

Miceli Newsletter

Winter 2014

Opening Times:

We will be open for the Queen's Birthday Weekend- Sat, Sun, Mon, June 7-9 11.00 - 5.00.

On Sunday and Monday we will be serving food- Home made gourmet antipasto, and local 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 for tastings (usually) every weekend 12.00 to 5.00 pm. (And available, for sales only, every day).

New Releases:

The **2011 Lucy's Choice Pinot Noir** shows how with enough care and attention to detail and skill it is possible even in a "difficult" year to produce great wines. The style is a little less full bodied than usual for us but still has a very attractive brilliant red colour, great depth of flavour and suppleness at a only slightly lower alcohol. The small scale of our operation enabled us to do the critical tasks such as spraying leaf plucking etc. in the small windows of suitable weather available. And we could have the courage to wait for the right time and then pick quickly with our long term skilled gang of workers, using ruthless selection to exclude unsuitable grapes. I compare this wine to our 2005, in the more delicate style, which we tasted a month ago and showed magnificently, with lovely fruit and colour showing richness and still youthful, with a long way to go.

The **2011 Iolanda Pinot Grigio**, likewise, maintains the same quality and style, with just a little more delicacy and minerality than the 2010 or 2009 but also enough richness to fill the palate and give it great length. Again, fruit selection and gentle handling in the winery enabled us to avoid any damaged fruit or loss of quality. Amazingly enough, this wine also recalled quite closely the 2005 Pinot Grigio which we had at the same tasting, also still developing with a lovely balance of primary fruit and developed toasty and honey flavours.!

Season Report:

Late November and early December 2013 brought us miserable, windy, cold, showery weather. This of course is flowering time, and as a result fruit set was well below normal. The flowers would open but then fail to pollinate and fall off. In fact, particularly with Pinot Noir MV6 many, many whole flower bunches just shriveled and fell off. This is very disheartening and nerve wracking, as you have to wait for weeks and weeks to see whether the potential berries will form or just fall off (called "shatter"). Nowhere near as dramatic as the sudden destruction of frost or hail but just as severe. There is no way to recover the yield from this, and in addition, this is the time when the buds are forming that produce the next seasons flowers, and potentially a small crop also next year.

Our vines produced a crop of about 30% of normal, which sounds bad, but compared to some sites that were not even enough to be worth picking, we consider ourselves lucky. In particular the parts of our vineyard on rootstocks (especially Teleki 5C) produced better fruitset, and reasonable crop levels.

Following this time, the season developed into what otherwise would have been called ideal. The weather remained reasonably dry and calm, with no severe heat waves (we were not affected by excessive heat in late December). Thus the growing conditions were perfect for the grapes that we did have, and they ripened evenly and steadily, producing great flavour intensities, and retaining really quite high natural acidities.

After some good rain in April (95 mm) May has been reasonable (57 mm) though this is roughly half our long term average (95 mm).

Of course we are watching and waiting to see if an El Nino develops, as seems likely, and also whether the Indian Ocean also follows into a dry (positive index) phase. Certainly the cold fronts are staying well south of the continent, giving us no real cold weather outbreaks at all so far this year.

Due to our normally high rainfall and deep soils, we are usually well placed to endure droughts, and without wanting to neglect the suffering of others, this sort of weather potentially can be good for our grapes.

Vintage Report:

This harvest was one of our earliest, commencing in late March and finishing in the third week of April. A small amount of rain in the

weeks around harvest did not cause any damage at all, indeed it helped the vines to remain healthy and not drop their leaves prematurely.

Berry and bunch sizes were tiny, especially in Pinot Noir and chardonnay, which is a real pain for the pickers. Picking labour is only marginally reduced despite being such a light crop. Luckily the "Dclone" pinot clones, which in some years can be inclined to over-produce, were in this year the star performers. They had small loose bunches of perfect grapes, with lovely flavour, deep colour and rich tannins. Along with the small batch of really intense, rich MV6, this should be a magnificent (though scarce) vintage for pinot noir.

Flavours were likewise intense with the whites, and acid levels above normal. The pinot Grigio yields were closest to normal, which I attribute to it all being on rootstocks.

Grafting:

This year we have undertaken some grafting, to increase our pinot noir and add new clones, aiming to balance our production back towards red wine (currently ¾ white). A section of 12 rows of pinot grigio on rootstocks (teleki 5C) were grafted to "Abel" clone and "Pommard" clone. Abel clone reputedly came first to New Zealand from Domaine Romane Conte in Burgundy smuggled in a gumboot. It was caught in customs but the customs officer, being also a winemaker and recognising it for what it was put it through quarantine and it has become a major part of the NZ industry. Pommard clone comes, as you might imagine, from Chateau Pommard in Pommard, Burgundy, but via University of California. Only recent arrivals in Australia, we anticipate adding depth and complexity to our wines with these clones.

Grafting is a somewhat risky and difficult proposition, because if the grafts don't take re-grafting over time is very labour intensive and can lead to a very patchy vineyard. On the other hand, if successful, a good crop can be expected the very next year, from what are in effect already established vines, and with much less effort than waiting for 3-5 years for newly planted vines to establish and mature.

This is very skilled work and our grafter did a great job, with 90% take, of which 2/3 have enough growth to produce a reasonable crop, so we will definitely have some of these clones for the 2015 vintage.

Newsletter Special:

We always offer great specials with each newsletter, so if you want to receive it about 3 times a year please email us with your (postal) address, and don't miss out with our strict expiry dates (in case I don't get to the website in time) **website: www.miceli.com.au.**

Email: sales@miceli.com.au.

Tasting Notes:

Iolanda Pinot Grigio 2011

Distinctive, dry, flavoursome and refreshing, with a crisp finish.

Very pale straw colour. Lively and fresh, with typical Pinot Grigio characters- mineral, pear, lemon, honey and spice. The palate is crisp, dry, has perfectly balanced structure, and great persistence of flavour. Alc 13.5%

Olivia's Chardonnay 2009 *Special till 16/6**

An elegant and flavoursome wine with complexity and depth.

This wine is fermented in oak and remains in contact with its yeast lees for a full year. It shows citrus, white peach, minerality, restrained oak, with crisp acid balance and creamy mouthfeel. Alc 13.5%

D clone Pinot Rose (dry) NV

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

The colour is brilliant salmon pink. Delicious strawberry pinot fruit, with complexity, gaminess, and freshness. The palate shows great length and balance. Alc 13.0%

Lucy's Choice Pinot Noir 2011

A lively light red with deceptive richness and flavour.

Brilliant light red, with lively strawberry fruit, spice, earthiness and well integrated subtle oak.. The palate is medium bodied, with great length and persistence of flavour. Alc 13.5%

Michael Brut 2006

Aperitif style- Crisp, refreshing, and dry, this is a wine with great subtlety and length.

Beautifully pale with persistent fine bead, it has lovely yeastiness, lemon, honey and toast, this wine is savoury and elegant. Recently disgorged. Alc 11.0%

Rose Brut 2004

Elegant, sophisticated, and amazingly pretty, dry, with intense and lingering flavour and a creamy palate.

Aristocratic pale pink. The palate is rich and flavoursome, with creamy and toasty yeast, and delicious strawberry pinot noir fruit. It has great length, persistent fine bead and a clean dry finish. Alc 11.5%

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