

WERE ESTATE

NEWSLETTER SPRING 2010

NEW RELEASE WINES

We're delighted to launch our latest wine releases wines, made by the very talented Clive Otto. 2010 is Clive's second vintage for Were Estate and we're once again delighted with the wines he has made.

The Were Estate 2009 Shiraz has just been released and has already received a gold medal at the 2010 Small Vignerons Awards. Barrel-aged for 12 months, it is fruit-driven and delicious. Blueberries, pomegranates, cherries - a plethora of berries and lifted aromas spring to mind. Keep your eye on this one. More awards and stellar reviews seem imminent. Shiraz from Margaret River...who would have thought.

Joining the clan are our 2010 whites - Sauvignon Blanc and Semillon Sauvignon Blanc. We made a limited amount of Sauvignon Blanc this year focusing on selecting the finest fruit in the vineyard to make sure this wine stood out from the crowd. The nose is pungent with passionfruit and pineapple and the palate exhibits wonderful length and texture. This vintage is yet again a fantastic example of what Sauvignon Blanc from Margaret River should be.

The 2010 Semillon Sauvignon Blanc is a lean, tightly-structured beast, and as dry as this year's winter. Wonderful up-front fruit from the Sauvignon Blanc and leanness and length from the Semillon. Lots of citrus and a touch of melon and honeysuckle on the nose which carries through to the palate. A perfect example as to why we blend these two varieties. Sophisticated and elegant.

Make sure you check out our wine specials online www.wereestate.com.au.

THANK YOU, MR HALLIDAY

For the second year running and for the last 3 out of 5 years, Were Estate has been rated as a 5-star wine producer by renowned wine writer, James Halliday. James Halliday's Australian Wine Companion is the most comprehensive directory of the best wineries in Australia. The 5-star rating deems us an outstanding winery capable of producing wines of very high quality and placing us in the top 15% of Australian producers. Thanks very much!

James awarded Were Estate's 2007 Shiraz 94 points describing it as *'bright, fresh, fragrant and lively; red and black fruit mix; controlled oak and fine tannins'*. He also awarded the Were Estate 2008 Reserve Chardonnay 95 points, *'a fragrant and multifaceted array of stone fruit and citrus on the bouquet is followed by an exemplary palate, with intense and juicy fruit backed by citrusy acidity'*.

The 2007 Shiraz is available through mail order or online www.wereestate.com.au. (2008 Reserve Chardonnay sold out - sorry!)

A FOND FAREWELL

It is with sadness that we bid farewell to Steph Rhys-Jones who has worked at Were Estate for the past 7 years. I am sure that many of you will be familiar with her and have encountered her on a visit to the cellar door or when placing a wine order.

Steph started working with us in 2003 after completing a wine tasting course and having worked at Xanadu wines. She has been a great asset to the team at Were Estate and has worn a number of hats during her time with us. From cellar door management and helping out at wine shows to assisting in the vineyard during pruning and harvest.

Steph has decided to return to childcare taking up a position at a small childcare centre in Capel. She has been an incredibly loyal, reliable and trustworthy staff member and will be missed by all of us.

Steph's last day will be Wednesday 15th September and we wish her all the best with her new job.



Our cellar door will have limited opening hours from now on.

To avoid disappointment, please check our website or phone ahead to confirm if we are open.

WHERE'S WERE?

Were Estate is proud to be on pour at one of Melbourne's newest and most delightful cafes. Le Traiteur (the caterer) offer a selection of freshly baked breads - baked on premise twice a day - coffee and classic French cuisine. Everything is on offer as a dine-in experience or take-away. Situated on Lonsdale Street in Melbourne's CBD, Le Traiteur also offers a catering service for any kind of event. Le Traiteur is run by the dynamic duo from Libertine, Zoe Ladyman and Nick Creswick, and will no doubt be turning heads in the gastronomic scene.

We're also available at Von Haus, a small cafe/bar also in the Melbourne CBD. It has a short menu than runs from noon until 3am offering simple yet wholesome food such as corned beef with mustard sauce, homemade tarts and even bread and butter with jam. Von Haus has a small yet eclectic wine list that includes Were, as well as French farmhouse cider.

STATE OF THE MARKET

For those of you on our mailing list, you might be starting to think that we're all about cleanskin and discount wines. I don't blame you but it is far from the truth and it is never nice to sell a product that has had so much time and effort poured into it for little or no profit. It is however a reflection of the state of the wine industry at the moment.

The wine market has become an increasingly competitive arena. There is currently 100 million surplus cases of Australian-made wine which is driving down retail prices. Not to mention an increasing amount of wine imports from countries where the cost of production is much lower and therefore the cost of their product is lower. Wines that were marketed between \$15 and \$20 per bottle are now often found between \$10 and \$15 and wines that were usually priced under \$10 are around the \$5 mark. Happy times for wine consumers.

Unfortunately, not so happy times for grapegrowers and wine producers. The Wine Federation of Australia released a statement declaring that 20% of vines planted in Australia are surplus to need and are contributing to the 20-40 million cases produced per year that are not being consumed. Ouch.

For a boutique producer like us, it means that getting space in retail shops is becoming increasingly difficult, the supermarket chains don't want to know about us and we are having to rely more and more on direct sales (mail order) to stay afloat. And we thank our many wonderful customers who have been ordering so regularly!

It's certainly making us reassess what we are doing and there are changes afoot for Were Estate. In the meantime, we have a backlog of wines that we need to move so keep enjoying our wine specials while you can!



SPRING REPORT

Pruning is done and dusted and we are now into budburst and the major growth phase for the vines. The vines are busy beavers this time of year. The lack of rainfall over winter is a little bit of a concern and we hope that it doesn't mean that we have wild and woolly weather in Spring that can damage the young shoots. No freak hail storms please.

Last season we grafted some of our red grape vines to Semillon and Sauvignon Blanc and we have had a very high percentage of success. Grafting allows us to change the fruiting variety of the vine without the expense of replanting with the loss of only one cropping year. It involves cutting a 2-bud cane of the grape variety that you want and inserting it into the trunk of the established vine. The original vine continues to grow as the root system and lower trunk, while the new variety becomes the upper trunk and fruiting part of the vine. So some of our Cabernet vines are now fruiting Semillon and our Shiraz vines are fruiting Sauvignon Blanc. All a bit tricky really. We expect a good crop from these vines in the 2011 harvest which is one of the great benefits of grafting.

As usual, Jim is keeping the vineyard in an immaculate state. It really looks wonderful and we thank him for all his hard work and attention to detail.

CELLAR DOOR

The cellar door will now have limited opening hours.

We will be open over the long weekend in September and during the Christmas period but OPEN BY APPOINTMENT ONLY in between these times.

All wines are available through mail order or online www.wereestate.com.au, with free delivery anywhere in Australia.

GOLD AT SMALL VIGNERONS

At this year's Small Vignerons Awards, the Were Estate 2009 Shiraz was awarded a gold medal and second top in its class of Margaret River Shiraz across all vintages.

Be one of the first to try our 2010 whites! See order form for pricing and tasting notes.