

JAMES BUSBY TRAVEL - TOUR REPORT 2016

11 overseas wine buyers, somms & press, 14 days, 2 States, 13 regions, 55 wineries, 476 wines, 3000km, 1 amazing road trip. And now, the Tour Report, 160 pages, 20,789 words, 393 photos...

"Its was good times !!!!" - Fredrik Hierner, Denmark



Top left to bottom right

David Vareille, EX - Head Sommelier, Bar Boulud, Mandarin Oriental, London, recently moved roles to Head Sommelier, Arts Club, London.

Sophie Uddin, (EX - Operations Director, Granger & Co, London).

Ian Brosnan, Wine Manager, Ely Wine Bars, Dublin, Ireland.

Fredrik Hierner, General Manager and Head Sommelier, MASH Group, Aarhus, Denmark.

Sebastien Le Goff, Service Director and Head Sommelier, Cactus Club Cafe, Vancouver, BC, Canada.

Elizabeth Huettinger, (EX - Wine Director, Otium restaurant, Los Angeles.)

Mary Thompson, Director of Operations, 10 Grand Hospitality Group, Los Angeles.

Maurice DiMarino, Wine and Beverage Manager, Cohn Restaurant Group, San Diego.

Andy Xu, Owner, Cellar Door Wines, Shanghai.

Young Shi, Co-Founder, Taste Spirit Magazine and Academy, London / Shanghai.

Dorian Tang, National Education Director, ASC Fine Wines, Beijing.

Quentin the Quokka (aka Sweet Cheeks, Lil' Pumpkin, Mon Amour), Los Angeles

What a eyes opening! In Europe even the top sommeliers don't know about the tremendous diversity of Australia regions. After 25 years in the business, I'm not ashamed to say that Busby tour educate me, show me what Australia wine can offer, the diversity of cool vs. hot climate, the conventional farming to the almost 100% organic entire GI. I'm not leaving with beautiful pictures, I'm leaving with ideas, business contacts, and will be one of the ambassadors of modern Australian wine making. Yes it mean I'll buy some, because even for a Frenchman, they are fantastic.
David Vareille, London



Fantastic insight to the regions within regions of Victoria and SA, which would be impossible to study in such detail any other way. Really great to see the "pointy end" of the next generation too. The Jimmy Watson of wine trips.
Ian Brosnan, Dublin



This has been the most comprehensive, educational & fun journey through Australian wine I could imagine. The producers, wine and people have made a lasting impression. Most people in California have no clue that so much quality and diversity exist here. I am excited to share my knowledge & newfound loves with everyone I can. Thank you for the most professional experience. It was truly the best wine tour I have ever done.
Elizabeth Huettinger,
California

I learnt a lot of viticulture and winemaking from the trip, it should add an extra dimension to my business.
Andy Xu, Shanghai



This trip was an eye-opening experience. I was blown away to see the organic, biodynamic, natural wine movement going so strong here.
Maurice Dimarino, San Diego



James Busby trip 2016 has been absolutely the most wonderful wine region visit for me this year. The intensive two-week itinerary covers producers of various production scales, market position, viticulture practices, vinification techniques, and winemaking philosophies, which was frightfully fascinating! Throughout those memorable visits, I saw the legacy, the evolvment, the ambition and most critically, the passion and dedication! Their wines have impressed my palate, but they themselves have won my heart!
Young Shi, Shanghai



For me this has been an eye opener not only for classic Australian wines like Henschke, Tahbilk, Yarra Yering but also for Basket Range, Grenache, beautiful Pinot Noir...

It's been a great trip and will be in my heart forever!!!

Fredrik Hierner, Denmark





I am leaving with such an appreciation for the wines, people & country. This experience has motivated me to take on a bit of an ambassador role for the amazing things that Australia has to offer. I am very excited to share the knowledge & the journey with my friends & colleagues in the United States. I am changed & very grateful for the experience!

Mary Thompson, California

This trip is incredible, it has completely flipped my perception of Australian wine and winemaking. The winemakers in every region are paying homage to their sense of place and terroir. I had no idea of the diversity of wines within each region and the creativity of the winemakers. Mind officially blown.

Sophie Uddin, London





*Very impressive trip, I am able to better understand the winemaking styles, region, people you have in Australia and look forward to come back again... "We Care" - that really make Australia so unique and different...
Dorian Tang, Beijing*



*The most challenging and rewarding wine trip. Learnt a lot not only about Australian wine but more importantly about vineyard management and winemaking.
Sebastien Le Goff, Vancouver*

DAY 1 - WILLIAM DOWNIE, Gippsland by David Vareille

Introduction:

This is was or first visit, after this long travel, excitement and expectation of was coming next, I must say it couldn't have been better.

Forget about the all gimmicks you may have encounter, forget about any sense of PR, this is as raw at is get. Speaking of witch, we've welcomed by Bill himself (followed by his charming wife and kids) along some raw better (the legality of this type of product still in discussion) and delicious home made charcuterie, the long bearded, well opinionated Bill is a never ending source of knowledge, conviction, sassy and fun, honest and in my view Bryant. Arch is horse, is as fascinating. However the stage was set, the tasting ready and as usual the truth is in the glasses, so below some of our wines we tasted (drunk).

William Downie Pinot Noirs

Yarra Valley 2015

My personal favorite, ripe black cherries, black olives, wild purple plums, rich and concentrated, tremendous lengths on the palate, all surrounded by a citrus like acidity, this is an exceptional vintage, this wine is made to leave for ever, but if you are impatient like I'm you can drink it now.

Mornington Peninsula 2015

More burgundy on the nose, array of red fruit, wild strawberries, cranberries, dry leaf, persistent on the palate, precise and elegant, such a different wine that previous, I like them both very much.

Gippsland 2015

No other wine can be as close to the spring season that this one (we were just at the beginning of Spring during our visit), violet wild flowers, field red berries, the lighter in weight of the line-up, more feminine in the tannin structure, still a baby but can be enjoyed now without any guilt .

Extra wines

Petit manseng white

Mornington Peninsula Pinot Noir in MG 2012

Also Bill is making an another label called Save our souls from Chardonnay, rose (PN, sangiovese), Pinot Noir, Sangiovese, Sagrantino, Sauvignon blanc, and a skin contact chardonnay, they are very good value for money, and at a fraction of the price of the real stuff, but let's focus on the William Downie wines.





DAY 2 - GARAGISTE and THE STORY, Mornington Peninsula by Sophie Uddin

This was our first day proper, people still getting over jet lag and sussing each other out. we drove up to Arthur's seat. What an amazing view from up there and What an incredible way to start the day. The tasting was great, Barney, Rory and Cam are a great trio.

It was great seeing the two wineries side by side. This was the first of many interactions we had with multiple winemakers at one time that showed how tight a community there is.

It isn't about competition it is about working together to promote Australian wine which is truly great.

.....and if that was my friends pad I would have so pretended it was mine. What an incredible party house. Those guys have to make sure they crash that house more often. It was like a gallery.

First day on the beach rocked and felt it really felt like we were in Australia. Was great to taste the Cotier wines on the beach, loved that pinot gris with those delicious sandwiches.

What a wicked first morning and what lovely people Rory, Barney and Cam are.

La Stagiaire, chardonnay, 2015, Mornington Peninsula

Multi sub regional, Blend of the best grapes from different properties, Red hill/balnarring sub regions, P58 clone – Australian clone, Barrel fermented, native yeast, 13% alc
lighter old world style, lemon drop, grapefruit, floral, subtle oak, balanced acidity

'Merricks' chardonnay, 2015, Mornington Peninsula

single site, brown clay/sand soil and deep red soils, native yeast, natural malo, barrel ferment, 13% alc, stone fruit, melon, lean, good acidity

'Tuerong' chardonnay, Mornington Peninsula 2015

black sand, barrel ferment 20% new oak, native yeast, 13% alc
good acidity, good length, spiced apple pie, clove and cinnamon spice

Le Stagiaire, pinot noir, Mornington Peninsula 2015

blend of 4 sub regions, mv6 clone – old Australian clone, whole berry, 15% new oak, native ferment, 13.5% alc, plum, cherry, lightly savoury

'Merricks' pinot noir, Mornington Peninsula, 2015

brown and red soils, whole berry, native ferment, 13.5% alc, earthy, bright fruit, cranberries

'Balnarring', pinot noir, Mornington Peninsula, 2015

brown soils, whole berry, native ferment, 25% new oak, 13.5% alc, dark cherry, savoury, Christmas cake spice

'Terre de Feu', pinot noir, Mornington Peninsula, 2014

terre de feu means land of fire, red soils, 100% whole bunch, unfiltered, 50% new oak, 13.5% alc
funky, smokey, concentrated, savoury, herbaceous

Barney's minimal-intervention, skin-contact, carbonic-maceration wines under the Cotier label

Cotier, Riesling 2015

Cotier – pinot gris 2015

Cotier – chardonnay 2015

Cotier – sauvignon 2015



Mary finally arrives - only a day late!



The Story – Rory Lane

'We named our winery The Story one night over a few drinks with friends back in 2003. I explained to them that I had no clue what to call it because we seemed to lack all the usual core ingredients to a grand winery name. We owned no vineyards, so couldn't name it after that, or a hill, creek, valley or river. Our family had no history in the wine game, so the Lane name would have meant nothing to anybody, and we didn't have any children or even a dog to name it after. A good friend concluded that "you really just have the stories that go along with how you make it", and we loved the way it connoted a connectedness to others, a sharing, and a present tense.'

