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Ten Minutes by Tractor

MORNINGTON PENINSULA

Winter Wine Weekend 12-14 June 2010...

Cellar Door

New Release Wines...

We are very excited to release our 2009 10X and our 2008 single vineyard Pinot Noirs; these continue our journey and teach us a little more about our vineyards and the seasons. The single vineyard wines were only produced in tiny quantities—learn more at our cellar door...

2009 10X Pinot Noir

2008 Judd Vineyard Pinot Noir [not available for tasting]

2008 McCutcheon Vineyard Pinot Noir

2008 Wallis Vineyard Pinot Noir

Current Release Wines...

2008 10X Barrel Fermented Sauvignon Blanc

2008 X Chardonnay

2008 10X Chardonnay

2007 Wallis Vineyard Chardonnay

2009 10X Pinot Gris [not available for tasting]

2008 Ten Minutes By Tractor Tempranillo [not available for tasting]

Tastings...

Our cellar door will be open from 11-5 on Saturday, Sunday and Monday.

Interactive Masterclasses...

Those who attended these last year described them as the “best wine tasting experience we have ever had”. This year we are going to look at wine from the winemaker’s point of view focussing on two specific aspects: oak and clones...

- ▶ the impact of oak on wine; the differences between stainless steel and oak fermentation and ageing
- ▶ a look at key clones of Pinot Noir; you will have the opportunity not only to taste individual clones but to blend them together to make a wine specific to your tastes

Please call 5989 6455 to make a reservation.

The times...

Saturday 12 June - 2pm, 4pm

Sunday 13 June - 2pm, 4pm

Monday 14 June - 2pm

The price...

\$25/head

Restaurant

Over Winter Wine Weekend our restaurant will be offering a six course *dégustation* menu at dinner and a four course *dégustation* menu at lunch on Saturday and Sunday—both designed to complement our wines and to highlight the skills of chef Stuart Bell. On Friday and Monday our normal *à la carte* menu is available. Details of these menus may be found on our website (www.tenminutesbytractor.com.au).

Please call 03 5989 6080 to make a reservation.

Lunch *Dégustation* Menu :: Saturday 12—Sunday 13

4 Courses :: \$90

Including matching wines :: \$135

Dinner *Dégustation* Menu :: Saturday 12—Sunday 13

6 Courses :: \$120

Including matching wines :: \$175

Wine & Music...

Back in December 2007 we wrote in our newsletter on some interesting work being done on the relationship between wine and music.

Since then more work has been done on the subject and we direct you to...

www.grapecraft.com/grapecraft/page/music.jsp

...for an update. The research suggests that, for example, Pinot Noir loves romantics—romantic or sexy music such as Mozart’s “*Eine Kleine Nachtmusik*” and clashes with polkas; oaky Chardonnay needs something sultry and tastes best with blues such as Ella Fitzgerald’s “*St Louis Blues*”, it clashes with light, cheery music.

The exciting news is that we are putting on two dinners, hosted by Max Allen, which will further explore this fascinating topic

Hosted by **Max Allen**, the participants **James Erskine** (Gourmet Traveller Sommelier of the Year 2009, winemaker and music aficionado), **Kim Chalmers** (winemaker, musician, composer) and **Eugene Ughetti** (percussionist, composer and conductor) will take you on a journey which will delight and amaze.

The dinners, on Friday 10 and Saturday 11 September 2010 will combine music, wine and a wonderful menu created by chef Stuart Bell to match the flights of wines selected for this intriguing experiment.

We will keep you informed as we get closer to the dates but these evenings are going to sell out very quickly—if you are interested book now on 03 5989 6080.

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Vineyard

Alan Murray—Vineyard Manager

2010 was a kind vintage for Main Ridge (and the region as a whole) beginning with excellent rainfall averaging 75mm per month for July, August and September; this supplied the growing vines with essential motivation for growth.

Although September and October were marginally cooler than usual and growth was a little reserved during this time, November and December warmed up well providing the perfect conditions for what we call the "Grand Growth" phase (a rapid growth phase which begins when the plant switches from vegetative to reproductive mode) and also moderately good conditions for flowering.

Being warmer than the 2009 vintage we experienced great responses from the vines and, with more vigour, we required more trimming, greater shoot positioning, leaf plucking, mowing and so on.

