

Auldstone Cellars

December 2011 Newsletter

Welcome to yet another Auldstone Newsletter. We enjoy writing them - so we hope you enjoy reading them! It's hard to be concise and to the point - we could go on for pages!

2011 VINTAGE SUMMARY

The 2011 is well and truly tucked away. As most of you know by now, it was a very disappointing vintage across all of SE Australia. Cool and wet! The wines we made, Chardonnay, Merlot, Shiraz & Cabernet, all show beautiful, elegant, cool climate characteristic! Something very unusual for Glenrowan region wines. We made a very interesting Rhone Valley style Shiraz with a bit of Viognier thrown in that our son, Alex, is writing about on my Facebook page. Log in and have a look. He is tracking its progress.

FRANCE

After we put all the wines into wood and allowed to settle in tank, we both took some time out to finally visit France! We have been meaning to do it for years and now we wonder why we took so long! Without boring you with all the details, I have included a few photos of the highlights. We spent 2 weeks on the Canal du Nivernais. It was spectacular and a great way to unwind after a busy year. From a wine enthusiasts point of view, what was most amazing was the access to excellent wine (and food) everywhere we went - supermarkets, country towns, farmers' markets - everywhere. We then spent 2 weeks in a "gite" or cottage in Auxey Duresses, just out of Beaune, in the heart of the Cote d'Or,



or Golden Hillside, that produces France's famous Burgundy wines. We now have a whole new admiration for Pinot Noir - not to mention the beautiful Chardonnays. We picked up quite a few tips, so if you thought our Chardonnay was good, it is about to get a whole lot better!

We spent time getting to know the Chardonnays of Chablis and of the Cote

d'Or. Chablis use a lot less wood - many are unwooded. Most of the Cote d'Or on the other hand is all wooded but not a lot of new oak - which most Australians tend to use.

The pinots were beautiful. Elegant but with a lot of flavor and a pleasant lingering palate. Most were savoury flavours. Any hints of cherry or raspberry were very subdued and never dominating. To us that is always a



sign of a good Pinot. - but then they have been doing it for more that 200 years!

NEW LABELS

When we returned is was straight back to work. Alex has been suggesting for some time we need to revamp our labels. So with a lot of help from the design team at Graphix Labels in Burwood, we have come up with something not too different but we think a little more elegant and a lot less busy! You will see it on all our 2010 reds and 2011 whites - some fortifieds will get the new treatment when we use up old label stock.



NEW WINES

We have a fist full of new wines being released this month. Hopefully, by the time you get this newsletter our web site will be updated so you can read more about them

on that. Log on to:
www.auldstone.com.au/ourwines.html

They are:

- 2011 Chardonnay
- 2011 Cabernet Rose
- 2010 Sparkling Shiraz
- 2010 Cabernet Shiraz

(We have departed from the old CSM label as we don't have enough Merlot for it anymore and it wasn't adding a lot to the blend anyway)

- 2010 Merlot
- 2010 Shiraz
- 2010 Cabernet Sauvignon
- 2009 Black Cabernet

(The only wine we made in 2009 - the year of the horrific Black Saturday fires - because most of our grapes were also lost that week to the extreme heat. This was a parcel we rescued early and it shows the intensity of a warm year with loads of fruit characters.)

- The Liqueur Muscat is now in a 500 ml Ariane bottle (the tall, elegant one). We were about to put the price up but chose a smaller bottle instead. The old dump port bottle we used is no longer being made.

NEW PRICES

A few of our prices have had to go up slightly- we just don't have enough wine and with unpredictable weather patterns

emerging we have to make the most of what we do get. In the last 10 years we have lost almost all of the 2003, 2007 and 2009 vintages and a 1/4 of the 2011 vintage due to smoke from bush fires or other extreme weather events.

20012 VINTAGE

It is still too early to predict how 2012 will eventuate. At the moment it is very similar to the 2011 at the same time. A lot of rain and a lot of growth. The vines are looking a picture at the moment and no sign of any Mildew from all the rain. We have had good, average rains for September and October but about twice the average for November. We are all starting to get nervous! The sprays are on early this year and the vineyard looks great. Hopefully it will stay that way.

Thank you for the interest you have shown in our wines. We hope you enjoy or new wines and we look forward to seeing you soon. We both would like to wish you all a very happy Christmas and all the best for the New Year.

Michael & Nancy