Whitlands, Riesling, 2015

30yr old vines, fruit from henty ad the King Valley, close planting, red soils, 8% Residual sugar, 11.7% alc, floral, delicate, Austrian style, Citrus

Westgate vineyard, Grampians, marsanne (60), roussanne (20), viognier (20)

Granite and sandy soil, average vine age 9 yrs, 12.9% alc, wild old oak, full malo, pear, honey, rich

Port Campbell, pinot noir, 2015

vine age 18 yrs, grey and limestone soils, 13% alc, from south west victoria, nr 12 apostles, completely isolated vineyard 50km form the next vineyard, light, pretty, delicate, light red fruits – raspberry, strawberry

Port Campbell, pinot noir, 2016

vine age 18 yrs, grey and limestone soils, 13% alc, from south west Victoria, nr 12 apostles completely isolatd vineyard 50km form the next vineyard, strawberry, herbal, savoury

Grampian, shiraz, 2014

13.8% alc, 40% whole bunch, 10% new oak, multi vineyard blend – 3 different vineyards incl Westgate, smooth, dark red fruit, blueberry, white pepper

R. Lane vintners, Westgate vineyard, Grampians, shiraz, 2014

Single site, Vine age 44 yrs, 60% whole bunch, 20% new oak, unfiltered, new project subtle oak, velvety, smooth



DAY 2 - KOOYONG and PORT PHILIP ESTATE, Mornington Peninsula by Young Shi

On Sunday 16th, second day of our James Busby trip, we paid a visit to Kooyong and Port Phillips Estate in the afternoon. Owned and operated by the Gjergja family, all Kooyong and Port Phillip Estate wines are entirely domain grown, vinified and bottled.

Winemaker Glen Hayley who oversees the winemaking welcomed us with a glass of lovely Ferrous single vineyard Pinot Noir 2012, whose fruit comes from one of the three single vineyards for Pinot Noir which are Ferrous, Haven and Meres. Single vineyards Faultline and Farrago are mainly dedicated to Chardonnay.



Standing in Ferrous vineyard, one of the three single vineyards, Glen discussed about the soil and water source. The soils of Kooyong are distinctive. The bedrock found at depth is sedimentary: an ancient weathered sandstone dating back to the Ordovician period some 450 million years ago.

The water source issue which was managed in two ways:

Firstly, push vine roots to go further in the soil to seek water. The sandy loam soil drains and dries quickly which means limited amount of water may be retained after the rain; Secondly, allow grass cover to help retain the moisture.

This is our first vineyard visit on this trip and we instantly noticed the much lower planting density (around 3000-3500 vines/ha), compared with the conventional European standard. Glen explained that the plantings was carried out in 1996 when wide row space (between 2.5 and 3.5 meters) was widely prevalent relating to convenient tractor access, easy land resource then. New plantings has 1.8m row space, which allows about 6000 vines/ha.

We've tasted these wines as follows:

- Beurrot by Kooyong Pinot Gris 2015
- Clonale by Kooyong Chardonnay 2015
- Port Phillip Estate Red Hill Chardonnay 2015
- Kooyong Estate Chardonnay 2015

- Kooyong Estate Chardonnay 2011
- Port Phillip Estate Red Hill Pinot Noir 2014
- Port Phillip Estate Balnarring Pinot Noir 2014
- Massale by Kooyong Pinot Noir 2015
- Kooyong Single Vineyard Meres Pinot Noir 2014
- Kooyong Single Vineyard Haven Pinot Noir 2014
- Kooyong Single Vineyard Ferrous Pinot Noir 2014
- Kooyong Single Vineyard Ferrous Pinot Noir 2010

Pinot Noir from single vineyard Meres tends to give sage, smoked herbs, juicy and savory flavor, well structured, arguably the most balanced and complete of the three Pinot single vineyards. Those from the Haven vineyard present less expressive nose, mild juicy black berry, dark spices, more delicate and fresh. The newer vintage Ferrous Pinot Noir showed a bit reductive character, pungent, smoky and earthy with creamy texture. Overall, it's a well organized flight that interpreters the different characteristics of each single vineyard as well as how it responds respectively to its terroir.



DAY 2 - OCEAN 8, Mornington Peninsula by Maurice DiMarino

We arrived at Ocean 8 at 7pm of day in the Mornington Peninsula. We were greeted by Mike, the winemaker for Ocean 8. Mike's family owned the vineyards of Kooyong. His family sold off the vineyards and he left to study in Champagne. When he returned to Australia, he began Ocean 8, where he focuses on Chardonnay and Pinot Noir. He runs programs with the local restaurants where they come to the winery and dosage their own sparkling wines. We took part in this process and disgorged his 2006 vintage. Each of had had a duty. We were split up into station of, freezing the necks, disgorging, topping with liqueur de triage & base wine, capping the bottles and cleaning them.

We then moved into the kitchen for our Pizza competition and tasting of his wines. The competition was too much fun as we all went head to head with our ingredients to make the best wood oven pizza. The best pizza was won by Sophie who made an andouille sausage, fennel, pepperoni and jalapeno pizza. It was by far the best pizza. The pizza which paired the best with Pinot Gris was made by Liz, who made a prosciutto, honey, arugula, blue cheese and apple pizza. The worst was our Frenchman's potato pizza on gluten free dough.

Ocean 8 Pinot Gris 2016

Whole press barrel fermented for 6-8 months with 2-3 grams of RS. Heavy and broad on the palate with lees character. Aromas of Apple and pears, sweet tree fruit and fresh acidity.

Ocean 8 Verve Chardonnay 2014

An unoaked Chardonnay without Malo has an oxidized aroma. Inspired by Puligny, this wine had pear and tree fruit aromas, citrus. We tasted it fairly warm, so it had more weight on the palate. It was racy and finished with high acidity, which goes along with the name "Verve".

Ocean 8 Pinot Noir 2014

This was a tough vintage where he lost 30% of his harvest due to rain which washed away most of the pollen. It resulted in less berries per bunch. It was handpicked, but was difficult to de-stem. He was concerned that it would not be good for the market place. However, it resulted in a good quality Pinot Noir with an earthy, bacon aroma. The tannins were soft, it had bright acidity and dominated with aromas and flavors of violets.



Disgorging, dosing, capping and labelling at Ocean 8



Pizza Competition at Ocean 8

1st place Sophie with her "Chilli 8" pizza

2nd place Liz with "Honey, honey" pizza

Wooden spoon - David with his unique "Le Potato" pizza





DAY 3 - DE BORTOLI, Yarra Valley by Sebastian, Mary and Ian

Sebastian Le Goff:

Leanne De Bortoli and Steve Webb welcomed our group. Pinot noir and chardonnay mainly produced on the site of the winery. Experimentation with Gamay. The winery produced 300 tons of pinot noir / year. Syrah, Sangiovese and Nebbiolo are also grown on site.

Pinot Noir: more whole bunches pressed nowadays. Looking for ripeness and perfume. They no longer try to imitate Burgundy. They want to make their own style of pinot noir. Oldest chardonnay vineyard: 30 years old. P58 chardonnay clones planted in 1976. Amphi Chardonnay: Amphitheatre shape vineyard, receiving the morning sun. Always do some malolactic fermentation but let it happen naturally. They pick the grape earlier than they used to do so they need malo to soften the acidity in order to balance the wine. That is their house style.

They use a different philosophy for the pinot noir than for the chardonnay regarding oak treatment. Lots of new oak used for the pinot noirs. Malo in barrel, then sulfur. 40 to 45% new oak used every year. Barrel are medium toast.

4 lines of wines at De Bortoli: La Boheme - Village wine - Estate wine - Single vineyard wine

Wines tasted out of the barrels:

Milburne chardonnay

Grenache

GSM: 70% syrah 25% Grenache 5% mourvedre

Syrah A8 vineyard

Wine tasted at the restaurant:

2016 Pinot Blanc

2016 La Boheme, white blend: pinot gris + pinot blanc + gewürztraminer + riesling

Rose: Grenache + mourvedre. 100% fermented in old cask. 100% malo in order to soften the acidity.

2016 Greco

2015 chardonnay. Villages level

2015 single vineyard wine. Dixon creek vineyards

2015 pinot noir 35% + pinot meunier 56% + pinot gris 9%

2015 Lustra Park pinot noir

2015 Balnarring pinot noir from Mornington

2015 Shiraz 70% + Grenache 25% + Mourvedre 5% from Heathcote

2016 La Boheme Act Four from Yarra. Syrah + Gamay. Carbonic fermentation. 60% whole bunches

2014 Section A8 Syrah



Fredrik finally arrives - TWO days late!



Mary Thompson:

Leanne De Bortoli and Steve Webber have developed the De Bortoli Yarra Valley estate over the past 27 years. They have both been major contributors to the culture and wine style of the region. As well as cultivating vineyards at Dixons Creek and Tarrawarra, they have just acquired the Lusatia Park vineyard at Woori Yallock, so I guess we can expect some extra excitement from there in the coming years. Total vineyard holdings are now 270 Ha. The wines have character and detail, fruit is picked with natural balance and the wines are generally quite considered. Excessive oak is despised. While Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Syrah styles are the main game, there is a serious commitment to developing interesting varieties, blends and lots of pale textural Rosé.

WINES

De Bortoli, Section A5 Chardonnay 2015 Yarra Valley \$50 RRP AUS, N/A US

8000 bottles made, hay color with watery edges, no new oak, 100% malo, mature vines 1976, green apple and yellow citrus with texture and fullness in the mouth without the cloying sweetness often associated with it. 9 mos. on the lees, rather delicate. One of the leanest wines in the valley. First release in 2005

De Bortoli, Selection A8 Syrah 2014 Yarra Valley \$50 RRP AUS, N/A US

Super concentrated and rich color. Graphite, boysenberry, black berry and with power and elegance, with good structure and integrated tannins. 14% alc. Acid and structure really dominate and there's not a jammy flabby-ness to it.

Riorret, Lusatia Park Pinot Noir 2015 Yarra Valley \$40 RRP AUS, N/A US

5000 liters made, Weight and concentration take the lead with black cherry and rose on the nose with texture and black cherry and black berry in the mouth, herbaceous. Tons of perfume on the nose. 40-45% new oak

Riorret, Balnarring Pinot Noir 2015 Mornington Peninsula \$40 RRP AUS, N/A US

Less perfume and more acid to this wine than it's Yarra equivalent. More robust and structure than the Yarra with loads of black fruit and earth. Boisen berry, black cherry and black berry with 40-45% new oak.