With veraison starting in late January another early vintage was predicted and the nets went straight on. At this point

it was noted that this season was quite moderate when compared with the previous with no great extremes and a prolonged cooling predicted by the Bureau Of Meteorology for the autumn. Fortunately they were mostly right this time although March was warmer than average, the ripening period rolled along without any great concern, resulting in another early vintage as is the pattern these days; a somewhat calm and stable one which allowed for strategic targeting for harvesting our individual fruit parcels at the perfect moment.

With another successful vintage behind us we are now collating the 11th year of data we have collected and adding to this some new soil testing just being undertaken. With this information a concerted approach to long term vine health is underway. The endless search for sustainable management of our vineyards will this year see the implementation of new strategies for soil health and waterway management so that our vineyards and environment continue to evolve in a complementary and cohesive way well into the future.

The following data refers to the 2010 vintage on our Main Ridge home vineyards.

Pinot Noir 2010

- ▶ Average budburst date: 7 Sep
- ▶ Average 100% veraison date: 7 Feb
- ▶ Average harvest date: 20 Mar
(12 days earlier than 11 year avg of 1 Apr - 3rd earliest PN harvest)
- ▶ Budburst to harvest: 195 days
(the 3rd shortest PN hang time; avg = 209 days)
- ▶ Average yield: 4.2 t/Ha (1.7 t/acre)

Chardonnay 2010

- ▶ Average budburst date: 7 Sep
- ▶ Average 100% veraison date: 12 Feb
- ▶ Average harvest date: 23 Mar
(11 days earlier than 11 year avg of 3 Apr - 2nd earliest CH harvest)
- ▶ Budburst to harvest: 197 days
(the shortest CH hang time; avg = 210 days)
- ▶ Average yield: 3.9 t/Ha (1.6 t/acre)

Some Recent Wine Reviews...

2008 10X Pinot Noir

All too often the term "elegant" is abused by wine writers and substituted for "light". This wine is elegant in the true sense. It is finely structured, delivers an almost ethereal bouquet, has a silky texture and finishes long, but it is in no way a big purple coloured pinot. Bravo!

Outstanding, Winewise, December 2009

2007 Judd Vineyard Pinot Noir

Displays abundant fresh complex cherry aromas supported by the clever use of stems. It's intense, complex and savoury, with the bonus of classy oak.

Outstanding, Winewise, December 2009

TMBT further cements its position in the hierarchy of the Aussie Pinot scene with this buccaneering single vineyard creation. Judd is the jewel in the crown of the TMBT single vineyard wines with sensational texture and lusty, fragrant, almost decadent, plum and cerise notes. Sadly not a cheapie, you can still get your everyday TMBT fix by leaping into a glass of '08 10X, Judd's rabble-raising,

mayhem-causing, junior gang member. *Matthew Jukes, 100 Best Australian Wines 2010*

2007 McCutcheon Vineyard Pinot Noir

This has a forest berry smell to it, with flinty smokiness and mintiness too. There's plenty of tangy, pippy fruit on the palate, and powerful chewy tannins that pull everything together. This is serious, structured pinot.

Tim White, The Age Melbourne Magazine, February 2010

2007 Wallis Vineyard Pinot Noir

Top Aussie Red. This maker's style is pale -coloured, light-bodied and delicate, with great perfume and subtlety. Good intensity and drive; linear yet long and well concentrated. Don't look for dark coloured, big juicy pinot here. It's all about finesse rather than size.

93, Huon Hooke, Sydney Morning Herald Good Living, 16 February 2010

The Wallis is one of three special vineyards owned by this label. The pinot noir is excellent with its enticing aromatics and sweetish cherry fruit on the palate, tempered by savoury, spicy notes. It builds and plumps out with

loads of juicy fruit and subtle oak, all supported by supple, fine tannins. A moreish, balanced wine. Great drinking now or for short term cellaring.

Jane Faulkner, The Age A2/Sydney Morning Herald Life, 9 January 2010

2007 McCutcheon Vineyard Chardonnay

All the concentration of Meursault. Creamy stone-fruit core lifted by fresh, zesty acidity and spice. Balanced, long, complex. Drink now-2018.

18.5, Andrew Catchpole, Decanter, February 2010

2007 Wallis Vineyard Chardonnay

This is my favourite of the individual vineyard chardonnays from this outstanding Mornington Peninsula producer. A wine with wonderful pristine fruit character, elegance and restraint with vibrant acidity. French oak barrique maturation has added complexity but the oak is never intrusive; letting the fruit do the talking. Excellent.

Winsor Dobbin, www.wdwineoftheweek.blogspot.com, January 2010



Dégustation

"The *menu de dégustation* is the finest expression of avant-garde cooking."

