

Miceli Newsletter

Autumn 2010

Opening Times:

**Easter we will be open Friday to Tuesday
12.00 to 5.00 pm.**

**Anzac Day Weekend Sat and Sun 12.00 to
5.00**

**Following this we will be open as usual the
first weekend of the month, 12.00 to 5.00 pm.**

Vintage Report:

This year brings our earliest vintage yet. We started on 4th March for sparkling wine, (the 4th time I have missed out on a party for my birthday due to sparkling wine), but also the third week of March for the first pick for table wine (the start of the Pinot Grigio). We have never picked grapes for table wine before in March! Last year we were 3 weeks later, despite the obvious heat then.

The condition of the grapes is perfect, following a relatively dry December (63), January (28mm) and February (37mm), and although there was one good fall of rain in March (56mm) it has been dry since then. Crop levels are about average. The flavours of the grapes/juices have been extraordinary, and I believe will make some of our best ever wines.

Thankfully we have missed all the drastic storms that affected Melbourne recently, and even the bulk of the rain from the heavy falls up North has petered out before getting to us. Although these days we get envious of heavy rain, who wants a wet Summer anyway! Much better to have a bit of (relatively) dry weather. If you wanted a wet Summer then move to Cairns (1064 mm) or Darwin (1515mm) or even Alice Springs (330mm this year) Apart from one or two hot days in early Feb we have not had any excessive heat this year.

Climate Discussions:

Whilst Pacific Ocean temperature have been in the "strong" El Nino range for several months, drought has generally been avoided for most of Eastern and Central Australia. The spectacular floods at Christmas time, and even more spectacular floods in early March, appear to defy the climate indicators.

I believe there is no doubt that the Earth is warming due to manmade CO2 (and other gasses), but the evidence that our current drought is due to this is only circumstantial. Whilst the CSIRO tentatively predict a 10% reduction in rainfall by 2050, many people take this to mean that we will have permanent drought from now on.

That was always too much of a conclusion to be drawn from the day to day weather (over a few years). Now that Brisbane's dams are overflowing, there is no where to put the (energy intensive) desalinated water and even their (also expensive) recycled water. I have always been against the desal plant for Melbourne (not because of the local site damage but because of the huge energy cost for its water, and lack of permanent need for it).

The danger is that the climate change skeptics can take advantage of the situation now to say "you're wrong, climate change is nonsense", and the public perception of climate change science takes a "knock". The over-dramatic claims that have served to push the case for climate change will not now serve the case well.

Winemaking:

Those of you who were lucky enough to come to our harvest picnic or drop in over the past couple of weeks will have seen our system in action.

Our grape handling procedures are a huge part of the factors that give us quality in our wines.

The grapes are handpicked into buckets, and then the same buckets are taken to the winery (hundreds of metres not hundreds of kilometers), and individually tipped into the press (for white wine) or crusher (for red wine). Thus there is much less trauma, and thus spoilage possibilities, between the vine and the tank. Even tipping buckets into a collecting bin causes premature juicing and some spoilage possibilities.

I'm sure this is one of the reasons we have our success without the huge energy cost of must chilling and fruit chilling that big wineries consider to be so essential. For most (larger) wineries, refrigeration is the biggest (and it is BIG) energy cost. We avoid this entirely.

I think that there is a difference between technology and science, and I doubt that the validation of such processing by scientific

comparison with handling at different temperatures has been done.

Buying wine from us is a very "green" alternative!

Grape ripening.

There is a lot said about grape ripening and until recently relatively little known in precise ways about it. Even now our understanding of the processes is only sketchy.

Everyone knows that warmth ripens grapes, but this is only part of the story.

Burgundy (our hero!) seems to be a cold area, but the average maximum of the warmest month is 26.8 deg C, compared to Melbourne at 25.5 deg C. Burgundy actually has a quite hot Summer and a relatively short ripening period. Of course the Winter is MUCH colder, as is the average of the growing season (1180 degree days, us 1250 degree days). They also have relatively warm nights (in the ripening period) which has the effect of keeping the grape vine metabolism active for a large part of the 24 hours, not only during the photosynthesizing hours. This sounds counterintuitive to top quality, but actually it means that flavour and tannins are being produced all night and day and sugar only in the daytime. Thus sugars do not get ahead of flavour development, which is the main shortcoming of hot areas!

The reason our season has been so early this year is I believe the result of firstly lack of any cold days (which are basically non-ripening days but add to the total duration), and also the warm nights. The Bureau of Meteorology (website) shows that for the last month the average maximum in our area has been 1-2 degrees above average, but the average minimum has been 2-3 degrees above average. The consistent warmth has produced very effective ripening processes and still given us fantastic quality.

Newsletter Special:

If you are in our mailing list you will be able to take advantage of the specials and know about new releases 3 or four times a year.

P.S. Our Website is up and running at:

www.miceli.com.au.

Though we still have some problems with the new email address so please stick to miceli@alphalink.com.au for a little while longer.

Tasting Notes:

Iolanda Pinot Grigio 2008

A distinctive, dry, flavoursome white wine with clean acid finish.

Pale greenish yellow. Full-bodied, but fine, with typical Pinot Grigio characters- mineral/flinty, brown pear, lemon, honey and floral. The palate is fresh and clean, and it has great persistence of flavour.

Alc 13.5%

Olivia's Chardonnay 2005

An elegant wine with depth and power.

Brilliant pale greenish yellow. Peach, cashew, citrus, "struck match" and superbly integrated vanillan oak..

Smooth mouthfeel and fine acid balance, with great intensity and length of flavour. Alc 13.5%

6 Bronze

Dry Pinot Rose 2006

This is a serious rose, totally dry, with great depth of fruit and a clean acid finish.

Brilliant strawberry pink, with plum, strawberry and a hint of vanillan oak. Intense and full bodied with palate freshness, smooth mouthfeel, good acid and great length of flavour. Wine Wise Highly

Recommended (Best of Category) Alc 13.5%

Lucy's Choice Pinot Noir 2006

Serious pinot noir, a medium bodied red with elegance, richness, and complexity

Brilliant deep red. Rich dark cherries, coffee, spice, and fragrant oak. Savoury, with great length and silky tannins, a wine with body, complexity, and depth. Alc 14.0 %

Michael Brut 2004

Aperitif style- dry, fine, flavoursome, complex with refreshing acid finish.

The flavours are "fine" and intense, with toasty/vegemite yeast, strawberry and hints of melon, pear and honey. The palate is very creamy, long, with cleansing acid and a fresh dry finish. AL 11.0% 1 Gold

Rose Methode Champenoise 2001

A flavoursome, delicate, and complex dry sparkling rose, with a fine bead.

Brilliant pale salmon pink. The palate is rich and flavoursome, with creamy and toasty yeast, strawberry pinot noir fruit, great length, and a clean dry finish. 12.5 % alc./vol 1 Gold 2 Silver 4 Halliday*

Satisfaction Guarantee:

Any wine that is spoiled will be credited or replaced. Any wine that you wish to return that has been well looked after and still in saleable condition will be refunded. Special museum release wines excepted.

Pauline & Anthony Miceli