La Boheme, 'Act Three' Pinot Gris and Friends 2016 Yarra Valley \$22 RRP AUS, N/A US

Pinot Gris, Pinot Blanc, Gewurztraminer & Riesling. easy, gentle, aromatic, lean style, floral

La Boheme, "Act Four" Syrah Gamay 2016 Yarra Valley \$22 RRP AUS, N/A US

Understated nose of dusty rose petal and underripe boisonberry. Medium body with tons of earth and fresh lively, structure with rich opulent color. Clean & easy drinking. Reminiscent of St. Joseph and Crozes. Sold 50,000 bottles in 2 months, sells out in 7 months

De Bortoli, Villages Heathcote Grenache Rose 2016 Heathcote \$20 RRP AUS, N/A US

Pale salmon color almost clear. Tart strawberry, a little reductive bone dry, tons of acid and a lingering finish. Natural fermentation, 100% malo, zero skin contact, pH 3.65, 5 gr acidity, No saignee, no bleed off, 12 tons to hectare

De Bortoli, Villages Yarra Valley Chardonnay 2015 Yarra Valley \$20 RRP AUS, N/A US

2-3 years typically to develop character. 4 different vineyards. really lean in the mouth with bright citrus and green apple, has a bit of a green edge. 5% new oak

De Bortoli, Villages Heathcote Shiraz Grenache 2015 Heathcote \$20 RRP AUS, N/A US

70% Shiraz, 25% Grenache, 5% Mouvedre, Rich black fruit in the nose with a bit of marked heat. Fennel, wild herb, tar and tobacco with rich and concentrated with complexity and a lasting finish that has great tannic structure. 10,000 cases made

Vinoque, 'Same Same' Pinot Blend (Meunier 56%/Noir 35%/Gris 9%) 2015 Yarra Valley \$25 RRP

200 cases made, lighter body with bright cherry on the nose, vibrant acid and bing cherry and raspberry in the mouth with a touch of boysenberry. Long lean integrated finish. No 2016 made

Vinoque, 'The Oval' Pinot Blanc 2016 Yarra Valley \$25 RRP AUS, N/A US

Hay color, with bright vibrant citrus nose of lemon with medium body and leesy. Quaffable, fresh, crisp, simple, lychee

Vinoque, Chalmers Vineyard Greco 2016 Heathcote \$25 RRP AUS, Y/N US

Growing Greco & Fiano in warmer climates. Bright acid pop, with lemon and lime peel, a bit of minerality in the nose, bright, wet stone, crisp and bright

YARRA VALLEY

The Yarra Valley is one of the three most innovative and progressive wine regions in Australia, the other two being McLaren Vale and the Adelaide Hills. The Yarra has two histories, the first in the 19th century when Swiss settlers cultivated vines in the valley. By the 1920s the vineyards had all been removed, succumbing to the twin impact of phylloxera and the closure of trade routes to Europe caused by the First World War. The second history of the Yarra begins in the 1970s with three doctors establishing the estates of Yarra Yering, Mount Mary and Seville Estate, often with the ambition of growing Cabernet and Bordeaux varieties to make mid weight Yarra Valley "claret" styles. Cabernet blends are still successful, but commercially have given way to Chardonnay and Pinot Noir. The Yarra is broadly divided into the main valley, which is around 100m above sea level, and the Upper Yarra, which sits to the south east and comprises the tail end of the Great Dividing Range and goes up to 400m. Many vineyards in the Upper Yarra which were planted to Pinot and Chardonnay for sparkling base are now highly prized for table wine. The Upper Yarra is "cool" in both senses of the word! The Yarra leads the charge in the contemporary style of modern Chardonnay, and there is a dynamic group of winemakers, young and middle aged, many of whom came through the "training school" of De Bortoli, and have gone on to spread the innovative styles and approaches practiced by Steve Webber at De Bortoli.

UPPER YARRA & YARRA VALLEY

Upper Yarra is south and east of Yarra Valley. Yarra Valley has winter dormancy.

Perfume is easier in Yarra than Mornington, Mornington is more robust and earth driven.

AUSSIE CHARDONNAY THING

Sulfur, burnt match nose; big swing back from butter and richness that dominated the style for so long. Chardonnay styles very controversial, wines may now be received as unfriendly where maybe it has gone too far.

What's done differently now:

Cooler sites (higher altitude)

Earlier Picking (controversial, may have gone too far)

Better Clones (Dijon clones dominant rather than Mendoza, Gin Gin)

Hand Harvesting (night harvesting)

Whole Bunch Pressed (no clarifying, settling, centrifuging)

Barrel Ferment (lees and wine interaction, complexity based on barrel variation)

Maturation (older oak, 0-30% new oak only)

Larger Format Oak

Almost no Battonage (don't want to build additional fatness in the wine and look to keep reductive qualities in the wine)

Malo (ideal for malo to happen after the spring, barrels are often moved into air conditioned rooms)

Squirt of Sulfur at Bottling

Screw Cap (no Pre Mox)

Sulfites (some wineries dial it up every year, Penfolds (Bin A) handles it well in the whites)

Ian Brosnan:

Wines

Vinoque Pinot Blanc Yarra Valley 2016. *Wild ferment, whole bunch. Pinot Bianco style. La Boheme Pinot Gris & Friends Yarra Valley 2016 (Friends- Pinot Blanc, Riesling, Gewurz) All fermented separately. Nice aromatics, floral, good freshness.*

De Bortoli Villages Heathcote Grenache rosé 2016. *Very pale, 0g residual. Hand picked, whole bunch, natural fermentation. Soft but bone dry.*

Vinoque Chalmers Vineyard Greco, Heathcote 2016. *Crisp, with savoury & bitterness. White wine which doesn't rely solely on fruit character.*

De Bortoli Villages Yarra Chardonnay 2015 - *Dixons creek vineyard, using some new clones "for the craic" 5% new oak. Textured but fresh.*

De Bortoli Section A5 Chardonnay 2015 *No new oak, 100% malo. 9mts on lees. Lean, fine boned, gently smoky. Takes a few years to show.*

Vinoque 'Same same' Pinot Blend 2015 - *Pinots Meunier, Noir & Blanc. Aromatic, light and easy. I quote "would smash a bottle on a hot day"*

Riorret Lusatia Park Pinot Noir, Yarra Valley 2015 - *40% new oak. Tight, structured, perfumed.*

Riorret Balnarring Pinot Noir, Mornington Peninsula 2015. *Deeper, richer, plumper fruit. De Bortoli Villages Shiraz Grenache, Heathcote 2015. Herbal/woody (fennel) rounded fruit character and lightly peppery finish. Inspired by Montcalmes.*

La Boheme Syrah Gamay, Yarra Valley 2016 - *60% whole bunch, some carbonic. Fruit forward style with just enough structure to keep it serious.*

De Bortoli Section A8 Syrah, Yarra Valley 2014 - *purple colour & fruit, nice weight & long savoury finish. Quite peppery aftertaste.*

Wines tasted from barrel- Amphi 2016, Melba 2016, Lasetia 2016, SGM Heathcote 2016

Notes

Use the P58 chardonnay clone

Steve hates Mendoza clone- tastes of tinned pineapple.

Using more whole bunches, looking for more perfume in the wines.

Yarra wines are lighter & more fragrant than before.

Greco & Fiano both have potential in sites previously deemed "pretty shit"



DAY 3 - LUKE LAMBERT, Yarra Valley by Mary Thompson

I started making wine in my tin shed garage in 2004 with some rudimentary small batch equipment and 1 ton of purchased Yarra Syrah. 12 years on, I now make 5000 dozen bottles of wine and export to 10 markets overseas. Nebbiolo is the focus along with Syrah and Chardonnay. I'm lucky enough to lease vineyard area within (in my slightly biased opinion) the 2 most interesting sites of the Yarra Valley. All wines are wild yeast fermented, matured in large format oak and bottled without fining or filtration and minimal sulfur. There's a long way to go but the vineyards and wines are starting to settle down and show the terroir, and perfume, structure and shape I'm aiming for.

Syrah vs Shiraz... French style of making the wine vs Australian style production

Hendrix strums in the background

Lounging dog finds his home among chalk drawings on the floor of crude maps of the regions in play.

Sold through Vine Street

WINES

Luke Lambert, Chardonnay 2012 Tibooburra Vineyard \$32

Golden color, soft white flowers in the nose with a touch of lemon peel, the mouth is very giving with a luscious texture with notes of green apple and bright acidity and a long finish. 30 year old 500 liter punchons

Luke Lambert, Chardonnay 2015 Tibooburra Vineyard \$35

A less expressive nose than the 2012, beautiful rich, round texture in the mouth with popping acid and granny smith apple with vibrant citrus on the finish

Luke Lambert, 'Crudo' Chardonnay 2016 Denton Vineyard \$26

Great graphite on the nose, leaner structure and more citric vibrancy in the mouth, very long finish of lemon peel and green apple. Salty, gritty

Luke Lambert, Syrah 2015 Tibooburra Vineyard \$42

Electric violet color with an herby baking spices black bruit nose with medium weight and voluptuous fruit of cassis, boysenberry and blackberries that is kept in check with vibrant acid and long lean tannins.

Luke Lambert, Syrah 2016 Tibooburra Vineyard \$26

Wildly inky, dense purple with an complex bouquet of cassis, thyme and boysenberry. touch of spritz from fermentation. Pepper, spice and deep dark rich black fruit. Extremely elegant despite its age.

Luke Lambert, 'Crudo' Shiraz 2016 Denton Vineyard \$26

Deep inky violet color with an extremely perfumed nose of cassis and fresh cut herbs with really great structure takes the lead with a backbone of granite with supple boysenberry and blackberry fruits.

