

Miceli

Newsletter

Autumn 2007

Opening Times:

We will be Open for Easter: Fri - Mon 11.00 - 5.00 & first weekend of May, Queens Birthday Weekend, and the first weekend of each month as usual. Wine tasting and cheese platters.

Show Awards:

The only show so far this year is the Red Hill Cool Climate Show, we were awarded three BRONZE medals (not too bad, we can't always win the golds).

New Releases:

We have 3 new releases since the last newsletter, the **Michael Methode Champenoise 2003**, **Iolanda Pinot Grigio 2006**, and the **Dry Pinot Rose 2006**.

The "**Michael**" 2003 is proving a worthy successor to the 2001, slightly more delicate with a higher (38%) percentage of chardonnay but very much along the same style and quality. The **Iolanda Pinot Grigio 2006** is again consistent in style with a little more "grigio" leanness than the 2005, and is more than half sold in the period since just before Christmas. Jeni Port reviewed it in the top couple of gris/grigio wines in Australia recently in the Age Epicure. The **Dry Pinot Rose 2006** is a remarkable wine with a vibrant very pale pink-with the refreshment of a white and depth and interest of a red, this is an up and coming style.

Season Report:

Of course the big issue this year has been drought and heat. We have been relatively lucky, not having been caught by the frosts, and although way below normal, we have had sufficient rain over Summer to keep the vines healthy and growing. This shows the depth of the root systems of our mature vines, that they can somehow find some water when everything seems so dry. We have used a very limited amount of irrigation on the pinot grigio,

which has the shallower rooting "Schwartzman" rootstocks (the equivalent of about 50 mm of rainfall over the entire season, though efficiently placed by dripper). The dry weather has also meant that there has not been many cold (wet) days and vine growth has been way ahead of normal. In fact, as I am writing about ¾ of our crop is now picked. A full month earlier than what used to be normal, and even 2 weeks ahead of recent years.

The yields have been slightly down, mainly due to poor early season growth and hail damage, especially in the chardonnay. Berry size is marginally smaller. However, I would still call it a "normal" crop in general terms, though less than 2006 and marginally less than 2005.

Quality is outstanding, with absolutely no disease and fantastic fruit flavours and ripeness. Colour in the pinot is extraordinary. This has been achieved because the vines are in fact not suffering from any stress, still having their full canopy of green leaves and even a few growing shoots. We have carefully maintained the nutritional needs of the vines with foliar applications to supplement what they couldn't absorb from the dry upper layers of the soil.

Phylloxera:

Last Autumn I spoke about phylloxera, a theoretical risk, but since then the winemaking community has been stunned by the detection of an outbreak in the Yarra Valley, at one of Foster's vineyards - right in the heart of the vineyard country. Foster's have removed the infested vines and those in a surrounding area and Department of Primary Industry (DPI) claim their survey shows no phylloxera in the rest of that vineyard or the surrounding 5 km quarantine zone. Does this mean it is eradicated? The likely, and "official" situation is "no". This is only meant as a holding measure, there has never been a successful eradication of phylloxera from a region (apart from Geelong in the 1890s when the entire vineyard region was uprooted). The insect lives underneath the ground on the roots of vines and is only about 0.1 mm in size. Who can do a survey and swear that they did not miss one insect?

The damage from phylloxera, depending on the soil type, usually takes 2-3 years to start to affect the vine, and thus be detected. Thus it has been there possibly 3 years or more already. With harvesters and other machinery and people moving freely from

one Fosters vineyard to another across the Yarra Valley what chance is there that it is only in one spot?

So where did it come from? Of course the likely suspect is the North East Victoria, including King Valley which has other Foster's vineyards. Fosters point to their strict protocols and records, and claim there has been no contact between that vineyard and these areas. They have a point and may be correct. They believe that it came from an as yet unknown Yarra Valley vineyard (who presumably either don't know or won't tell).

What does this mean to us? Up until now there has been no legal restrictions on moving grapes and machinery and people from the Yarra Valley to other non-phylloxera areas such as the Mornington Peninsula (and there still isn't apart from the quarantine area). There are certainly a lot of picking bins that go from our region to the Yarra wineries when fruit is sold, and then come back (are they always the same or just identical bins?) Mechanical harvesters and other contractors have covered both regions frequently. There must therefore be some risk that it is hiding on the Peninsula already. All we can do ourselves, is to continue our vigilance and protocols for all visitors and workers that come to our own site. The ability of phylloxera to move under its own power is limited to several metres, so we could still be OK for some years even if there is an outbreak in our area, as we are self sufficient, not using any outside contractors for spraying etc.

Of course, phylloxera does not affect humans and is no risk to wine drinkers! (apart from getting enough wine to drink)

Newsletter Special:

We always have a special for our mailing list, and for this one we are offering the remainder of the 2001 Lucy Pinot and the 2004 Pinot Rose for an amazing 50% off (but strictly 2 cases for the price of one, and not mixed).

Tasting Notes:

Iolanda Pinot Grigio 2006.

A distinctive, dry, flavoursome white wine with fresh acidity.

Pale greenish yellow. Full-bodied, but fine, with typical Pinot Grigio characters- mineral/flinty, brown pear, honey and lemon. The palate is fresh and clean, and it has great persistence of flavour. Alc 13.5%

Olivia's Chardonnay 2004

An elegant wine with depth and power.

Brilliant pale greenish yellow. Peach, cashew, citrus, and superbly integrated vanillan oak.. Smooth mouthfeel and fine acid balance, with great intensity and length of flavour.

Alc 13.5%

1 Trophy 4 Gold 1 Silver 4 Bronze

Pinot Rose 2004 * special**

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

Brilliant salmon pink, with plum, strawberry and a hint of vanillan oak. Intense and full bodied on the palate with clean acid freshness, smooth mouthfeel, and great length of flavour. Alc 13.0% 1 Silver.

Best of Category: Wine Wise

Dry Pinot Rose 2006 (new release)

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.

Pinot Noir 2005

This fruit-driven light red shows all the flavours of the noble pinot noir grape.

Brilliant ruby red. Black cherry, plum, some earthiness and a hint of vanillan oak. Lively and fresh, this wine is well balanced with smooth mouthfeel, soft tannin, and great length of flavour.

Alc 13.0 %

Lucy's Choice Pinot Noir 2001 *special**

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

Medium red and brilliantly clear. Delicate and complex - gamey, spicy, and earthy with cedary oak. The palate is soft and well balanced, dry, and complex with great length. Alc 13.0%

1 bronze, 4* 88 Points Halliday Wine Companion.

Michael Methode Champenoise 2003

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

The flavours are delicate and fine, with toasty yeast and hints of melon, pear and strawberry. The palate is very creamy, long, with cleansing acid and a fresh dry finish. 11.5% alc. 3 Bronze

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 2 Silver 4* Halliday

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.

Pauline & Anthony Miceli