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2009 Vintage Review

SCOTT ZRNA
Winemaker



In 2009 we managed to trump 2008's one in one thousand year heatwave with an even more intense record equalling weather event. Not since 1908 had we been subjected to that sort of sustained heat pattern, although these days our air conditioners made our lives a little more comfortable than those coping with a similar event over one hundred years earlier. Following 2008's heat wave in March there were several media reports questioning the quality of the 2008 vintage but I can assure you we have some fantastic wines sitting in barrel due for release later this year and early next year.

Vintage 2009 was characterised by yet another dry growing season following on from those experienced in 2007 and 2008, which caused the vines to set a slightly lower than normal crop and also display some set variability within the bunch. Initial media reports following the heat wave at the end of January abounded with wild claims about the entire

region's vineyards and crop being totally written off. The extent of damage was over exaggerated, and unfortunately some growers across the region did lose their entire crop, some suffered significant damage, while others suffered only minimal damage and loss. The reasons some vineyards coped better than others was due to factors such as vineyard aspect, row orientation, canopy type and management, hydration of the vine just prior to and during the heat period, crop load and general vine nutritional status and health. Amongst our growers we had varying levels of heat effect, ranging from little effect and an almost normal yield to significant loss and approximately 40% of normal tonnages.

White grape varieties showed a larger effect on the flavour profile than our reds, as they were closer to ripeness when the heat occurred. For fans of the Fox Creek Verdelho I have some sad news, our vineyard was stressed by the dry growing season and then the fruit was damaged by some blisteringly hot winds during January's hot spell. This left us in the unenviable position of not harvesting the vineyard at all as the fruit quality had slipped below what we deem necessary to make wine for a Fox Creek label.

The red grape varieties were only just through veraison when the weather event hit so any berries that were damaged at this time shrivelled up and either fell off or stayed attached to the vine during harvesting. The remaining sound berries were then bathed with some of the most ideal ripening weather I have seen. The fruit developed some beautiful flavours at moderate sugar levels, which in turn gave us full flavoured wines at moderate alcohols. The 2009 wines have all completed their alcoholic fermentation and some of the reds have even finished their malo-lactic fermentation. From the tasting I have just done, wine from some vineyards have made much higher grades this year than they have in the past, which will more than compensate us for the lower yields from some of our usual premium vineyards.

I would like to thank all our winery and vineyard staff for their tireless efforts over the 2009 Vintage in order to deliver yet another round of high quality, flavour filled wines for you our valued customers.

STOP PRESS

OUR 2006 RESERVE SHIRAZ HAS JUST WON A GOLD MEDAL AT ONE OF THE MOST PRESTIGIOUS WINE COMPETITIONS IN THE WORLD, THE DECANTER WORLD WINE AWARDS HELD ANNUALLY IN LONDON.

New Releases



2008 CHARDONNAY

The new vintage of our Chardonnay is a fantastic wine of balance and complexity. It is a perfect example of a contemporary Chardonnay with its bouquet showing lifted citrus with quince and just a hint of lemongrass. The soft rich palate shows white peach and honeydew melon flavours framed by a creamy texture from the barrel fermentation and maturation on yeast lees. The balanced integrated oak coupled with crisp acidity gives zing, persistence and length to the wine. Overall the wine has a fresh juicy palate with restrained alcohol and natural acidity.

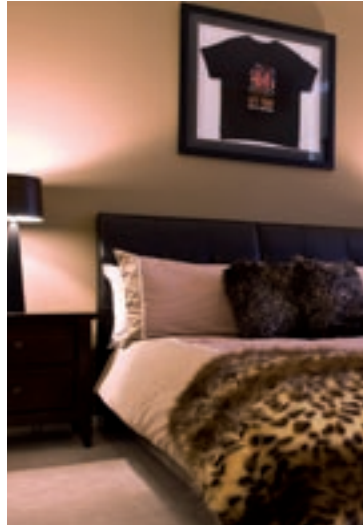
The 2008 Chardonnay will be drinking at its best throughout 2009 and 2010.



