



JUNE 2005

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

*Why White?
Visitor to China & Korea
2005 Vintage*



FROM SOMEWHERE IN THE MESS THAT IS A WINEMAKER'S DESK!

Why White?

SCOTT ZRNA
Winemaker

While it is fashionable these days when drinking wine with friends to be presented with a big red in an almost comically oversized glass to swirl and sniff away to your hearts content, the humble and sometimes maligned white wines are either scoffed at or ignored.

Some of the best value wines in the country are white; take Riesling as a case in point. Pinnacle wines from some of the country's top producers sell at under \$35, which is a bargain compared to the prices iconic reds now command.

In a climate like ours the exhilaration in sipping a crisp chilled Riesling or Sauvignon Blanc for Sunday brunch, while munching on a warm chicken salad and fresh crusty bread is pretty close to heaven on earth.

Pity the poor "fashion conscious" ABC's (anything but chardonnay) who poo poo anything containing chardonnay. They are missing out on some absolute jewels that have resulted from a shift in chardonnay winemaking style towards better balanced, more restrained and integrated wines. Modern styles exhibiting the best fruit characters the variety has to offer, combined with all the care, attention and creativity that is the essence of the winemaking craft, produce wines far removed

from the simplistic and overdone wines of the past. Lifted, fresh fruit with crisp acid and subtle integrated oak exemplify the styles that the more 'savvy' consumers now demand.

Less mainstream varieties like Verdelho often bewilder consumers because no one is sure what the wine is supposed to be. There are a wide range of styles produced all over the country, but the variety seems to excel in areas with a warm growing season like McLaren Vale.

The rich, tropical fruit flavours shine through in wines from these climates, with the spicy nuances and richness pampering the palate.

How do you tell a good white wine?
A good white wine will show either delicate or generous fruit flavours depending on variety or style, be well-balanced and show good structure, flair and finesse. Above all, its consumption should be a pleasurable and rewarding experience.

OUR NEW 2004 CHARDONNAY

"The 2004 vintage is a fine example of the new philosophy behind the Fox Creek Chardonnay style – rich, ripe stone fruit with soft creamy integrated oak and yeast lees complexity" Chris Dix Chief Winemaker

This wine has a beautifully complex bouquet of lifted melon and grapefruit that combines with pear and subtle hazelnut oak. The generous palate shows white peach and pear fruit flavours, a generous creamy texture with a touch of grapefruit citrus that leads to a crisp balanced finish. Great tasting integrated fruit power with complexity and finesse.

Our 2004 Chardonnay tastes great after work with nibbles and is perfect with seafood, stir-fries, grilled chicken and fish dishes. Expect this wine to be at its best from now to 2007.

See order form for special offer on this wine.



New Releases

2003 'FOX & HOUNDS' SHIRAZ-CABERNET SAUVIGNON



The eagerly anticipated second release of this special blend of Shiraz and Cabernet Sauvignon is only available for purchase by mail order and from our cellar door.

The 2003 Fox & Hounds shows aromas of licorice, dark fruits, toasty oak and chocolatey rum and raisin.

The palate is soft with rich blackberry and stewed plum flavours. The structure is typical of Fox Creek, showing ripe fruit and well integrated oak complexity.

The critics agree! It was awarded four stars, equal top in category, in a recent new release tasting by Winestate Magazine (see upcoming July/Aug 05 issue). This wine was also recently awarded 5/5 in a leading Danish Wine Magazine, VinAvisen, with the following comments:

"This is wine! A red wine with a wonderful colour, a clean and inviting nose and a soft and delicious taste of berries. The wine is at the same time harmonious and full-bodied."

With its strong fruit flavours and balanced solid structure it is very approachable now but should offer good drinking until 2010.

2002 RESERVE SHIRAZ MAGNUM



Bigger is better, size does matter! As most members will be aware our 2002 Reserve Shiraz has been described as "Sex in a Bottle" and has won many accolades including Gold Medals at the International Wine Challenge in Asia 2004 and the Sydney

Royal Wine Show 2004. Only 600 bottles of this great wine was put into magnums. So, we now have available "Sex in Big Bottles"!