Luke Lambert, Nebbiolo 2013 Denton Vineyard \$60

Garnet center with rust colored edges, Beautiful dusty rose petal nose with notes of earth, lean savory mouth with long lean tannic structure, red currant and dried raspberry take the back seat to structure and acid

Luke Lambert, Nebbiolo 2014 Denton Vineyard \$60

Garnet center with rose colored edges, savory nose with notes of cranberry and cassis. In the mouth the cranberry and cassis are reiterated with pronounced acid and a very long, elegant finish

Luke Lambert, Nebbiolo 2015 Denton Vineyard \$60

Garnet center with rose colored edges, rose petal, anise and spice on the nose with a medium bodied mouthfeel with notes of stewed cranberry, cassis and brewed tea leaves. Yields under 2 tons/acre.

Luke Lambert, Sparkling Chardonnay 2013 Tibooburra Vineyard \$50

100% Chardonnay, zero dosage, hand disgorged, 700 bottles made, 100% wild malo

Vibrant golden color with dancing teeny bubbles with green apple and lemon curd with a vibrant acid kick

Luke Lambert, Crudo Rose 2015 Ngumbie Vineyard \$26

80% Shiraz, 20% Nebbiolo

Bone dry with notes of strawberry and raspberry, a wee bit reductive in the nose

Luke Lambert, Syrah 2014 "Lightning Shiraz" Tibooburra Vineyard \$42

Boysenberry with notes of cassis and cedar with stewed blueberry and boysenberry in the mouth with very pronounced acid. Lightning wine shiraz... Struck by lightning...





DAY 3 - GEMBROOK HILL, Yarra Valley by Mary Thompson

The Marks family planted their vineyard in 1983 at the Southernmost end of the Yarra Valley. We are nose to tail producers. Our vineyard's deep red soils and unirrigated vines on own roots grown in the coolest end of the valley yield unique wines. You will find complexity and pedigree but at their base these are smashable wines. Famous for Sauvignon Blanc

Gembrook is 100% de-stemmed, un-fined, unfiltered

Sold through Patrick Fox

WINES

Gembrook Hill Blanc de Blancs 2011 Upper Yarra

Gembrook Hill Sauvignon Blanc 2011 Upper Yarra

Very herby and eucalyptus nose, vibrant acid and structure with white peach and under-ripe yellow peach with crisp and clean finish

The Wanderer Pinot Noir 2013 Yarra Valley (Negociant side project)

Lean bright cherry with super bright acid and a lighter body with silky tannic structure

Gembrook Hill Villages Pinot Noir 2013 Upper Yarra (buying fruit)

garnet center with watery edges, very herby nose with eucalyptus and pepper, strawberry, red cherry, no new oak, bright acid

Gembrook Hill Pinot Noir 2013 Upper Yarra

Bright, clean vibrant, with bing cherry and spice with lifted acid

The Wanderer Pinot Noir 2014 Upper Yarra

Vineyard 6k North is estate fruit. Ruby rust colored with watery edges. Tons of eucalyptus notes intermingling with bright red cherry and lean structure

The Wanderer Syrah 2015 Upper Yarra

Electric violet color with strawberry edges, full boysenberry nose with herby notes, blueberry and macerated blackberry in the mouth checked with acid and tannin

Gembrook Hill Pinot Noir 2005 Upper Yarra

Color runs from garnet to rust, muted eucalyptus in the nose with bing cherry and rose.

Super vibrant, hard to believe it is an 2005. Strawberry and stewed cherry with nice structure

Gembrook Hill Pinot Noir 2006 Upper Yarra

Color runs from garnet to rust, herby notes are more integrated. Beautiful structure and spice take the lead with ripe cherry taking a back seat.

Gembrook Hill Pinot Noir 2008 Upper Yarra

Color runs from garnet to rust, herby notes are more integrated. Beautiful structure and spice take the lead with ripe cherry taking a back seat. Super elegant, seamless integration

Gembrook Hill Pinot Noir 2010 Upper Yarra

Color runs from garnet to rust, leads with the red fruits. Beautiful structure and minimal spice. Really pretty

Gembrook Hill Pinot Noir 2012 Upper Yarra

Spice and herbs on the nose with minimal fruit. Color runs from ruby to garnet. Bright bing cherry with popping acid and pronounced tannins.

The Melbourne Gin Company



DAY 3 - MAC FORBES, Yarra Valley by Mary Thompson

Mac Forbes was born and raised in Victoria's Yarra Valley. Born in the 70's, Mac grew up when the modern history of the Yarra Valley was commencing. He counts the late John Middleton at Mount Mary and Dirk Niepoort (Portugal), as his overriding influences. These relationships together with winemaking stages and consultancy in Europe have helped Mac define his own style and find philosophies and methods that suit the Australian landscape. Since his first vintage in 2005, Mac has explored and focused his direction. Today, the focus is mainly on Pinot Noir, Chardonnay and Cabernets from the Yarra Valley as well as German inspired Rieslings from the Strathbogie Ranges. As demand for Mac's wines has increased he is now incorporating the role of grape grower to his established winemaker status. A number of small vineyards have now been leased in the Yarra Valley, ensuring greater control over quality and style of the wines Mac ultimately wants to make. Sold through Hudson

WINES

Mac Forbes, RS 10 Riesling 2016 Strathbogie Ranges \$36

Hay colored with watery edges, green apple and honeysuckle with notes of white peach with vibrant acid and a long finish

Mac Forbes, RS 13 Riesling 2016 Strathbogie Ranges \$36

Hay colored with watery edges, granny smith apple and white nectarine with very prominent acid that isn't reflective of the increase of the residual sugar content. Long expressive finish.

Mac Forbes, Tradition EB 22 Riesling 2015 Strathbogie Ranges \$40

Straw colored with watery edges, very luscious honeysuckle nose with apricot notes, one would assume from the nose that the mouthfeel would be richer but it is bone dry and popping with acid. White peach and under-ripe nectarine

Mac Forbes, Chardonnay 2015 Yarra Valley \$30

Straw color with watery edges, a bit a wet match on the nose with a medium body and tart granny smith apples in the mouth with a bright finish of citrus fruits and acid

Mac Forbes, Hoddles Creek Chardonnay 2015 Yarra Valley \$50

Straw color with watery edges, granny smith apple and tart white peach in the mouth with wet stone on the nose

Mac Forbes, Woori Yallock Chardonnay 2015 Yarra Valley \$50

Straw color with watery edges, a bit of wet match and apple on the nose with candied lemon peel and green apple in the mouth, bone dry with a long citric finish

Mac Forbes, Coldstream Pinot Noir 2015 Yarra Valley \$50

Garnet colored with watery edges, bright cherry and cassis on the nose, spicy bing cherry and lean tannic structure with a long balanced finish

Mac Forbes, Hoddles Creek Pinot Noir 2015 Yarra Valley \$50

Ruby colored with watery edges, spicy cassis nose with notes of boysenberry and black cherry, ripe cherry and raspberry in the mouth with almost cranberry as the finish, very shy and pretty

Mac Forbes, Yarra Junction Pinot Noir 2015 Yarra Valley \$50

Ruby colored with watery edges, muted perfume on the nose of cassis with bright rainer cherry in the mouth with subtle spicy notes of black pepper and dried roses.

Mac Forbes, Woori Yallock Pinot Noir 2015 Yarra Valley \$70

Ruby colored with watery edges, reductive mid palate, rose petal and bing cherry with bright acid and good length. Slightly green in the mouth with notes of peppery spice

Mac Forbes, Wesburn Pinot Noir 2015 Yarra Valley \$70

Ruby colored with watery edges, planted in 1991, super spicy in the nose with notes of anise and stewed cherry, in the mouth lean under-ripe cherry with gripping acid and structure

Mac Forbes, 'Hugh' Cabernet Sauvignon Blend 2014 Yarra Valley \$70 (vineyard gone to Phylloxera)

Deep inky ruby color with watery edges, boysenberry, spice, smoke and cassis on the nose. For a cabernet it leads with fruit and the tannin is super understated. Stewed blackberry and spice.

Mac Forbes, EB17 Cabernet Sauvignon 2014 Yarra Valley \$70

Deep inky ruby color with rose watery edges, macerate blackberry, cassis and overripe boysenberry with notes of smoke and spice with tannins that are long, lean and elegant. Fruit and structure in harmony.



Moriarty, where are you?

DAY 4 - GIANT STEPS, Yarra Valley by Sophie Uddin (WHY CAN'T I TURN OFF THE CAPS SOPHIE!!!!!!)

WE WERE WINNING IN SO MANY WAYS THIS MORNING!

THAT VIEW FROM THE TOP OF THE HILL, COFFEE , BEATING THE RAIN

THE BIGGEST WIN THOUGH WAS GETTING TO LISTEN TO PHIL SEXTON, I WAS RIVETED. I HAD MET HIM BEFORE IN LONDON BUT OF ALL THE PEOPLE WE MET ON THE TRIP HE HAD THE MOST TO TELL US ABOUT THE BUSINESS SIDE WHICH WAS SO INTERESTING. YOU OFTEN GET TAKEN OVER BY THE ROMANTIC SIDE OF WINE MAKING AND FORGET THAT IT IS ACTUALLY A BUSINESS THAT NEEDS TO MAKE MONEY AND THAT NEEDS SOMEONE LIKE PHIL SEXTON TO DRIVE IT. SO IT WAS GREAT TO GET THE INFO FROM THE OWNER OF THE BUSINESS.

PHIL WAS SO ARTICULATE ABOUT HIS BUSINESS, ITS GROWTH AND YET STILL MANAGES TO MAINTAINS A CLOSENESS TO THE BUSINESS AND THE WINES THAT WAS REFRESHING. EVERYONE INVOLVED TODAY SUZANNE AND JULIAN WAS SO WELCOMING, BREAKFAST WAS DELICIOUS, WHO DOESN'T WANT TO START EVERY DAY WITH BUBBLES AND BACON?