2008 RED BARON SHIRAZ

This is the vintage of Red Baron that Qantas selected to serve on their international flights after a taste-off against thousands of wines. This nose shows lifted cherry ripe, mixed spice and strawberries and the palate has a thick and juicy entry which leads into a blend of fresh red berry, cherry and plum fruits framed with soft smooth tannins. This wine has a ripe and fleshy mid palate displaying sweet ripe fruit, spice and subtle balanced oak with a lingering length.

As always, this wine is made to be enjoyed now while it is fresh, young and fruity.



The Vixen Apartment in McLaren Vale

We are delighted to let you know that there is now a luxury apartment in McLaren Vale called The Vixen. It is one of six "apartment style" self contained accommodation suites at the new McLaren Vale Studio Apartments. It can accommodate up to 6 people and has a full kitchen with dishwasher, outdoor BBQ, spa bath, the latest home theatre system with Foxtel and luxury leather home theatre seats. Most importantly you receive a bottle of our Vixen on arrival. See www.mvsa.com.au for more information.

We are pleased to be able to offer you a winter special available until 31 July 2009.

To stay in The Vixen apartment it will cost you \$190/night (normally \$215) with any booking of two nights or more. Valid by mentioning this newsletter special offer.

For bookings please contact Roz Vertigan on 08 8323 9536 or 0438 708 558.

FOX CREEK SCORES IN THE WINE ADVOCATE

The Wine Advocate is a US publication featuring independent consumer advice by wine critic Robert M Parker Jr. The guide has no advertising and publishes in excess of 7,500 wine reviews per year. The ratings given to the wines utilise Parker's 50-100 point quality scale and have a significant effect on the economic performance of the reviewed wine.

Parker has recently delegated tastings for most of the world's wine regions to a team of critics, including Dr Jay Miller who reviews Australian wines. Collectors often purchase highly rated wines in the hopes the Advocate scores will increase the value of the wine. With all of the above in mind, it is no wonder that wineries wait with anticipation for the release of the publication.

Recently, Fox Creek's wines received the following scores.

90 points – 2007 JSM

90 points – 2006 Short Row

91+ points – 2006 Reserve Shiraz

Using Robert Parker's Rating System, wines rated 90-95 are considered an outstanding wine of exceptional complexity and character. Parker considers these to be terrific wines.

EMAIL SPECIALS

Did you know that we email special offers to our Circle members between newsletters? If you are not receiving these and would like to, please advise us of your email address. If you were receiving these but haven't seen one recently perhaps you have changed your email address? Please contact Brenda by email brenda@foxcreekwines.com so we can keep in touch.



SHADOW'S FACEBOOK COMPETITION

We here at Fox Creek are missing our furry ambassador and namesake of our wine Shadow's run. Shadow's facebook group is growing but we want to boost the number of members to help keep his memory alive so, we thought we would run a competition for those of you who love dogs.

THE COMPETITION DETAILS

Competition opens – 8th May 2009

How to enter – Post your most memorable four legged tale (dog only) on Shadow's

Round Up Facebook Group (visit our website and follow the link on the homepage). Please limit your tale to 200 words. The tale can be happy, sad or just plain stupid – it is up to you. You are welcome to upload images but this is not a competition requirement. Limit of three stories per member.

Winning entries – The winners will be judged by the staff at Fox Creek Wines.

Prize – First prize will be one case of Shadow's white and one case of Shadow's red and Second Prize will be a mixed case of both.



Competition Closes – 1st July 2009.
Winners notified shortly afterwards.

Australia and the Global Wine Market, April 09

TONY KEYS IS A FRIEND AND SCRIBE WHO WRITES THE INFORMATIVE AND SOMETIMES CONTROVERSIAL WEEKLY WINE INDUSTRY NEWSLETTER "THE KEY REPORT". TONY ALSO WRITES ARTICLES FOR A NUMBER OF OTHER WINE PUBLICATIONS. WHEN INVITED TO WRITE SOMETHING FOR YOU TONY KINDLY OBLIGED AND WE THANK HIM VERY MUCH FOR HIS INTERESTING ARTICLE BELOW. IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN FINDING OUT MORE ABOUT HIS NEWSLETTER SEE WWW.THEKEYREPORT.COM.AU

In 2007 the world produced around 267 million hectolitres of wine (nearly 3 billion dozen 750ml bottles) and global consumption was around 241 million hectoliters (just over 2 & ½ billion dozen 750ml bottles).

