

Decanter Club

September 2003

Coming Events:

Tony Montgomery: Rosemount Estate Thursday 28th August *cost: \$20.00*

Some people may think that \$20 is too much to pay for an Australia tasting, but the line-up includes Balmoral Shiraz (\$90), Roxburgh Chardonnay (\$60) and the Jimmy Watson Traditional as well as the wonderful GSM and the Hill of Gold range. Not a tasting full of the lower end wines which makes this a tasting not to be missed.

Tim and Judy Finn: Neudorf Wine Thursday 11th September *cost: \$15.00*

A Neudorf tasting is as rare as hen's teeth outside of the Marlborough/Nelson/Wellington region, so this makes this tasting a very special tasting indeed. For as long as I have known the Finns and this winery, I have rated Neudorf as one of the top boutique wineries in New Zealand, with among the best Chardonnays and Pinot Noirs in the country. Please book early for this tasting as many winofiles far and wide will be clambering to get to it.

Mark Robertson: Matua Valley Thursday 18th September *cost: \$15.00*

One of the larger NZ wine companies and without doubt one of the better producers of good quality wines across the range. Mark Robertson has been the winemaker for this company for several years now and his extensive knowledge is not to be missed.

Ant McKenzie: Spy Valley Thursday 25th September *cost: \$10.00*

We have been raving about the spy Riesling and Pinot Gris for a few vintages now, so I for one am very much looking forward to listening to winemaker Ant McKenzie and having a sneak preview of the new vintage wines. I seriously rate this winery, and I hope this tasting will be full.

Warwick Foley: Johanneshof Wines Thursday October 2nd *cost: \$10.00*

Warwick Foley is the winemaker of this small Marlborough winery that is making some very good whites, in particular their riesling and the botrytis wines are quite outstanding. Several of their wines have featured in recent Cuisine Magazine tastings. Wines recently tasted

Wines Recently Tasted:

Albert Mann Tokay Pinot Gris 2002 33.25

Wow, what a wine! This packs more flavours in the mouth than most wines dream about. The palate is pure stonefruit, leaning towards peaches and apricots. The finish goes on and on. Try it as a treat with duck breasts

Ashwood Grove Cabernet Petit Verdot Malbec 2001 13.45

Decanter Club Newsletter

A wine with loads of character, very deep colour and a warm inviting nose of ripe blackcurrants and spice. The palate is generous with heaps of black fruit flavours and a chunky texture reminiscent of Bordeaux

Browns Padthaway Ernest Shiraz '99 25.15

Very powerful wine with plenty of everything. Very intense nose with charred American oak, plums and cherries and spice. Huge dense flavour with some mint and massive sweet fruit. It's a cracker!

Coto de Hayas Crianza 2000 12.55

Coto de Hayas has produced another lovely wine here. The same style and flavours as the earlier Crianzas with a blend of grenache, tempranillo and cabernet sauvignon. The vintage may have changed but not the quality.

Daniel Le Brun NV 28.75

Toasty and highly flavoured bubbly with a yeasty nose. Fresh and crisp with mealy, biscuity flavours showing complexity and good length. This Pinot Noir dominant style shows real class and finesse. Still one of NZ's top sparklers.

Dry Gully Pinot Noir 2002 31.45

5 stars Cuisine, this is another fabulous wine from the 2002 vintage in Central Otago. Full of black cherries and plums and a lovely touch of spice. Very limited supply.

Forrest Botrytised Riesling 2002 31.45

Gold medals both here and in Australia. Luscious dessert wine, lemon gold in colour with lovely 'legs'! Very pure Riesling flavours, with lemons, tangelos and apricots with a honeyed plate. Very rich and smooth, never cloying and a palate that goes on and on.

Fromm Gewurztraminer 2002 29.65

Powerful lush and oily with a pronounced nose of rose petals, and a rich palate of lychees and spice. Leave it a couple of years for added complexity.