IT WAS REALLY INTERESTING TO SEE THE 2015 WINES SHOWN ALONGSIDE EACH OTHER. A VERY INTERESTING TASTING. TODAY SHOWED US YOU CAN HAVE A LARGER SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS AND STILL MAINTAIN QUALITY, HOSPITALITY AND HAVE PRIDE IN WHAT YOU PRODUCE.

SEXTON VINEYARD, CHARDONNAY, 2015

NORTH FACING GETS AFTERNOON SUN, NON VOLCANIC, SHALLOW TOP SOILS, MENDOZA CLONE, WHOLE BUNCH PRESSED, WILD FERMENTATION, NO MALO, GRAPEFRUIT, STONE FRUIT, CLEAN FINISH

TARRAFORD VINEYARD, CHARDONNAY, 2015

SIMILAR TO THE SEXTON CLIMATE, WITHOUT AS MUCH AFTERNOON SUN, CLAY LIMESTONE SOIL, LIGHT OAK, GINGER, STONE FRUIT, ELEGANT

LUSATIA PARK, CHARDONNAY 2015

RED VOLCANIC SOILS, PICKED LATER THAN ALL OTHER CHARDONNAYS, CLEAN, APPLE, PEAR, HONEY, SPICE

SEXTON, PINOT NOIR, 2015

WHOLE BERRY FERMENTATION, SLIGHT CARBONIC MACERATION, VANILLA, CHERRY DROP, ANISE, WHITE PEPPER, LONG FINISH

PRIMAVERA, PINOT NOIR, 2015

DEEP RED VOLCANIC SOILS, DEEP PLANTED ROOTS, WHOLE BUNCH, BRIGHT FRUIT, HERBACEOUS, CHERRY, FLORAL

APPLEJACK, PINOT NOIR, 2015

BLACK VOLCANIC SOIL, COOL SITE, EAST FACING – LESS SUN, BLACK AND RED CHERRY, BITTER CHOCOLATE

YARRA VALLEY BLEND, PINOT NOIR 2015

BLEND OF ALL PINOT VINEYARDS, GOOD TANNINS, DARK CHERRY, RASPBERRY

TARRAFORD, SYRAH 2015

RED DOG CLONE, SPICE, PEPPER, SAVOURY CHARACTER, AROMATIC

YARRA VALLEY, SYRAH, 2015

SMOOTH, VELVETY, GOOD TANNINS, BRIGHT DARK FRUIT CHARACTERS, CLEAN



Brekky on the hill was rained off for the first time ever. Sun drenched vistas will be back on the menu next year! For now, here's a Quokka



DAY 4 - YARRA YERING, Yarra Valley by Dorian Tang

Australian iconic winery, established in 1969 by Dr Bailey Carrodus, he had planted some of the oldest vines on hillsides. There are 94 stainless steel lined wooden "tea-chest" fermenters (600kg), allows with small batch fermentation, with stem or de-stemmed, and then into the final blend according to individual unique characters, which also might takes lot of space. Malolactic fermentation in French oak barrels. The barrel age, size, shape and maturation time will be dependent on the variety and wine style before blending and bottling. Total Production: 45,000 cs



Viticulturist: Andrew George

Sustainable viticulture not certified. The 70 acres of vines at Yarra Yering are dry farmed on the slope at the foot of the Warramate hills with good drainage, there is cover crop every 2 rows to keep soil in competition, keep the moisture during dry seasons, and help soil erosion from the slope. The yield is very low, 1-2 tons per acre, allows to source best concentration and quality fruit.

- Not organic due to high disease pressure, herbicides spray around 3-4 times a year.
- Gravel soils: west facing hills for more afternoon sunshine, Cabernet Sauvignon and other Bordeaux varieties and Portuguese varieties are grown
- The rows of vines are planted 3m *1.3m
- All cane pruning



- New plantings are on rootstocks now – Phylloxera

Chief winemaker: Sarah Crown



- Joined in Yarra Yering in 2013, previously worked in Hunter valley,
- Oct 2016 Sarah was awarded by James Halliday as Winemaker of the Year for 2017



Tasting notes:

1. Yarra Yering Chardonnay 2015: foot tread, basket pressed, 1-2 hours skin contact, 8% MLF (Malolactic fermentation) : pure, pristine fruit, linear style, apple, stone fruit, fresh acidity balanced with moderate body. 90 points
2. Yarra Yering Pinot noir 2014: 40% less production than usual, due to fruit set during flowing time, 40% new French oak, youthful, bright red fruit, cherry, strawberry, herbal spices, soft tannin, elegant structure and moderate length. 88+
3. Underhill 2012 Shiraz: 13% abv, 40 years old vines, it was very good vintage, more stalk used. Deep dark fruit, plummy, savoury, chewy (M+) tannin, bright acidity and lingering length. 90
4. Underhill 2010 shiraz: very concentrated year, sweet fruit, black cherry, plummy notes, dark chocolate, vibrant acidity, well integrated tannin and oak, long length. 92+
5. Underhill 2004, big yield that year, 12.5% abv, tertiary notes of mushroom, forest floor, savory palate, herbal, baked fig, slightly short length. 88
6. Yarra Yering Dry Red Wine No2: Rhone style blend, Shiraz –based, shiraz and Marsanne planted in 1969, Mataro and Viognier planted from 1984 to 1995; all dry farmed. 2012: aromatic, perfume and baked spices, only 1% of Mataro and co-fermentation with white grapes Viognier and Marsanne adds some complexity. 93
7. Yarra Yering Dry Red Wine No2 2010: high VA, lacking fruit. Little disappointment. 87
8. Yarra Yering Dry Red Wine No2 1991: small batch of viognier, maybe some pinot noir in the blend. Pale garnet, still very lively on palate, savoury notes, mushroom, racy acidity, elegant and great length. 91+
9. Yarra Yering Dry Red Wine No1 2012: Cabernet Sav. Dominate, Merlot, Cab Franc, Malbec.. medium body classic style, black current, cassis, hint of sage spices, black cherry, juicy acidity, fine grained tannin structure, good fruit concentration and length. 91

10. Yarra Yering Dry Red Wine No1 2010: very good vintage, highly intense fruit concentration, bright fruit and vibrant acidity, good balance and lingering length. 93+



11. No 1 1981: still very lively shown layered tertiary notes, tar, smoky, bacon, tobacco, leather, typical classic elegant Bordeaux style, long finish, very impressive. 96+





DAY 4 - MELBOURNE GRAZING NIGHT by Mary

Grazing night was an amazing opportunity to check out Melbourne. My group (myself, Frederic and David) got to visit with Bill Downie and Jason Searle. We hopped through tiny spots tucked into alleys where the food was off the charts. We probably hit three places before rejoining the rest of the group for more wine tasting and amazing views from the rooftop at Siglo.

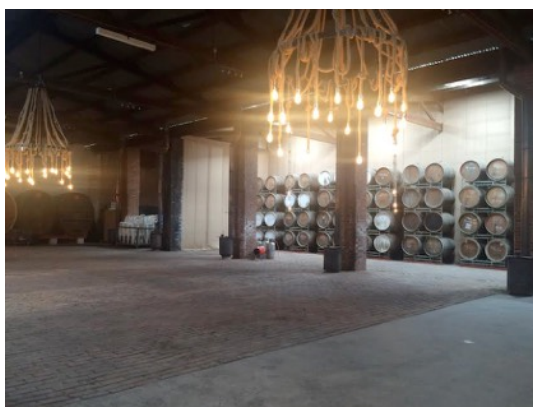


the band photo, Hosier Lane

DAY 5 - ALL SAINTS, Rutherglen by Liz Huettinger

Our trip to All Saints winery was our first stop of the day on our journey through Rutherglen. One of the 8 members of the Rutherglen network, All Saints has a long history in Rutherglen. Purchased in 1990 by the Browns from the original owner, the building itself was built in 1864 by a Scottish man who was the Queens carpenter. Both the kiln and the building are official Australian heritage sites. It is not surprising that they hold many events, concerts, and weddings here. The building and grounds are beautiful, and would make a great backdrop for nearly anything.

Angela and Nick Brown, cousins to the Browns (Brown Bros winery) that we would visit later in the trip, toured us around the property, along with their adorable and very busy Border Collie, Molly.



After the tour we proceeded to have lunch at their award-winning farm-to-table restaurant. It was amazing, and delicious, and most of us probably could have done with a nap right after. I didn't see a single plate left full, and that was with several courses.

As far as the lineup of wines:

2015 Estate Marsanne

2013 'Family Cellar' Marsanne

2014 'Pierre'(named after Dad, Peter) Cabernet Sauv.(50%), Cabernet Franc(20%), & Merlot(30%)

2014 Estate Shiraz

2013 'Family Cellar' Shiraz

2014 Estate Durif

2012 'Family Cellar' Durif

Museum and Classic Muscadelle

Museum and Classic Muscat

The fortifieds and the Durif were definitely the stars of the show. We were thrilled to have been able to see such a beautiful and historic place that was run by such great people.

DAY 5 - CAMPBELLS, Rutherglen by Ian and Sebastien

Ian Brosnan:

I was the person charged with saying thanks at the end of this remarkable tasting, and I mentioned that while we had visited some fine wineries and tasted some fantastic Chardonnay/Pinot/Syrah on our visits, this tasting could not have taken place anywhere else in the world. For that reason, I think this was one of the most important and valuable visits of the entire trip, and one of the wine styles which genuinely sets Australia apart from the rest of the world.

People – Col Campbell, Jane Campbell, Glenn Eberbach, winemaker. Pat Gehrig, Sales & Export

Wines

Marsanne Viognier 2015 – 55:40 with some Roussane . 500l casks, some lees contact. Aromatic, apple blossom, slight bitterness on finish.