This shifts the power of negotiation from the producer to the retailer resulting in lower prices for consumers. That has to be good right? Actually no it isn't, it results in a divided industry with the less caring producer dumbing-down quality because they are desperate to make a sale and meet retailers' price points by cutting corners.

Australia produces far more wine than it consumes therefore we are reliant on our export markets. The UK, USA and Canada lead the pack - all three markets are declining and overall that is not good news. However this does not mean the Australian wine industry is in danger of collapse, nor will we lose all global credibility.

Big is not necessarily best in the wine industry. We have had our shot at trying to convince the world it should drink Australian Chardonnay and Shiraz or that wines with cute sounding 'critter' names are a superior drop. Now it's

time to settle down and show the world what amazing diversity there is within the country, show that there are vast differences between Shiraz wines produced in McLaren Vale, Mornington Peninsula and the Hunter Valley or how different Chardonnay is from Tasmania, Adelaide Hills and Margaret River.

The harsh reality behind carrying out such a transformation or re-education program is that there will be losses along the way. In a perfect year Australia can produce around two million tonnes of grapes. Events such as heat, drought, bushfire and smoke taint have this year reduced the crop to an estimated 1.6 million tonnes. Sadly, Australia cannot sell all the resulting wine even from this reduced harvest.

The ideal size of our grape crop is much debated. If we accept the fact that it will reduce - whether via voluntary withdrawal or straight bankruptcy - what will go and what will remain?

Australia can produce good wines at very reasonable prices; a vast amount of grape material is being sold at below cost of production and ending up in wines that are undervalued and themselves often

sold at below cost of production. These will go.

The UK supermarket and high street retailers' ability to do the beloved deal of 'three for a tenner' will be curtailed, and that is no loss at all. Australian wines will have less shelf space but the wines that remain on shelves will be wines to be proud of.

Have no doubt we produce some of the best wines in the world, but keep in mind our wines have to earn a position amongst the world's best - it's a slow process although we have come a long way in a short time. It can be said with confidence that we are part of the way there; now we need to show and explain, educate and most importantly listen to what others say.

Now is the time to take the long view, to produce only what can be sold, to make sure that what is sold is worthy to carry 'product of Australia' on its label and that consumers all over the world feel secure in spending their money on that product.

Less production over the next few years will, in my opinion, lead to a measured increase in generations to come. Australian wine is well placed to move up the global quality wine ladder. I am confident in the long term and in this business... long is decades not years but for now patience is required.

TONY KEYS



Winter 2009 Mixed Dozen

The Fox Creek Circle Mixed Dozens for Winter 2009 are listed below. **If you require any changes to your mix or would like to add to your order please contact us by Friday 29th May despatch will start on Tuesday 2nd June.** Those who have ordered single variety dozens for Summer will receive them at the same time. If your credit card has changed or expired please contact us so you don't miss out.

WHITE DOZEN

- 2007 Shadow's run Unwooded Chardonnay
- 2008 Sauvignon Blanc
- 2008 Verdelho
- 2008 Chardonnay

Mail Order Price **\$189.00**
Fox Creek Circle Price **\$162.00** delivered



RED DOZEN

- 2007 Shadow's run Shiraz-Cabernet Sauvignon
- 2008 Red Baron Shiraz
- 2007 Shiraz-Grenache-Mourvedre
- 2006 Duet Cabernet Sauvignon-Merlot
- 2007 JSM Shiraz-Cabernet Sauvignon-Cabernet Franc
- Vixen Sparkling Shiraz-Cabernet Sauvignon-Cabernet Franc
- 2006 Short Row Shiraz
- 2005 Reserve Shiraz

Mail Order Price **\$279.00**
Fox Creek Circle Price **\$241.50** delivered



MIXED DOZEN

- 2007 Shadow's run Unwooded Chardonnay
- 2008 Sauvignon Blanc
- 2008 Verdelho
- 2008 Chardonnay
- 2007 Shadow's run Shiraz-Cabernet Sauvignon
- 2008 Red Baron Shiraz
- 2006 Duet Cabernet Sauvignon-Merlot
- 2007 JSM Shiraz-Cabernet Sauvignon-Cabernet Franc
- Vixen Sparkling Shiraz-Cabernet Sauvignon-Cabernet Franc
- 2005 Reserve Shiraz