The wine in these magnums is still youthful with rich red currant, spicy white pepper and blood plum fruit integrated with toasty oak and soft, velvet tannins.

The full bodied structure of this wine is a reflection of the best wines made in the cool Summer of 2002. We suggest two years further cellaring to develop the secondary characters in the bottle and, if cellared correctly, the delightful primary fruit of this Reserve Shiraz will be fully retained. Drink by 2020.

These handsome Reserve Shiraz Magnums have the label etched into the glass and are all individually numbered and boxed. There is a limit of two per customer.

MUSEUM RELEASE OF JSM SHIRAZ- CABERNET FRANC

This pack contains two of each of the following wines. All are ready for drinking now.

1996 JSM Shiraz-Cabernets

Drinking very well at the moment, showing ripe plummy fruit with cigar box overtones on the nose supported by some typical McLaren Vale sweet fruit and soft integrated tannins on the palate.

1997 JSM Shiraz-Cabernets

Lively example of the style with a leafy, spicy clove nose with elegant fruit and a harmonious balance of toasty oak and firm tannin finish to the palate. One for those who like their wine a little larger than life.

1998 JSM Shiraz-Cabernet Franc

Soft and approachable sums up this wine from an excellent vintage. This wine shows gamey complexity and stewed plums on the nose with voluptuous fruit held in a cradle of rich oak and firm dusty tannins rounding out the palate.

Paul Rogers: Master of Wine Marketing

The Management and Staff of Fox Creek Wines congratulate Paul on the completion of his Masters of Wine Marketing degree from the University of South Australia. He has just cause to be proud that all his hard work has paid off and his family is delighted that all the homework has finished!

Correction

An astute Wine Club member, Glenn Baker of Melbourne, has pointed out an error in our March Newsletter promotion of 1998 Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon. Quotations from the Penguin Wine Guide actually referred to the 1998 Reserve Shiraz. We regret this editorial error. Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any queries.

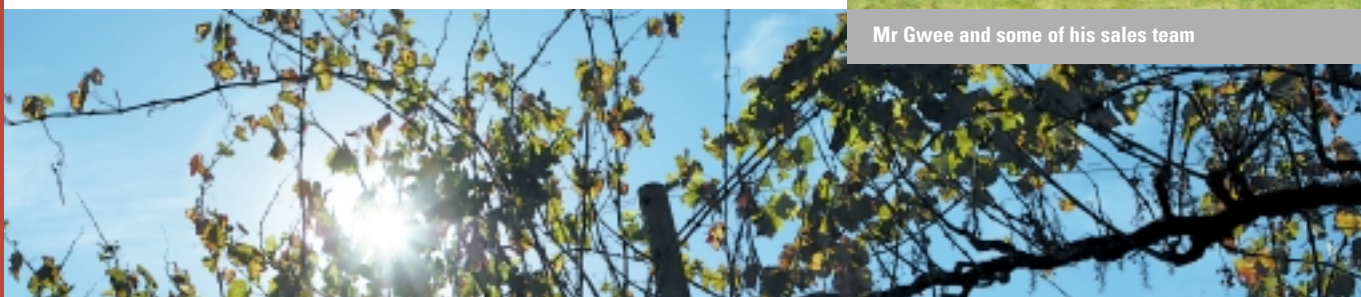
Muihua Visit Fox Creek

On the first anniversary of Muihua (pronounced Mwe Ha) being appointed as Fox Creek's importer into Malaysia Mr Gwee, the owner of the company, visited Fox Creek with sixteen of his sales team on the 5th May. During their short visit they went on a tour of the winery with our winemakers and indulged

in a morning barrel tasting of components of the 2004 Short Row Shiraz and some Cabernet Sauvignon destined for the 2004 Duet. They finished their visit with a tasting of our current release wines that are not yet available in Malaysia. As you can see from the picture, fun was had by all.



Mr Gwee and some of his sales team



2005 Vintage Report

CHRIS DIX
Chief Winemaker

The growing season for 2005 started early with bud burst two to three weeks earlier than normal with the warm Spring progressing things along. Flowering was consistent with only the early Verdelho showing some hen and chicken (large and small berries) because of a few weeks of wet and cool conditions in November.