Bobbie Burns Shiraz 2013 – blend of many different blocks. fruit driven, cherry, plum.

Sixties Block 2013 – Portuguese varieties, v. dry & tannic. Some sweet spice. 10% new oak.

Brothers Shiraz 2013 – Blend of select parcels, riper, concentrated, warm spice.

Barkly Durif 2013 – only made in good years, ironstone, concentrated, lots of grip!

Rutherglen Topaque – honey, cold tea, fish oil, raisin.

Classic Topaque – richer, with some Rancio character coming through.

Grand Topaque – Hotter, tea, dried herb, raisin.

Rare Isabella Topaque – very rich and intense, v. sweet raisin & dried fruit, massive length.

Rutherglen Muscat – sweet, honeyed, fig/dried fruit

Classic Rutherglen Muscat - caramel, date.

Grand Rutherglen Muscat – warmer, toffee, christmas cake fruit

‘Merchant Prince’ Rare – luscious, toffee, bitter chocolate, tea.

Muscat of the Century – deep, dense & complex. tea, treacle, toffee, coffee etc.....

over 350g rs.

Notes

Topaque- registered Australian name of Tokay/Muscadelle in 2009.

Climate similar to Clare Valley, but with extra 20mins sunshine (not heat) per day.

Usually dry heat so disease pressure is low. Spring frost can be an issue.

Fish oil is a classic characteristic of Muscadelle/Topaque.

Classification for Muscat

Rutherglen Muscat 3-5yrs RS 180-240

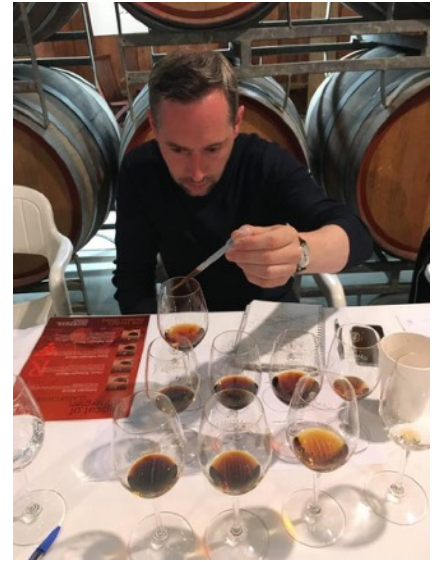
Classic Rutherglen 6-10yrs RS 200-280

Grand Rutherglen 11-19yrs RS 270-400

Rare Rutherglen 20+ RS 270-400

Classification is all about quality; age is secondary.





the winemaking challenge was to blend a Classic Muscat - no pressure when Col came round to check!



DAY 6 -TAHBILK, Nagambie Lakes, by Sophie

GETTING TO TAHBILK WAS LIKE STEPPING BACK IN TIME, IN SUCH A GOOD WAY. AS SOON AS YOU STEPPED ONTO THE PROPERTY YOU FELT LIKE YOU COULD FEEL ITS HISTORY AND WERE PART OF IT'S STORY.

..... AND BEING SHOWN AROUND BY ALISTER PURBRICK.... WELL THAT WAS SOMETHING VERY SPECIAL. I COULD HAVE LISTENED TO HIM TALK ALL DAY.

GOING INTO THE CELLARS WAS TRULY MAGICAL I WOULD CHALLENGE ANYONE TO HAVE NOT FELT THAT.

I FELT LIKE I WAS IN HOGWARTS (DEFINITELY NOT MY NORTHERN COMPREHENSIVE) SITTING IN THAT AMAZING ROOM FOR THE TASTING. I LOVED THAT SPACE!

JET WAS FOR ME THE CUTEST DOG (SORRY LIZ YOU HAVE MURRAY).

THE WINES WE TRIED WERE SO AMAZING, THE OLDER WINES TOTALLY HELD THEIR OWN AND SHOWED THE QUALITY OF VINES AND WINE MAKING THAT HAS BEEN GOING ON FOR MANY GENERATIONS.

THE RIVER CRUISE WAS INCREDIBLE, I AM NOT GOING TO LIE I WAS SLIGHTLY TERRIFIED OF BEING EATED ALIVE BY WELL ANYTHING THAT LIVED IN THERE.... BUT MOSTLY BY CROCODILES.

SEEING AND FEELING A PIECE OF AUSTRALIAN WINE HISTORY, MEETING AN AMAZING WINEMAKER, A RIVER CRUISE (AND NOT DYING), A CUTE DOG, DELICIOUS LUNCH AND OUTSTANDING WINES..... 6 TICKS. WHAT A VISIT!

A DAY I WILL REMEMBER FOREVER FOR SO MANY REASONS.

Tahbilk, founded in 1860 is the oldest family-owned winery in Victoria. They have the largest single holding of Marsanne grapevines in the world. The first vines were cuttings made in the 1860s from the St Huberts Winery in the Yarra Valley. Tahbilk's current plantings of Marsanne date from 1927.

These heritage wines, plus eco-tourism, carbon neutral status and the First Families of Wine export drive continue to ensure that Tahbilk remains one of Australia's and the world's top family-owned wineries.

Marsanne

2016

no oak, stainless steel ferment, pear drop, slight sweetness, lime, citrus, vibrant fruit flavours
honeydew melon

2011

no barrel ferment, more complex, toast, floral, honey

2002

richer , fuller, still bright fruit, lemon, honeysuckle

1927 vines marsanne

2008

dry, multi layered, textured, marmalade

2004

bright fruit, lime, melon, toasty, creamy

2000

sherry characters, bright fruit, Christmas cake spice

Shiraz

1986

savoury, bell pepper, raspberry, 100% old oak

2013

dry tannins, fruit driven, blackberry, new oak – small amount

cabernet sauvignon

1991

menthol, eucalyptus, mulberry, vanilla, old oak

2013

sanguine, big berry fruit, new oak

'eric stevens purbrick' shiraz

not single vineyard

1998

lovely sweetness, dry finish, fig, chewy

2004

light berry fruit, floral, pretty

2012

savoury notes, drier style, light fruit

'eric stevens purbrick' cabernet sauvignon

1996

clove, cinnamon, spice

2002

vanilla, mulberry, smooth, dark berry, liquorice

2012

savoury, fruit cake, clove

'1860 vines' shiraz

tahbilk clone from hermitage rhone

1994

still bright fruit, elegant

2004

menthol, eucalyptus, elegant

2010

light soft fruit, elegant







DAY 6 - BINDI, Macedon Ranges, by Young Shi

50 kilometres north-west of Melbourne in the Macedon Ranges lies the Dhillon family property 'Bindi'. Vineyards enjoy elevation at 520 meters above sea level and soils are predominantly shattered quartz over siltstone, sandstone and clay.

Organic practice started being implemented in 2005 followed by biodynamics preparations of BD500 & 501, focusing on promoting soil life and balance leading to excellent vine health.

Michael Dhillon showed us around the original and new plantings in different plots of the site.



Unlike the prevalent low-density plantings in Australia, 1.1m*0.4m and 1.1m*0.8m are being experimented in Bindi's new plantings, which gives extremely high density so that Michael and his team may assess the influence on wine within the local terroir.





We followed Michael to his winery for a memorable barrel sample tasting to kick start the beautiful evening. It absolutely amazed us that even the unfinished samples could charm us with the fineness, balance and elegance. Quartz Chardonnay 2016 tasted almost like a finished wine, highly pretty and well made. My tasting notes ended with a firm sentence which says 'I just want to drink it!'

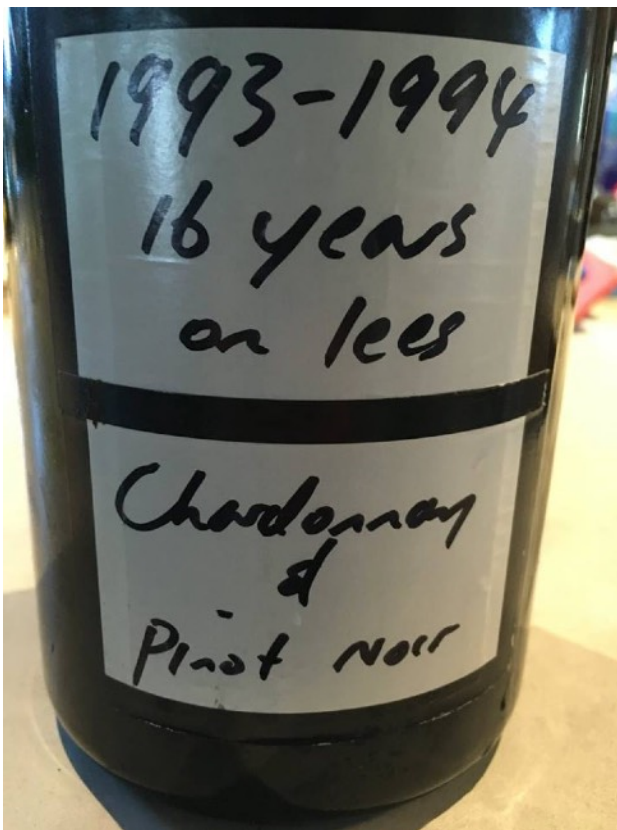
Barrel Sample Tasting List as follows:

- Kostas Rind Chardonnay
- Quartz Chardonnay
- Dixon Pinot Noir
- KAYE Pinot Noir
- Original Vineyard Pinot Noir
- Block 5 Pinot Noir

The home-feeling dinner started with Bindi Sparkling Magnum 1993. Chardonnay Pinot Noir 20 years on lees, no dosage, and simply fine, complex and delicious. (a three tick wine btw - ed)







Andy celebrated his birthday while on tour, and somehow Michael knew!

