

Auldstone Cellars

June 2011
Newsletter

Welcome to a brief newsletter to keep you informed of happenings here at Auldstone.

Vintage Summary

A memorable vintage to say the least! In our last newsletter (Nov 2010) I commented on the amount of rain we had – well it kept raining! Our area has never had such a wet summer and does not normally have much problem in the way of diseases – this year was different.

In an average year we would spray the vines about 3 times – just after bud burst in October, just before flowering in November and just before the canopy drops in December. After that we are usually safe. This year we probably had to spray nearly twice as often and we still did not save our Muscat, our Riesling and most of our Shiraz. The tougher skinned Cabernet came through with flying colours. We were able to pick the Chardonnay and Merlot earlier and so avoided trouble.

It was interesting in 2 ways. The level of disease made us sharpen up our disease control methods and taught us a lot about Botrytis which we don't normally see. Hopefully we will be better prepared next time. The second interesting point about this vintage lay in the winemaking.

Winemaking

This year, being a lot cooler and wetter than average, meant everything ripened more slowly and retained more acid. The later varieties, Shiraz and Muscat, just didn't make it home in time! The Riesling was too soft and succumbed to secondary rots quickly. Those varieties that survived showed a much greater "elegance" than we normally see – more like Yarra Valley fruit than typical Glenrowan. We should see some beautiful wines out of this vintage but only time will tell.

There were three deviations from the normal plan that we "played" with this year:

- One was a small batch of a Chenin Blanc that we picked from Gary Scholze's block (Gary works for us and you may have met him at cellar door on busy weekends). We picked it very early, along with some of our Chardonnay (we call it the Cha Cha!) We hope to make a champagne (or more technically a cremant, as champagne can only be made in Champagne) in the traditional Burgundian Cremant style - lees stirred, barrel matured, 10 months on lees – so it won't be available for at least 18 months. Watch this space.

*- The second was a small batch of Durif we also got from Gary. It was blended with a little Shiraz just to make up the quantity and round out the palate. It too won't be available for at least 18 months. Once again, watch this space.
- The third was a whole lot of fun – so read on....*

A new Wine for Auldstone

Our son Alex had this bright idea, as sons often do, "lets make a new wine, Dad, something that appeals to my generation not to you old fuddy duddies!" After I informed him that we "fuddy duddies" are merely people with matured palates and that our wines are something one has to graduate too, he said,

"Yeah, yeah, I've heard all that but lets try and pick some shiraz earlier and maybe mix it with a bit of viognier and make a softer style."

"You mean like in the Rhone Valley", I replied. "Whatever!" was the response.

"OK", I said, "This will only be a small batch, you work out how to sell it and I'll make it."

"I've already done that. We'll create a page on Face Book, get all our friends involved in the whole process, and sell it over the internet."



The enthusiastic picking crew



Alex left to clean up the crusher!

Food

Nancy's kitchen is getting busier and busier. We have persisted with our "Provincial France" theme and found some great recipes. Duck Cassoulet is on the go at the moment and proving very popular. We decided everyone else is going down the Italian path but all of our varieties are French and the whole food and wine experience has its birthplace in France – but don't try and tell that to the Italians!



These kids, want everything at the push of a button. Whatever happened to all that hard work of door knocking, tastings, dinners, press releases, countless samples sent to shows and wine writers..... "Well, lets give it a go" I said – and we did. And what a great year to try. It could not have been better. Slow ripened shiraz with lovely acid levels and beautiful flavor development, picked early to avoid the botrytis rot, blended with about 4% King Valley viognier. Alex organised a page on Face Book, took a video of me taking grape samples and organised a group of friends to come up and pick for the day – and great fun was had by all! The wine turned out beautifully - even Alex was impressed. It needs time for the tartrates to settle over winter and then into some new oak barrels, So if you are on FB, log in to Michael Reid's page and "A New Wine For Auldstone" and join in the fun.

Coming Events

We have pulled out of a few events this year. Events such as the **Good Food and Wine Show** was becoming increasingly expensive and only of benefit for the big players with national distribution and publicity networks.

Federation Square has always been good for us but the late vintage and other commitments mean we have to miss it this year.

- Trails Tastings & Tales Weekend

This is coming up very soon. June 11, 12 & 13. Follow the link to see the regional brochure giving details of what's on:

<http://www.auldstone.com.au/events.html>

One event that weekend is Rinauldo's Degustation dinner. Make sure you book early, it was hard to get into last year. Follow the same link for the menu.

- Glenrowan Winemaker's Weekend

This is coming up October 1, 2 & 3. It is the Labour Day weekend in NSW and the ACT. The Glenrowan winemakers put on a special effort this weekend to entertain visitors. It is centered around our famous dinner on the Saturday night, followed by the equally famous breakfast Sunday morning. Watch the web site for further details.

Well that's about all the news I can bore you with at the moment – though it is hardly boring to us.

Bon appetit et bon vin!

Michael + Nancy