Mail Order Price **\$261.00**
Fox Creek Circle Price **\$226.00** delivered



LATEST PRESS

FOX CREEK WINES AND IN PARTICULAR OUR 2008 RED BARON SHIRAZ HAS BEEN RECEIVING A LOT OF PRESS LATELY. HERE IS WHAT SOME OF THE PEOPLE IN THE WINE INDUSTRY HAVE HAD TO SAY.

Campbell Mattinson, Sunday Magazine, Herald Sun, 5th April.

"When the bottle arrived with my inflight meal, it made me smile. In the most tense financial climate since the 1920s, Qantas has turned to the Red Baron – or the Fox Creek Red Baron Shiraz 2008 to be exact.

Getting a wine onboard Qantas is a big deal for an independent winery. It's not far off winning the lottery. Qantas wants the Red Baron shiraz in tiny, 187ml plastic bottles – and has ordered a whopping 252,000 of them. Given it'll be on the Qantas inflight wine list, it's estimated more than five million folks will see the Red Baron name over the next 12 months.

Indeed, Fox Creek owner Jim Watts reckons these tiny bottles are the perfect serve to help protect against heart disease, stroke, diabetes and dementia. Apart from running a successful winery, Watts just happens to be a retired surgeon.

He's also a stout believer that red wine should be affordable. A few years ago, when some of the Fox Creek reds were fetching high prices at US wine auctions, Watts worried that good red wine would fall out of reach of ordinary red-drinkers.

Thankfully, the Fox Creek Red Baron Shiraz 2008 hasn't – you can pick up a 750ml bottle for \$19 (Vintage Cellars). This soft, red berried, chocolatey wine comes with a rich, McLaren Vale oomph. It's an altitude red with attitude."

MX in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane reviewed the **2007 Shadow's run Unwooded Chardonnay** in October 2008.

"If you like that all-Aussie flavour, you will love Shadow's run. Great for a spring evening, it's quite a quaffer. Smooth and limey, just short of a little fizz. Go fetch Shadow!"

Ray Jordan reviewed our **2008 Verdelho** in the West Australian on 16th April.

"Pleasant fruity Verdelho with soft acid and stacks of tropical fruit and displaying a mix of mango and creamy banana with a little citrus edginess. Nice current drinking wine. 86/100."

Ross Noble wrote in the Mount Baker Courier on 18th February that our...

2008 Sauvignon Blanc *"is fresh and herbaceous with kiwi fruit, orange blossom, passionfruit and pineapple on the palate. Ideal for a pre-dinner drink on a warm evening."*

Our **Vixen** got great reviews by John Lewis in the Newcastle Herald in 24th December 2008 and Sally Gudgeon in The Australian Way, Qantas' in-flight magazine in February.

John said the **Vixen** *"has aromas of bramble jelly and potpourri and delivers blood plum flavour on the front palate. Cherry ripe chocolate, yeast and vanilla oak characters combine on the middle palate and soft flinty tannins hold sway at the finish."* ★★★★★



Sally called the **Vixen** *"A McLaren Vale blockbuster made predominantly from shiraz. It's full of fruit, spice and dark fruits; a bit like tucking into a slice of black forest gâteau."*

Tony Love awarded our **2007 Shiraz-Grenache-Mourvedre** 92 points in the Adelaide Advertiser in November last year.

"The combination here of S, G & M results in a lovely harmony. Gorgeous mulberry fruit aromas with lifts of lavender and sage extend into the mouth with good spiky and youthful fruit presence and sweetish spices all the way through. There is a rich middle stretch and a soft palate feel towards the finish. Very easy drinking."