DAY 7 - BESTS, Great Western, by Maurice

On day 7 we arrived in the Grampians GI, in the sub GI "Great Western" at Bests Winery. The town, Store was founded by miners during the gold rush. Henry Best was a butcher who supplied meat to the goldminers in 1866. With the help of a French friend he planted the Nursery Block, where varieties were planted randomly. They made field blends of red and white grapes. Henry sold the winery to the Thompson family in 1921. Today it is run by Chris and Viviane and son Ben. We were met by the Jono, the winemaker who took us on a tour of the old vine vineyards of Pinot Noir and Pinot Meunier. Along the way we tasted several of their wines.

We also went into their cellar for a tasting of their library wines.

Concacella Blanc White Blend

Handpicked Riesling, Gerwurztraminer, Pinot Blanc, Fiano. Waxy, petrol, aromatic white. Green herbaceous with sweet fruit, sticky and tart at the same time.

Nursery Block Red Blend

A field blend. Very light color, prune, red stewed fruits, cranberry. Med body finishing clean, tart with lingering floral, citrus peel and animal flavors.

Great Western Riesling 2016

The Riesling house block was planted in the 1960's. They have started to make wines with more RS and balance. Straw colored, honey, apricot, grapefruit aromas, bright acidity and passion fruit.

Foudre Fermented Riesling 2016

Aged in new foudre. Very textural, Manuca honey, apricot, good acidity with more weight on the mid palate.

Riesling, Gerwurztraminer, Orange Muscat blend 2016

A gentle blend creating an aromatic and textural wine. Lychee, ginger, honey and mouth-watering acidity.

House Block Riesling Kabinet Style 2016

I really enjoyed this wine. It was made by accident when the ferment shut down too soon leaving an RS of 22. It has a savory-salty character, apple, melon, apricot and honeydew aromas and honeysuckle flavors with a n intense mid palate.

Shiraz Nouveau 2016

A Beaujolais influenced wine made with Shiraz. It is fresh with flavors and aromas of bubble gum, violets, easy drinking. Much better than Gamay.

Bin 1 Shiraz 2014

This wine won the Jimmy award in 2011. A wine with lifted aromas of both tart and juicy fruits. It was a savory quality and full of florals. It comes from the Grampains GI.

Shiraz Viognier 2015

This is the first time Bests has made this blend. It has aromatics of pepper, black and blue fruits, mint, bacon, potting soil. Tannins are smooth and the wine has very nice texture. A Northern Rhone style Shiraz.

Bin 0 Shiraz 2014

The grapes come from 4 estate vineyards one of them is 150 years old. The label has been around since the 1890's. It has uplifted fruit aromas of both black and blue fruits, violets and herbs de Provence. It is rustic with great texture.

Thompson Family Shiraz 2014

This wine won the James Halliday wine of the year. It is herbal, black raspberry, charred roasted coffee, peppery and savory. The tannins are rounded and wine finishes with ripe and tart blue fruits. It is handpicked and has sorted and is only made in the best vintages. There have only been 19 bottlings in the past 30 years.



sparkling shiraz and bacon and egg rolls for brekky



a rare sighting of the famous Concongella boating lake





Thompson and Thomson

DAY 8 - JIM BARRY WINES, Clare Valley, by Fredrik Hierner

We met up with Sam at the Florita vineyard with some wines on a cold chilly day .
Jim Barry started with Peter in 1959 in clare valley after working Taylors
This year its 30 years ago since they got Florita vineyard back in the 1986.

The wines we tasted at the vine yard was:

- Riesling 1999
- Florita Riesling 2009
- Florita Riesling 2013
- 2016 Lodge Hill Riesling
- 2016 Assyrtiko
- 2006 The Armagh Shiraz

For me it was the first time to try Jim Barry's wine, and the were all really god and stood out.
We started with 1999 riesling as blind and its was beautiful as riesling get after some years,
and in this case 17 years.

The Florita riesling 2009 fresh and so the 2013 Florita and they are 50% hand harvested.

The Armagh 2006 were perfect balanced with some age, and are some fun facts that its was
planted in 1969 and 1985 was the first vintage and it was released on Ayers rock and cost at
that point 35 Aus dollars.

The Assyrtiko was a big surprise, it was 2016 and i have a big love for well done Assyrtiko.

As far as i know there are some plantings in Chile, and this one is the only Assyrtiko in
Australia, and has this fresh and razor sharp acidity.

2016 was the first vintage for this wine and love to follow it in the future...





DAY 8 - PAULETT'S, Clare Valley, by Mary

Pauletts was an amazing experience. Our hosts were super engaging and they set up a really fun way to taste and learn. What's better than tasting such great wine on top of a barrel in the cellar? Neil and Matt Pauletts are our hosts. Dry farm. Chose to stop irrigating back in 1999, yield drop but quality rose. First vintage was 1983 RIES & SHIR. 3 kids playing tennis. Polish Hill River founded by Poles up from Adelaide. Clare is made up of little valleys: Auburn, Watervale, Polish Hill River, etc., not official GIs. South Australia is the only state that is Phylloxera free in AU

Pauletts Polish Hill River Riesling 2016 \$23

Hay color with watery edges, lead with morality and citrus of lemon.

Pauletts Polish Hill River Aged Release Riesling 2010 \$50

Golden yellow color with watery edges. Leads with bright minerality in the mouth with very vibrant acid and citrus notes of lemon and lemon pithe. Finish is quite lean.

Pauletts Helmsford Watervale Semillon 2015 \$23

Really vibrant perfumes nose of white flower, granite and dried apricot with a hay color to watery edges. Nice coating texture in the mouth with contrasting bone-dry palate and bright citrus flavors of lemon and lemon pithe. Long acid finish.

Pauletts Polish River Hill Cabernet Merlot 2013 \$25

Dark and deep inky color of ruby with rose edges. Mulling spice and black berry in the nose with cinnamon and black cherry. On the palate, dense underripe blackberry, plum, stewed cranberry and spice long lean structure on the palate. 70% CS, 30% MLT

Pauletts Polish River Hill Shiraz 2013 \$25

Deep inky violet color with a spicy stewed blackberry nose. On the palate, dried blackberry, boysenberry and juicy tannins.

Pauletts Andres Shiraz 2012 \$50

Deep inky violet color with rose edges. Cinnamon and mulling spices on the nose. Boysenberry and blackberries on the palate with a nice structure in the mouth. 'Andres' first Polish settler on the property. 24 mos in old.



DAY 8 - KILIKANOON, Clare Valley, by Mary

Established in 1997, Kilikanoon has achieved consistent awards and accolades including being awarded Winery of the Year in 2013 by James Halliday.

Kilikanoon is based in the Clare Valley, South Australia. This incredibly diverse region has over 1000 different micro climates, each varying in altitude, rainfall and soil sub-structure. Kilikanoon has vineyards in many different parts of the Clare valley, their philosophy is to leverage this diversity to achieve a consistency of quality and style for each marque.

Kilikanoon owes its philosophy to founder Kevin Mitchell and his father Mort and their fascination with terroir, our winemaking team employs traditional winemaking techniques and meticulous care to craft vibrant wines with distinct regional and varietal definition.

No maritime influence. Kevin Mitchell's son just won a tennis match.

Killerman's Run Riesling 2015 \$20

Watery color with hay colored tinges, 3g/L. Lemon, lime & grapefruit notes with vibrancy and popping acid.

Mort's Block Riesling 2015 \$25

Watery color with hay colored tinges, bone-dry. Grapefruit, lemon and lemon pithe long acid finish

Mort's Reserve Riesling 2014 \$44

Hay colored with watery edges, bone-dry. Petrol and minerality on the nose with a luscious texture with bright lemon and lemon pithe.

Killerman's Run GSM 2014 \$20

Grenache 50%, Shiraz 40%, Mataro 10%, 2-5 year old seasoned french oak, deep ruby color with rose edges. Rose petals in the nose with juicy blackberry. Stewed blackberry and cranberry with pepper spices and heat on the finish.

Prodigal Grenache 2013 \$33

Garnet color with rose edges. Very interesting nose of dried cranberry, savory, dusty cherry, rock. Texture almost chalky with dried blackberry and baked boysenberry on the palate

Covenant Shiraz 2013 \$44

New French oak, 18 mos in barrel. Dense inky concentration of garnet to rose edges. Spice and stewed blackberry on the nose with a juicy palate of bright blackberry and stewed cranberry with perceivable heat on the finish.

Oracle Shiraz 2012 \$80

1/2 new French oak, 20 mos. Inky ruby color with garnet edges. Spicy stewed blackberry nose with savory notes. Spicy stewed plum with stewed blackberry and a heat in the mouth. Dances the opulent line but still keeps a nice structure in place.





DAY 8 - SKILOGALEE, Clare Valley, by Mary

Small family owned and operated vineyard and winery established in 1970. Now owned by the Palmer family. Grows majority of its own fruit using sustainable farming practices. Small batch winemaking with “restrained” intervention focussing on fruit flavors and natural acidity made in a modern winery using traditional methods eg hand plunging, basket pressing keeping batches distinct until they are amalgamated for bottling.

Winery has a vibrant cellar door and restaurant encouraging wine tourists and connoisseurs to visit the “place” which provides the essence of the wines produced.





DAY 8 - ADELINA, Clare Valley, by Sophie

Immediately walking into the Adelina winery you know you have entered a special place. Loud music blaring, funky art hanging from the walls and being greeted by two unassuming and clearly brilliant people..... You feel immediately at home.

Oh and dogs! Liz jumped on the cute canines immediately. Not sure how happy the animal was but it made Liz smile.

This is how you feel even before trying any of Col and Jennie's wines.

Their labels are brilliant and are really cool, totally in keeping with what is going on here on every level.

It was really refreshing to see the different grape varietals they are playing with.... All of which work. Love the nebbiolo and arneis.

Chatting to Jennie, who is so refreshingly modest it is clear why these guys wines have been lauded, both for the Some Young Punks label and the Adelina label. She is so lovely and so smart. They just work hard and are incredibly passionate.