The Summer was cool with very few hot days over 35°C and this allowed the formation of high levels of flavour compounds in our grapes. As veraison (ripening) approached we were blessed with warm February days that developed the flavours and sugars within the grapes. A week long light rain caused a little concern in terms of fungal disease but the vines appreciated a little extra water in what is usually the driest month of the year.

Most of the grapes were ripening one to two weeks early and the flavours showed good concentration at lower sugar levels. A week or two of warm weather in February accelerated ripening with Verdelho being the first variety harvested on the 11th of February. This was quickly followed over the following two weeks with our Sauvignon Blanc, Semillon and Chardonnay. In a "turn up for the books" we also picked Shiraz on the 14th and 17th of February!

Just as we were getting to the end of our white grape processing an extremely warm weekend sent the flavours and sugars in our reds "sky high" and red grapes came in thick and fast. At the end of February and early March most of our early ripening Shiraz, Cabernet and

Merlot came in showing intense flavour concentration and ripe tannins.

In a change of philosophy and to the disgust of the vineyard owners and harvesting crews we picked many sections of blocks separately to process certain parcels of grapes on their own. This included North & South parts of vine rows, top & bottom cordons and East & West rows. We are conducting a number of harvesting, pruning, irrigation and bunch thinning trials to achieve the highest possible quality fruit. The wines have all been made separately and will be matured separately in barrel for assessment later in the year.

Many thanks to the winery team – Danny, Glen, Dave, Jeff, Mel, wine-making student /vintage cellar hand Carrie & fellow Winemaker Scott Zrna.

A Fox Creek Visitor to China & Korea

PAUL ROGERS
Business Manager

You say to most people that you have just come back from two weeks in China and Korea and they say "WOW you're lucky!" But if they really knew what is involved then they might think again.

With all such business trips, typically you are trying to do as much business as you can in the time available. This usually means appointment after appointment, between lunches and dinners. So you probably leave the hotel around 9am and don't get back until after 11pm. Well, you might say but what about all that great food you get to eat? Absolutely, but after 16 days of three course lunches and dinners all you want to do is eat some junk food, more as a change than anything else and I won't mention the extra hole needed on the belt buckle to do up the trousers.

But all this said and done, these are two really amazing countries and Fox Creek is fortunate to be in their wine market.

Our importer and distributor in China is Summergate Fine Wines and our first shipment arrived in January this year. The Australian Wine sector in China has been growing fast and is currently number two behind France



in sales. Summergate have offices in Shanghai, Beijing and Shenzhen and distribute to over 24 cities across China. China has an estimated population of over 1.3 billion people with over 13 million in Beijing and over 18 million in Shanghai alone. During my visit I travelled to Beijing, Shanghai and Shenzhen to conduct tastings, dinners, general appointments and staff training. The team at Summergate are all very friendly and made me feel most welcome. Our wines are available in most of the top hotels and restaurants in these three main cities. Currently our wines are being consumed by expatriates and knowledgeable Chinese wine drinkers but I am sure as the local Chinese become more and more familiar with wine our distribution will grow further.

In South Korea our importer and distributor is called Luvincorea and like China our first wine shipment

arrived in January. Luvincorea is a relatively new company which started approximately 8 months ago, but what they lack in age they make up for in experience with the large majority of their team having over eight years experience in the wine industry. South Korea has a population of over 48 million people, with 45% of the population living in Seoul. The Korean people give a whole new meaning to the word polite with nothing being too much trouble and I was certainly made to feel very welcome. Our wines are available in the major hotels as well as the local retail stores and restaurants in Seoul and Busan, which is the second largest city in South Korea situated on the south east coast. Wine sales in Korea are mainly to local Koreans, with a large portion of the general population enjoying wine. Long may it continue.

DIARY

12th & 13th June

Sea & Vines Festival in McLaren Vale

A weekend of sensory indulgence in McLaren Vale. Fox Creek is having a year off so we hope to see you around other wineries enjoying yourselves. Our Cellar Door will be open for tasting all weekend. For more information see www.seaandvines.com

25th June (12pm to 7pm)

The Great McLaren Vale Wine Tasting at 60 Darling Street, Sydney

For those of you who live in Sydney and enjoy a taste of McLaren Vale (including some of our wines) then come along to Sixty Darling Street Fine Wines in Balmain East for a free tasting on Saturday 25th June. For more information ring 02 9818 3077.

