

Miceli Newsletter

Winter 2011

Opening Times:

We will be open for the Queen's Birthday Weekend- Sat, Sun, Mon, June 11-13 11.00 - 5.00.

On Sunday and Monday we will be serving food- Tony's Gourmet Terrines (Duck with Pinot Noir, Rabbit with Chardonnay), and cheese platters.

We will also be at the Red Hill Showgrounds on Saturday, along with all the other wineries.

Following this we will be open as usual the first weekend of the month, 12.00 to 5.00 pm. (but available, for sales only, almost every day).

Season Report:

The weather has continued cold and dryish in March, and then cold and wet in April, and then more cold and more wet! As many will have experienced, Melbourne had the coldest March for three decades, followed by a colder than average and wet April, the coldest start to May on record, and the coldest May in 41 years (I would like to think it was coldest May in my life, but maybe the coldest I can remember might be more accurate).

Still there is nothing to complain about compared to the floods and adverse weather absolutely everywhere. When you are a farmer you have to cope with what the seasons bring. This is the big difference between the seasonal, down-to-earth, genuine agricultural producer, and the industrial brewers and distillers.

Vintage Report:

Nevertheless, we did have a few "warmish" fine days, and a gradual, "nail-biting" progression to ripeness.

The Pinot Noir sailed along just fine, benefiting from all the leaf plucking, thinning and their naturally thicker skins (than the whites). Although very late (9 May) the Pinot Noir came in near perfect condition, and lovely intensity of flavours. The alcohol will be less than recent years (which is not a bad thing), meaning that flavour ripeness was attained at lower sugar ripeness.

The Pinot Grigio also braved the weather quite well, although there was some rot in particular patches. This is where our small scale came to our rescue, with our tightly controlled family picking team, (yes there is some benefit from having 4 big kids), highly selectively picking the more affected patches, and producing a perfect sample of grapes (with a lot of effort!). Even the Cambodian team, which are the same team for the last 5 years, did a marvelous job of throwing away any rotted or under-ripe bunches. The lemony and mineral characters are a standout at this stage.

The Chardonnay has the thinnest skins, and the least tannin, and thus the most susceptibility to rot (tannin is there to protect the grapes, not just for the benefit of our palates). We suffered some very significant losses, particularly at the later dates, probably more than 25%, but did achieve an overall good level of ripeness, though less than recent years, but with good flavours. More in the restrained and citrusy end of the spectrum. Again, all our intensive manipulations of the canopy and crop load got us through (though only just), and our selective picking produced an amazingly clean looking batch.

20th Anniversary:

Of course they say that time goes quickly when you're having fun, so I guess that means a real lot of fun has been had here! Really, it has been a fantastic adventure and an amazing way of life.

It is now nearly 20 years since Pauline and I moved here (she was expecting with Lucy) on first of July 1991. An extremely wet day, we hired a truck and brought all our things from Frankston down to Main Ridge in three trips.

The house was cold, with just an open fire that didn't "draw" properly and lots of mud. Certainly there were no grapevines, in fact only a few miserable plants for a "garden" no drive or paths, barely even grass. The land was degraded, eroded, and covered in farm rubbish.

Our tractor (only retired 2 years ago) and sprayer and equipment arrived the next day.

The next big issue was planning and carrying out the establishment of the vineyard, something that I had been learning about at Charles Sturt University, but never done before. I was determined to pioneer close planting (1.8 x 1.8 m) and innovative trellising.

We didn't have the money (or advance planning) to buy grafted vines, so I propagated the 5000 vines myself. In the freezing cold, I

took cuttings from Kings Creek, Mornington Vineyards, and Main Ridge Estate while minding my pager, on call from HMAS Cerberus Hospital.

Our soil map (which later became our logo) and analysis, showed that all our soils needed a lot of correction, being moderately to severely acidic, critically low in phosphorus, and also low in potassium. This could be appreciated by just looking at the paddocks, as the grass cover was sparse, and rough, clover was absent and there was a dominant cover of dandelions and plantain weeds (as well as thistle and cape weed).

However the rain would not stop and nothing else could be done for months! A huge task remained before the vines actually went in on Cup Weekend 1991! To be continued....

Vineyard Report:

The Pinot Grigio vines that we have been following from Christmas 2008, produced an amazing, full sized crop of beautiful fruit at 2 yrs 5 months of age, in their third growing season.

Winery Report:

The cold weather in May has not only made ripening difficult but also presented problems with getting the wines to ferment fully. Especially in our "steel winery". We have had to put heaters on all the tanks, either aquarium heaters or water bed heaters. The barrel fermenting chardonnays are covered up with a heavy plastic sheet and electric oil column heaters. It's a lot of extra work but appears to have succeeded.

Newsletter Special:

For WWE we are offering 25% special on our already well priced Lucy's Choice Pinot Noir 2007, for dozen purchases.

Competition:

All purchases of wine from now until Fri following Queen's Birthday Weekend will be entered into a draw for a mixed dozen wine. All dozen purchases will get two tickets for each dozen. The odds for this competition are pretty good and even the losers get great wine.

Upcoming Events

We have tentative plans for a "winemakers dinner" with tastings of wines going right back to our early days, to mark our anniversary, probably Pinot Week 8-16/ Oct. The venue is to be decided but may be either peninsula or SE Melbourne. We are seeking expressions of interest to help plan this, and preferences for Melbourne or Peninsula. Please email us.

website: www.miceli.com.au.

Email: sales@miceli.com.au.

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.

Alc13.5%

Olivia's Chardonnay 2007

An powerful yet elegant wine with complexity and subtlety.

Brilliant pale straw. Peach, cashew, citrus, vanillan oak with some butteriness and struck match. Smooth mouthfeel and fine acid balance, with great length of flavour. Alc 14.0%

1Gold1silver

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 2007

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

Brilliant deep red. Dark morello cherries, gamey, earthy with some spice, and subtle, well integrated oak. Rich and complex with delicious pinot fruit, full palate weight, depth, and balance. 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. Alc 11.0%

2 Gold 2 Silver

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. Specials and museum releases excepted.

Pauline & Anthony Miceli