Fromm Riesling 2002 26.05

Lovely medium style Marlborough Riesling with a touch of class. Honeyed fragrance, with peaches, lemons and limes and a long honeyed finish with a hint of marmalade.

Grant Burge Miamba Shiraz 2001 19.75

Very ripe sweet plum and berry aromas. Savoury, gamey flavours come through on the palate. Still quite youthful and will benefit from cellaring for a few years, however it is drinking well now. Should go well with most red meat dishes.

Gymnasium Mehringer Zenerberg Riesling Kabinett 1994 23.35

I love old German Rieslings and this is a beauty. It's rare to be able to offer a wine that is almost 10 years old, however this is still very fresh. With the ageing it is that marvellous honey characteristic that just isn't there

with youngsters. This wine will improve over the next 4–5 years. Yum!

Leasingham Bastion Shiraz/Cab '01 13.45

The new vintage of this ever popular remarkable Aussie red blend. Fresh aromas are backed up with warm berry fruit flavours, and a touch of oak on the finish. A serious wine at a silly price.

Les Salices Syrah 2001 15.25

Another fabulous red from the south of France. Elegant and rich, with a lovely hint of white pepper and a firm plummy finish.

Margan Family Cab Sauvignon 01 20.65

From the Hunter in Australia this is wonderfully deep purple in colour, and a fine example of a wine displaying fully ripened characters. Rich berry aromas are followed by cassis and wild berry fruit on the palate and is nicely balanced by the subtle use of oak.

Margan Family Shiraz 2002 20.65

One of the first Aussie reds from the 2002 vintage. This Hunter Valley Shiraz is made in a slightly lighter style compared to some of those Barossa beasties. Plenty of ripe, sweet soft tannins make this wine very drinkable.

Matua Matheson Syrah 2002 19.75

Dense wine with lifted pepper flavours, together with attractive oak against a background of plummy ripe fruit flavours.

Newton Forrest Syrah 2001 44.95

John's first vintage of Syrah from his Cornerstone vineyard in Hawkes Bay, and what a beauty! Intensely aromatic, sweetly fruited and juicy on the palate. Very purple in colour with fresh cracked pepper, violets and cedar oak flavours. Delicious drinking now but will cellar well under the screwcap.

Preece Merlot 2000 14.35

The lovely warm 2000 summer in Victoria gave great ripening conditions for this merlot. I've drunk this wine for the last 3–4 years and now the importers have reduced the price (and definitely not the quality) it makes it even better for the buyer. Lovely plum and cherry flavours complement the soft tannin structure. Beautiful wine.

Rosemount Balmoral 1999 71.95

From the very low yielding vines in the McLaren Vale, this is a real treat. A monster, exceptionally powerful, chunky, cherry and rich. Very full-bodied with a lot of extract, and very generous chocolate flavours. Still a relative bargain. Cellar and serve with a big steak. You will reap the benefit of cellaring for the auction market, as this is a collector's item.

Saddleback Pinot Noir 2002 26.95

Decanter Club Newsletter

Lovely soft Pinot from Central Otago with lots of cherry flavours. Made by a well-known continental winemaker! Great value

Sanctuary Riesling 2002 13.45

One of the best buys in the shop, with two gold medals to its name. a medium style packed with stonefruit and citrus flavours and a long delicious finish. Great lunch wine.

Yalumba Viognier 2003 15.25

A lovely alternative to riesling. Yalumba are getting good at this difficult Northern Rhone varietal. It is a generous full-on wine with excellent tropical nose with spicy aromas in the mouth. A generous touch of apricot suggests a big broad highly viscose wine, with its own distinct flavours.

Wines of the Month

Martijn's choice:

d'Arenburg Stump Jump 2001 13.45

Yahoo 'Stumpy's' back! Yes we are happy to say that 'Stumpy' is back in our shop. After letting you all try some different wines, 'Stumpy' has come to make your choice even harder. There are lots of great wines around this price range at the moment, however I think that this blend of grenache, shiraz and mouvedre (monastrell in Italy and Spain) is truly fantastic. Spicy in character with hints of delicious raspberries. Remember to be in quick, as almost all our regular customers know this wine well.

