pape, which was the prototype for the entire appellation Controllee system. Along with the prescribed varieties allowed to be used, mandatory triage (or sorting of ripe/unripe grapes before fermentation) and limits on yield came the first geographical delimitation of strength (without chaptalization) of 12.5% which is still the highest in France. Ten grapes were originally permitted to be used in the appellation, which was increased to 13 in 1936, with grenache being the star player and indeed dominating plantings. Wines produced in the area range from the 100% grenache of Chateau Rayas to Chateau Beaucastel which can use all 13 (10 red and 3 white) in its Cuvee. Generally, however, the red wines of the area are made up of blends of grenache, mourvedre and syrah, with small amounts of cinsault and/or counoise, with the wine being possibly the finest expression of grenache.

The trio of years 1998/99/2000 have been incredibly kind to the Rhone with the two even years perceived as strongest in the south, and in 1999 in the north. Debate rages as to which is better in the south; '98 or '00, with Parker edging towards the '00 it seems. If you have '98s in your cellar congratulations, if not, you sorely need to look at the '00s, as they are stars in the making. Typified by low acidities, these are voluptuous, fat, rich wines which will age with grace, and offer glorious drinking over the next ten and up to twenty years. These seriously are a very good alternative to the much higher-priced and over-priced Bordeaux's and Burgundies.

**Domaine de La Vielle Julienne Chateauneuf du Papes 2000 55.75**

Under the guidance of its owner Jean Paul Daumen, this Domaine (which has nothing to do with finely sliced carrots) has been crafting more and more compelling wines, and taking the eye of Robert Parker. Rating it 92-94, he suggests fabulously ripe black raspberry and cherry fruit intermixed with floral notes. Due to its low acidity and incredibly ripe fruit, he feels that it will drink well young, but last for 15-18 years.

**Le Vieux Donjon Chateauneuf du Papes'00 50.35**

Made by the Michel family, in quite traditional style. This is a wine that could do with a few years of cellaring before broaching. Dark ruby red, it has a liqueur-like nose of cherry, redcurrants, roasted meats and spice cake. Dense and sweet in the mouth it finishes with pepper and chocolate notes and a fine lick of tannin.

**Clos Des Papes Chateauneuf du Papes 2000 61.15**

This is an estate that will be known to many of you and under the guidance of father and son team Paul and Vincent Avril, has become one of the leading lights of the appellation. A blend of 65% grenache, 20% mourvedre, 10% syrah and 5% counoise. The thing that struck me about this wine was the silkiness across the palate. It manages to combine power and finesse, and while enjoyable now should probably have a drinking window of 2005-2020.

**Domaine de la Janasse Chateauneuf du Papes 2000 73.75**

## Decanter Club Newsletter

The Cuvee Chaupin is a step up from the standard brew. Deeply coloured and super concentrated, this is a big wine, but well balanced. Sweet, ripe and supple in texture, with fantastic length, this wine should drink well for 15 years.

Cheers, Peter, Mark, Alistair and the crew at Munslow's. PS: Don't forget to put a big circle around the weekend 9/10th November. We look forward to seeing you either at the tasting or at the bbq if not before.