Ferran Adria, El Bulli

Our restaurant menu always has a dégustation option and each Winter Wine Weekend chef Stuart Bell puts together a special dégustation menu to highlight our new release wines.

The French word *dégustation* refers to the *art* of tasting; *déguster* is the verb to taste. As an aside, *goûter* is another verb meaning to taste; you may hear the term *goût de terroir* to describe "taste of the earth"—*goûter* is the actual *act* of tasting (what your tastebuds do) and *déguster* is *about* tasting (savouring the sensation or making a judgement).

According to Michael Harden writing in *The Age* (8 May 2007)...

"As with much modern French cooking and culture, the *dégustation* menu can be linked to Auguste Escoffier, who was instrumental in helping change the way top-end food was consumed in France.

Until the late 18th century, the French ate according to *service à la française*, in which all dishes were served on the table at the same time. But, influenced by the way the Russian tsars ate - smaller dishes served one at a time—chefs like Escoffier overhauled the old system and adopted *service à la russe* as the correct way to appreciate modern French cooking."

Escoffier served a special *menu de dégustation* at the London Ritz in 1908 for twelve guests including the future King George V; the menu comprised...

- ▶ Melon halves filled with Beluga caviar
- ▶ Clear turtle soup
- ▶ Cold velouté of chicken soup
- ▶ Roast chicken stuffed with wild rice and truffles
- ▶ Welsh lamb with fresh peas.
- ▶ Lemon-ginger sorbet
- ▶ Trout filled with fresh herbs and grilled
- ▶ Duckling breasts in port wine aspic
- ▶ Quails with grapes
- ▶ Sorbet of pink grapefruit
- ▶ Artichoke hearts in mustard sauce
- ▶ Lettuce salad with a mint and honey vinaigrette
- ▶ Peaches poached in vanilla sauce
- ▶ Petits fours
- ▶ Selection of fruits

There's Something [Different] About Main Ridge...

or

...The Distinctiveness of Single Vineyards

"...I want my wines to tell a good story. I want them natural and most of all, like my dear friends, I want them to speak the truth even if we argue...I'm trying to swell the ranks of those who love the differences in each vintage, who abhor homogenization, who want wines that make them smile, think, laugh, and feel sexy...wines that are honest."

Alice Feiring, Veritas in Vino

Our single vineyard wines are true single vineyard wines - they are made from grapes grown on single, discreet blocks on single, discreet vineyards in Main Ridge, the highest and coolest part of the Mornington peninsula.

Pinot Noir

- ▶ McCutcheon Vineyard Pinot Noir MV6 from the Windmill Block; 0.86 ha planted in 1992
- ▶ Judd Vineyard Pinot Noir 115 from the Creek Block; 0.84 ha planted in 1997
- ▶ Wallis Vineyard Pinot Noir MV6 from the Middle Block; 1.12 ha planted in 1995

Chardonnay

- ▶ McCutcheon Vineyard Chardonnay P58 from the Long Block; 1.18 ha planted in 1992
- ▶ Wallis Vineyard Chardonnay P58 from the Tree Block; 1.88 ha planted in 1992

At Ten Minutes By Tractor we are intrigued by difference. Before looking for difference it is important that we first determine what is *not* different.

There are three key features that are the same over our premium blocks...

- ▶ We know our **viticultural** and **winemaking** practices are the same

over our vineyards

- ▶ We also know that Main Ridge **soils** are very similar across our vineyards (though very different to the lower northern Peninsula areas—a topic for future discussion)
- ▶ And we know that **macro climatic**¹ conditions are the same (certainly as far as Main Ridge is concerned)

...so we search for the why to explain the differences in our single vineyard wines.

Temperature and therefore altitude, aspect and wind

According to Gladstones (Gladstones J, 1992, *Viticulture and Environment*, Winetitles, Adelaide), there is...

"no clear evidence that climatic elements other than temperature influence vine phenology. If they appear to...their main effect is almost certainly indirect, via temperature"

...so, simplistically, our search for difference is a search for factors which impact temperature at the individual block or vineyard level, in other words meso climate.

One of the most obvious factors which impacts temperature and one of the obvious characteristics of Main Ridge, which distinguishes it from the northern Mornington Peninsula, is altitude. The Google Earth image on the next page shows our vineyards with the "ridge" shown as a line connecting Arthur's Seat and Red Hill—to the north east of this line the land falls away sharply to the lower northern Peninsula, to the south the ridges and valleys of Main Ridge fall more gently to Bass Strait and Westernport.

