

# Miceli Newsletter

## Autumn 2009

### Opening Times:

**We will be open for Easter- Good Friday, Saturday, Sunday, Monday Tuesday 12.00 - 5.00. Following this we will continue to be open for tastings the first weekend of each month (and available for sales almost every day).**

### Season Report:

Winter has been cold and wet in our part of the world. Sad to say, I think most have not had the rain we have had. Even Melbourne, such a short distance away has been so much drier. Over Winter we have had 416 mm (196 in August) and now 640mm for the year so far. Not quite caught up for the first dry 4 months but a respectable total. Our new (and old) dams are full and have been for months.

September has been a bit dry (44) and October very dry (24 mm so far). This looks like the same dry Spring/Summer patterns of most of the last 10 years, though the El Nino and Indian Ocean Dipole patterns are close to normal so normal rain should be the result. Mind you, the dry warm drought years quite suit the grape vines!

With all the doom and gloom in the financial markets, definitely we need to celebrate the things we still can, continue to enjoy the (small) good things in life. That is why we are offering some big discounts on sparkling wine this time!

### New Releases:

The 2008 Pinot Grigio is being released with this Newsletter, possibly the best to date! We feel that as our experience grows with this variety we are continuing to unlock its secrets, complexity and nuances. Last Newsletter mentioned all the different batches made with different fermentations from 4/3 to 17/5 picking dates.

In conjunction with this wine we have an extremely limited museum release of 2001 Pinot Grigio. A fantastic wine which won Silver medals and high acclaim before the variety really was known in Australia. I believe this wine is

probably at its peak, though only time will show, as it has no signs of losing fruit or "drying out". Only available as half dozen cases (only one per customer) or combined with full case purchase of 2008 wine (one bottle 2001 & 11 bottles 2008).

This wine has tremendous flavour and complexity with richness, toastiness, honey, apricot kernel, and still great depth of fruit and acid. A rare chance to learn about the aging potential of this exciting variety. In Australia we assume to easily that this is a variety for drinking young, in Europe there is no such opinion.

N.B. While 2008 was a good crop, pre-release wholesale orders for the 2008 are already over 250 dozen, so don't delay!

### Vineyard:

Budburst has been very even and vigorous, with the vines showing no adverse effects from the dry Autumn and higher crop levels of the previous season. Of course it is far too early to predict the outcome of this year!

The big activity in the vineyard is the preparations for the planting of the new Pinot Grigio block of 0.6 Ha. A lot of agonising has gone into selection of the rootstock (phylloxera-resistant) for these vines.

All the rootstocks that are drought resistant are inclined to produce high vigour in the variety (scion) they are grafted to. So do we choose a rootstock that will suit drought conditions but go completely berserk in a wet/normal year? Or do we choose one that will produce low vigour, so balanced growth and high quality with our deep soils, and good rainfall -but need extensive irrigation and care in drought type conditions (and will we have the water for this)?

The problem of course is that no one has experience with what rootstocks would do well in our area (almost all vineyards are on their own roots), - and the future climate is even more unknown.

We have chosen for this block the rootstock called Teleki 5C (all the names are numerical and named after the breeder), a moderate vigour stock with slightly better drought resistance than Schwartzmann, which has been very productive but needed a lot of care with our existing Pinot Grigio vines.

Soil preparation is the next task, and although our soil is friable, red and deep, it is also quite acidic and lacking in phosphorus and

other nutrients, because of leaching by our high rainfall. Some vineyards (not named) that have been established without fertiliser have failed, and been removed at 10 years without bearing a reasonable crop.

Thus we have been spreading lime (50 tonnes on 2.5 Ha), and low-cadmium super and potash on the land. Unfortunately manures and plant products unavoidably carry large amounts of nitrogen that would be quickly lost by seepage and pollute the groundwater. The problem is that phosphorus is needed deep in the soils for the roots of the vines, but phosphorus applied to the surface only penetrates 5 cm approx in the first year, and is then fixed, moving 1 mm a year after that. This works for grass, but vine roots 20-100 cm deep will not see it for decades! Basically, the phosphorus requirements of the vines need to be added deeply into the soil before planting.

Deep mouldboard ploughing with an enormous tractor followed by 3 passes with the disc plough, then ripping out of tree roots, and finally rotary hoeing to a fine tith, are used for preparation.

After this there is no more cultivation for the life of our vineyard (phew!) Next is irrigation pipes, soon posts and then finally the vines. Stay tuned for the next installment.

#### **Winery:**

Of course all the fun in the vineyard does not mean the winery can be ignored. Bottling the 2008 Pinot Grigio has been an enormous task. Chardonnay and Pinot barrels require attention with topping and monitoring. MLF is reactivating in the barrels that did not finish before Winter.

#### **Newsletter Special:**

For Spring Carnival and Christmas Festive Season we are offering 25% off our 2003 Michael Methode Champenoise (for 6 bottle cases). Recently disgorged, the final batch of this shows amazing depth of yeasty characters with delightful fine bead, clean acid, and dry finish. With relatively low alcohol this is ideal for all these occasions, and there is not much left so take advantage while you can.

#### **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%

##### **Iolanda Pinot Grigio 2001:**

Pale golden yellow. Rich, toasty and honey and apricot kernel. Fine acid well balanced and no tannin harshness. This wine won a couple of Silver medals way back then, and its balance and depth of flavour continue to amaze. It shows development in a way not dissimilar to Hunter Semillons. Strict limits on numbers per customer. Breathe 30 min. Alc13.0%

##### **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 2 Silver 4 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%

##### **Miceli Pinot Noir 2006**

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

Brilliant medium red. Fruity and flavoursome, with black cherry, strawberry, and some earthiness. Palate structure is linear and well balanced, with good palate weight, soft tannin, and great length of flavour. Drinking well now! Alc 13.5 %

##### **Lucy's Choice Pinot Noir 2005**

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

Brilliant medium red. Rich, complex and gamey with coffee, black cherry, plum, spice and superbly integrated oak. The palate is soft with fine tannins, is well balanced and dry, with very long persistence of flavour. Alc 13.5%

##### **Michael Methode Champenoise 2003 \*\*\*special**

***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