July – August

Fox Creek's 10th Birthday

Wine Dinners around Australia

Please come and help us celebrate our 10th birthday and a decade of drinking Fox Creek wines! Invitations will be posted with more details shortly but in the meantime please pencil the date in your diary.

Hobart	30th July, Elbow Room
Brisbane	4th & 5th August, Lat 27
Melbourne	12th & 13th August, Matteo's Ristorante
Sydney	26th August, Bilson's Restaurant
Adelaide	16th & 30th September, Augé Ristorante
Canberra	If you don't live in ACT but would like an invitation to our inaugural Canberra Dinner to be held later this year then let us know.
Perth	Sadly not part of the odyssey this year but we hope to be back next year.

Sunday 16th October

Be a winemaker for a day at Fox Creek

Come and help blend our Reserve Shiraz. We will be sure to let you know all about this in our next newsletter but in the meantime if you are interested in knowing more, please drop us a line.



Fox Creek

SEE YOU AT THE CELLAR DOOR SOON!

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

Your Say!

ELIZABETH ELLIS

In celebration of our tenth anniversary as a wine company we wanted members to have a say on their enjoyment of our Wine Club, so we recently conducted a survey of a random selection of members. The results we received have given us clear direction for enhancing the benefits to members.

So what was 'your' say?

- Shiraz, shiraz, shiraz! 59% declared it their favourite wine.
- Verdelho and Sauvignon Blanc were the favourite whites.
- The top three most important topics in the newsletter were: new release information (25%), special offers (24%) and news from the winery (18%).
- Members would like to hear more about vintage conditions, cellaring and characteristics of individual wines.
- 58% would participate in a regular purchasing plan if they were to receive greater benefits. 8% were undecided.
- 25% have attended our Wine Club dinners.
- The most frequently mentioned reason members enjoyed the dinners was the opportunity to sample a selection of our wines not always available.

- 57% have visited our website.
- 75% would like to receive separate product updates, vintage changes or special offers by email.
- 59% dine out weekly.
- 84% enjoyed their last bottle of Fox Creek wine at home.
- 42% have purchased our wines at retail between one and three times in the past year.
- 59% have visited our Cellar Door between one and three times in the past five years.

We appreciated your co-operation and have started work on some improvements straight away. You'll notice we've included two articles written by our winemakers, Chris and Scott, in this newsletter. We have also included some great special offers on our highly praised aged vintages of JSM Shiraz-Cabernet Franc and our newly released 2004 Chardonnay and 2003 Fox & Hounds.

In an endeavour to create a better ongoing relationship with you we are considering a new and higher level of club membership which would allow us to offer more to our regular buying members. We will be sending you an opportunity to join soon. In the meantime please contact us with your comments and suggestions!

Win a Bottle of 02 Reserve Shiraz!

CALLING ALL CREATIVE MEMBERS...

We are currently in the midst of designing a new Wine Club brochure and were sitting around the meeting room table the other day throwing around ideas for a tagline - a one sentence statement that encapsulates what our Wine Club is really about. Everyone had great ideas but then we thought who better to ask what Fox Creek's Wine Club means to them than our members. We thought, what a great competition idea.

So put on your thinking caps. The member who sends in what the judging panel deems the best one sentence tagline will win a bottle of our 2002 Reserve Shiraz.

SEND US A PHOTO!

Along with a tagline we would like to include some great imagery in our

new wine club brochure. So please send us a photo of you enjoying a glass or bottle of Fox Creek Wine, at home, in an exotic location, with friends or in a cherished moment with a loved one! The winning photographer will also be given a bottle of our 2002 Reserve Shiraz.

Send your entries to us at Fox Creek Wines PO Box 321 McLaren Vale SA 5171 or marketing@foxcreekwines.com. Hard copy photos and digital photos accepted. Digital photos need to be at least 10cm by 10cm at 300 dpi saved as a Jpeg file. Please let us know if you would like your hard copy photos returned.

Competition entries close June 30th 2005. A selection of the best entries will be displayed on the "Have Fun" page of our website www.foxcreekwines.com.