Winestate Magazine in Jan/Feb edition had the following to say about some of our wines:

2006 Reserve Shiraz *"A developed wine loaded with long, lingering flavours. Very complex style, with heaps of varietal fruit, grippy tannins and creamy, cedary oak."* ★★★★★

2006 Short Row Shiraz *"A rich wine with an attractive bouquet of cedar, licorice and mint. Lots of oak on the palate but it's well intergrated with the fruit and acid. Good one to cellar."* ★★★★★

In Winestate's Special Edition **2007 JSM** *"Powerful oak-derived aromas with sweet nectarines underneath. Big, bold woody palate but has enough weight of sweet berry fruit to match it."* ★★★★★

and the **2007 Shadow's run Shiraz-Cabernet Sauvignon** appeared in the Top 40 wines. *"Rich plum fruit and cashew oak aromas and sweet berry and licorice flavours with a nice drying oak backbone."*

Paddy Kendler awarded the **2007 Shadow's run** red 4 & ½ stars in the Herald Sun on 14th April.

"Shadow the border collie no longer runs the rows of vines at Fox Creek near McLaren Vale, but his label will remain. This latest blend is pretty smart stuff at a modest price. The somewhat sweeter and softer shiraz provides the essential drive and character of the wine, while the cabernet component adds a drier, more serious note. Look out for Shadow on the label, one of the great winery dogs of our time."

And finally two reviews about our **2006 Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon**. Fergus McGhie in the Canberra Times 14th January

"You won't often see me review McLaren Vale cabernet – I'm too much of a fan of the region's shiraz. However, the Fox Creek Reserve stood out. It's soft, generous, black cherry fruit, complemented by mocha oak flavours, was like drinking a vinous equivalent of black forest cake. Its fine tannins will hold it up for some short-term cellaring too."

and Ray Jordan from West Australian 31st January

"Poised and elegant cabernet from McLaren Vale. Typically lush and plump in the middle, yet there is excellent structure with grainy tannins, fine-grained oak and intensely concentrated effortlessly long fruit. One for the cellar. 92/100."

EXHIBITIONS AT CELLAR DOOR

MAX RAGLESS

Until June 30th 2009

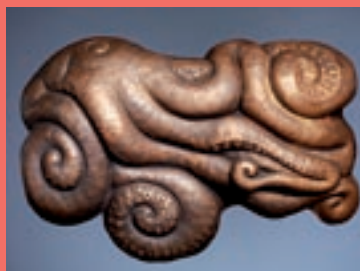
NADJA S. GUSTAFSON

July 1st to August 31st 2009

When I was three years old my Grandfather, a coppersmith and sculptor, put a hammer in my hands and let me bang on some metal. Thirty eight years later I am still hammering using the technique called chasing and repoussage, the forming of flat sheets of

metal on the "back" and "front" to create a three dimensional relief.

This ancient way of working is basic and direct yet can result in complex, detailed forms. I use copper and sterling silver because of their malleability and colour. My work focuses on the human figure, sea life, flora, and fauna as representations of an idea, a memory, an event, or sensation. The pieces are a reaction and response to some part of daily life.



Before Blackadder and the Holy Grail there was... *The Hypochondriac*

Fox Creek Wines' most recent arts collaborator, Adelaide-based Brink Productions has commissioned a new adaptation of Molière's comic masterpiece, the 300 year old 'Le Malade Imaginaire'.

Brink Productions' catastrophically funny *The Hypochondriac* has been adapted by Paul Galloway and brings together the cream of Adelaide's comedic actors for a riotous night of misdiagnosis and medicinal mayhem. Brink's *The Hypochondriac* is as hilarious and relevant to today's audiences as it was when sixteenth century doctors were shoving strange things into even stranger places. You'll come out feeling better than when you went in. The

season opens in Adelaide on 3 August. Just the ticket to chase away the winter blues!

Buy your tickets before 30 June and you get \$11 off the adult price of each ticket. These special offer tickets for \$31.00 are limited to Monday – Thursday evenings (7.30pm) or Saturday matinees (1pm).

Fox Creek Wine Club members can take advantage of this special offer by mentioning the password 'VIXEN' at any BASS outlet or when booking through BASS on 131 246.

BOOK NOW WHILE TICKETS LAST!

More information about Brink and *The Hypochondriac* at www.brinkproductions.com



Brink's *The Hypochondriac*. Photo: Wend Lear.



SEE YOU AT THE CELLAR DOOR SOON!

Cellar Door open for tastings between 10am and 5pm seven days a week.