Alastair's choice:

Astrolabe Sauvignon Blanc 2003 17.95

One of the new crop of sauvignon Blancs, and very impressive it is too. Made by the very busy Simon Waghorn of Whitehaven and Tohu fame. Ripe, sweaty characteristics are followed by the trademark lively, gooseberry and passionfruit flavours with a well-rounded finish. Get into it Dunedin.

Chris's choice:

Richmond Grove Limited Release Shiraz 17.95

This wine represents the best value for money year in, year out. The 2000 Barossa vintage was a good year favouring the ripening of Shiraz grapes to full colour, intense flavours and robust structure. The wine is full bodied and balanced by the fine oak tannin and a lovely long finish. It's drinking well now and should develop nicely with a couple of years in the bottle.

Peter's choice:

Rosemount Traditional 2001 Jimmy Watson 31.45

A blend of cabernet merlot and petite verdot, this is the first release. Very rich and opulent and full of plums, cassis chocolate and spice flavours. This is a huge wine and as gorgeous as it is now it will only get better with 8—10 years of cellaring in good conditions. The Jimmy Watson award is one of the most prestigious

awards in the Australian show circuit and is awarded to the best one-year old wine in Australia and has been won by prestigious wines like Elderton Command Shiraz and the Eileen Hardy. This wine will be shown at this month's Rosemount tasting.

Back in stock

The marvellous Greiner and Albert Mann wines from the Alsace.

Also new in the shop, a range of great German, Spanish and Italian wines. Challenge your palate, and buy something different. We can't guarantee that you will like them, but we can guarantee that they are very good wines. Sometimes it's just a matter of extending your palate from your New World comfort zone and see what the rest of the world has to offer.

For the diary

An early notice so you have time to place in your diary for late November Saturday 22nd: Bigger than Texas Tasting Sunday 23rd: Annual Decanter Club bbq

Vintage 2003

Reports coming from the Wine Institute for this current vintage suggest that the volume is down by 35%, however the quality is very good thankfully. This reflects the cool spring weather with late frosts that damaged the vines at the bud-burst stage. This will effect the export market, but we can only hope it doesn't result in higher prices for the domestic market.

On the brighter side the Wine Institute Report also notes an increased production in Otago. Although Central Otago is no way near the production of Marlborough (1,519 tonnes compared to 54,496). It can no longer be considered playing second fiddle to other grape production areas in New Zealand, as it is comparable to Canterbury, Nelson, Auckland and the Wairarapa areas.

Central Otago vintage 2002

Without doubt the 2002 vintage in Central Otago has produced some of the most stunning Pinot Noirs yet. We tried several of the top wines recently and without exception they were totally stunning. When talking to Alan Brady he said the grapes all ripened evenly right throughout the area, compared to the 2003 vintage which showed grape levels ripening at different stages from the Gibbston, Cromwell basin and Alexandra.

Wines tasted were from Carrick, Quartz Reef, Peregrine, Rockburn, Pisa Range and Mt Edward and rather than comment on each individually, I would just like to say they were all superb. As well as reflecting the excellent vintage, they also show how well this group of winemakers and growers have got to grips with the 'Holy Grail' of the wine world. Well done everyone, and a gold medal to each of you.

The majority of the Central Pinot's from the 2002 vintage will be released within the next two months. I seriously advise people to buy up this vintage.

5 star wines worth buying for auction

Penfold's Grange 1995 is available at \$404.95. A huge cost but will sell well above this price in a few

Decanter Club Newsletter

years at auction. James Halliday rated this vintage very highly.

Jim Barry Armagh 2000 also available at 116.25; Yalumba Octavius 1998 at 114.25

Cheers; Peter, Alistair Chris and the crew at Munslow's