Temperature decreases 6.5°C/1,000m increase in altitude (the standard average lapse rate). The highest elevations of our vineyards are Judd 206m, McCutcheon 200m and Wallis 142m so we are talking about theoretical temperature differences of <0.5°—not a huge daily variation but taken over a growing season of some

¹Climate is broken into three categories of scale: macro, meso and micro (from www.wineaustralia.com):

Macro...refers to a large area of land. It covers many square kilometres and often equates to an entire sub-region or even a whole region. This is useful in determining climatic explanations of regional character.

Meso...smaller and more localised. It breaks down topographic elements and can often be equated to a particular vineyard or section of vineyard.

Micro...the smallest scale. This is often-misused and frequently applied to descriptions of the meso-climate scale. Micro-climate in a vineyard sense is the area surrounding the vine, its canopy and its fruit.



200 days it makes quite a difference (see box below).

We can use average harvest dates as a proxy for temperature, as a measure of warmth through the growing season. During the time each of our vineyards had MV6 planted, Wallis ripened earliest, followed on average 5 days later by McCutcheon and a further 3 days later by Judd. (The Judd MV6 has subsequently been grafted to the earlier ripening 114 and 777 and now ripens just 2 days later than Wallis.)

Therefore we can say that Wallis is warmest followed by McCutcheon then Judd, which tallies with altitude.

Also, because of different slopes and aspects (and row orientation), all three vineyards experience very different periods of solar interception over the course of a day. The north-east orientation of Wallis maximises extended periods of direct sunlight, uninhibited by surrounding topography. In contrast both McCutcheon and Judd see slightly shorter periods of solar interception, with McCutcheon's easterly aspect capturing early morning light and shorter afternoons, whereas the westerly aspect of Judd provides later interception of first light and longer afternoon and evening exposure.

Despite all this, Wallis is a very cool vineyard—confirmed by comparison with the harvest dates of an MV6 vineyard in the northern section of the Peninsula which, on average, is 19 days earlier than Wallis. Admittedly, at just under 100m, this vineyard is slightly lower but that does not explain a 19 day difference. We believe the difference is largely cooling breezes.



The whole question of wind on the Peninsula and in our Main Ridge valleys in particular is intriguing in its impact on temperature. Specifically the influence of “bay” and “ocean” sea breezes (originating from Port Phillip/Westernport and Bass Strait respectively) and katabatic and anabatic winds², caused by differential heating and cooling associated with topography, have a major effect. It appears the Wallis Vineyard is more effected by winds in this sense than the other vineyards and that the southern slopes of Main Ridge are effected much more than the northern part of the Peninsula by the cool Bass Strait “ocean” sea breeze. (We will consider wind in more detail in a future newsletter.)

So, a quick trip up and down the valleys of Main Ridge highlights differences

between our vineyards and contributes a glimmer to our understanding of why our single vineyard wines are distinctively different.

Our search continues but, in the meantime, our wines express what it is we seek.

² Sea breezes are winds from the sea formed by increasing temperature differences between land and sea; katabatic winds are created at night by air cooled by radiation flowing downhill; anabatic winds blow up a slope, driven by heating of the slope by insolation.

Growing Degree Days

A very simplistic approach to looking at the impact of altitude (assuming all other factors remain constant).

Growing Degree Days (GDD) are calculated using the formula...

$$GDD = ((T_{max} + T_{min})/2) - B$$

...where T_{max} represents the daily maximum and T_{min} the daily minimum temperatures and B represents a base temperature value which is the physiological temperature below which plant development ceases—for grape vines this is 10°C.

GDDs are then summed over the growing season to calculate the heat available to ripen the grapes. Gladstones (1992) suggests both Pinot Noir and Chardonnay require 1150° to ripen effectively. Our Main Ridge growing season (budburst-harvest) averages 209 days for Pinot Noir and 210 days for Chardonnay.

Therefore, if 0.5° is the difference in the daily average due to altitude it would make a difference of 209 days x 0.5° = 104 GDD in the length of the growing season; this represents about 104 / 1150 = 9% of the growing season or 209 x 9% = 19 days. This is certainly a realistic difference between our higher vineyards and those in the lower northern Peninsula (admittedly lower again than Wallis, say <100m) but it does not explain the variation between Judd/McCutcheon and the Wallis Vineyard therefore other factors must be at play—see above...

[Coincidentally, the average variation between Wallis and our lower, northern Peninsula benchmark vineyard is 19 days.]