Dinner was wow! That lamb was fricking delicious..... holy hell.

It was clear how the night was going as everyone felt so super comfortable games ensued! As soon as anyone asks me to play charades I immediately forget the names of **any** films, plays, books or songs..... it's an affliction that both mary. Luckily for me and the group we have couple of show ponies all too ready to 'win points' (Liz my darling you rock).

I loved the wines but for me David's Jurassic Park charade was utter genius and one of my favourite moments of the trip. Closely followed by Ghost!

Tim's 30 seconds of total bonkers madness came close, what was that? Good use of props from both David and Tim though! (FYI Sophie That was Drop It Like It's hot - ed)

When the bus came to pick us up no one wanted to leave, always a sign of a good night.

Col came out and gave our lovely Wayne two bottles of wine as a thank you for waiting for us..... what a gent, says it all!

Oh yeah and I did say that David 's charade escapade was my favourite moment and it was until the bus drive home.

The loss of your inner monologue happens to the best of us when we have had a few drinks and are tired!

Tim Wildman it is one of life's eternal questions....

'where do kangaroos sleep?'

A brilliant end to a brilliant night!

(I deny all knowledge of this - ed)





two words...film...sounds like Thurassic Bark . No? Nobody?



DAY 9 - SEPPELTSFIELD, Barossa Valley, by Dorian



Established in 1851, now under the leadership of proprietor Warren Randall, Warren worked as a viticulturist and winemaker for the Seppelt family during the 1980s, Whilst always respected for this family business and history. Warren is undertaking a genuine disruption of the current stagnant perception of the Australian fortified wine category. The property has evolved from a tiring fortified wine house (once owned by Treasury Wine Estates) to a vibrant and progressive tourism destination - not only wine, but food and art at its core. The physical change to the estate had led to an equally rejuvenated demand and awareness of its fortified wares. Tawny, Tokay, Muscat and Apera (Sherry) collections enjoying renewed interest from 150,000 visitors who now venture through the doors annually. The positioning of the Para 100 Year Old Vintage Tawny as Australia's most expensive annually released wine and heightened awareness of the 1878 Centennial Cellar as a genuine international wine treasure also being deliberate measures undertaken by the estate.

I feel there should be a photo here - ed



Amazing Gravity winery



Wines tasted for birth year: 1975

Vibrant amber brown with sing of gold hues, pronounced aromas of dried fruit, fig, honey, and lifted citrus aromatics. Luscious sweetness, rich, full body, citrus peel, toffee, lingering finish. Subtle spice adds to complexity. 92



100 years tawny, 1916 vintage was drawn for tasting

100 years tawny:

Bright amber with touch of green hues on the rim, toasted almonds, honey, baked sweet potato, dried fig, caramel, toffee, aldehyde and rancio character, rich and luscious sweetness on palate, what a memorable moment of tasting history... 97







DAY 9 - CIRILLO ESTATE WINES, Barossa Valley, by Liz

First off, I have to say that being a bit of a snoop, I looked at what other people scored on the wineries at the end of the tour. Cirillo was one of a select few that got 10/10 from absolutely everyone. Not a single person didn't love their visit here and it's easy to see why.

When we strolled up, we were immediately thrust into a foot-bath, a necessary foot-bath, because we were about to walk amongst the oldest Grenache vines in the world, planted in 1848. Marco was amazingly gracious showing us the vines and how he cares for them, and wow, they are beauties. All this while we sipped on some of the most compelling Grenache in the Barossa the '1850' Grenache 2011.



After that we scuttled over to Marcos house where we met his incredibly lovely wife, sister, and daughter. Tim started managing the grill, because...well, I never really knew why, but he must really be specific about grilling. Maybe I didn't care, because the sun was out, we were able to lay out on the grass, and were treated to some delicious wine:

2011 Semillon, 2014 Rosato(100% Grenache), "The Vincent" Grenache, 2014 Mataro, 2014 Shiraz

Lunch was delicious, and most of all I think the whole experience felt very soul-fulfilling, as if we weren't just visiting a winery, but we were making new friends and family. I should mention that this was also the first occasion that I had heard Maurice voice his writing; he read us all a love letter to Grenache. It was the perfect end to a phenomenal lunch.

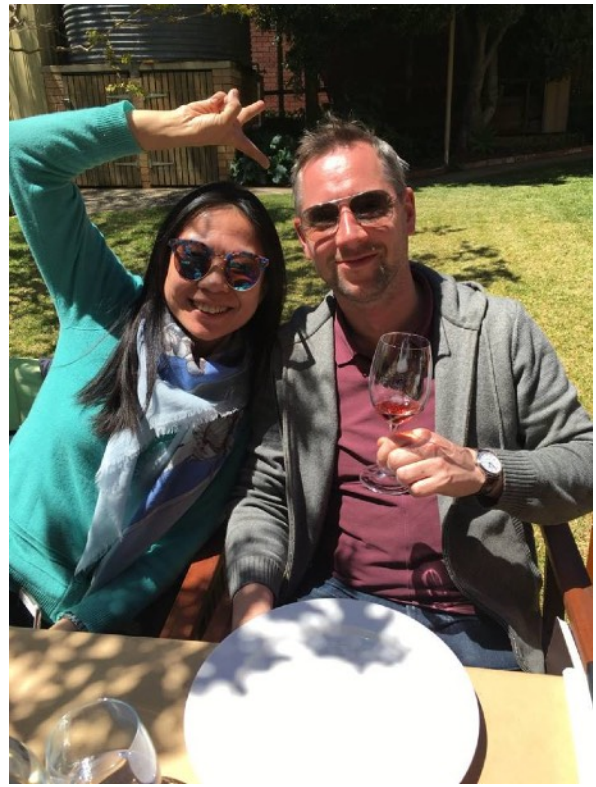
This visit definitely changed perspectives and ideas about what Australian wine can be, or in fact is. The care that he takes with the vineyards and the quality of the wine speaks for itself. Cheers to you and the great work that you do Marco!

Hanging tough OG style in the OG (Old Grenache) vineyard





no honestly, the cork was THIS big





DAY 9 - SPINIFEX, Barossa Valley, by Sebastien

The name comes from a herb / plant found in the Barossa Valley.

The owner are Peter Schell (Kiwi) and Magali Gely. His ancestors are German who first immigrated to Australia then moved to New Zealand 2 generations ago. He already had a connection to the Barossa Valley. Magali is originally from France and her great grandparents were in the wine business in the Southern part of France. Due to the French origin of one of the owner, several wines have a French name.

2001 was the first vintage made under the label Spinifex.

They make wines from 3 different origins: Barossa Valley, Eden Valley and Barossa (Blend of Barossa Valley and Eden Valley).

Wine tasted:

1. 2016 Eden Valley Riesling. Fruits comes from vineyards planted in the 1940's and 1950's.
2. 2015 Lola. Blend of Semillon, Ugni bLanc, Viognier, Muscat, Roussanne and Clairette. The Semillon comes from a 60 year old vineyard.
3. 2016 Rose. 60% old vine Grenache + 30% Mataro + 10% Cinsault.
4. 2015 Papillon. 70% Grenache + 30% Cinsault. Cinsault is not planted in abundance in the Barossa.
5. 2014 Esprit. Blend of 91% Grenache + Mataro + Cinsault.
6. 2015 Syrah. Barossa Vly + Eden Vly blend.
7. 2014 Bete Noire. 100% shiraz Barossa appellation.
8. 2013 Indigene. Mataro + Shiraz.
9. 2012 Mataro. Young block: 40 years old.
10. 2012 Shiraz. Old vines. Over 60 years old.
11. 2015 Esprit. Grenache + Mataro.
12. 2015 La Maline. 100% Syrah. Mainly Eden Valley Syrah.
13. 2015 Syrah. Moppa region.
14. White Barrel. Inspired by the white Rioja from Tondonia. Semillon based wine. Solara system kept under the sun.
15. Port. 7 to 8 year old blend. Mataro base.

Peter loves to experiment with Port and Solera system.



DAY 9 - LANGMEIL, Barossa Valley, by Mary

Langmeil is a blend of Barossa's cultural beginnings and world-class winemaking. Established as a trading village in 1842 and now owned and restored by the Lindner family, Langmeil is renowned for its preservation of old vines and old vine winemaking, most notably The Freedom made from what is understood to be the world's oldest surviving shiraz vineyard believed planted in 1843.

The stand out wines for me were:

2014 Orphan Bank Shiraz

It has a ruby center with rose edges. On the palate it is super concentrated and marked by stewed plum with cassis. While it is rich in the mouth with big time concentration, it has a pretty structure with long lean tannins on the finish.

2014 The Freedom Shiraz

Harvested from the oldest vines producing Shiraz in the world. This vineyard, planted in 1843, produces a wine of a deep ruby color with rose edges. On the nose, stewed cassis and roasted plum with spicy notes. In the mouth, ripe blackberry, peppery spices, pronounced tannic structure and vibrant acid.



(all together now) FREEEEEEEEEEEDOOOOOOOOOOOOM!!!!!!











DAY 10 - HENSCHKE, Eden Valley, by Sophie

Henschke is a family-owned, 148-year-old Australian winery.

Johann Christian Henschke planted his first vineyard in the early 1860's. They have implemented a nursery programme to preserve the genetic heritage of the oldest vines. They also practice organic and biodynamic principles.

I was so excited and a little nervous when I got Henschke to write about as it is such an iconic winery. You want to be able to do it justice. Also I wasn't sure what to expect of a winery so famous.

I also hoped it wouldn't disappoint – you know like seeing a really hot guy on tinder and him rocking up looking like your special second cousin Donald.... So I've heard I am not on tinder!

I needn't have been worried. I was smitten from the get go.

Standing in the vineyard in front of the church was pretty special. My fellow pink ladies and I had 'many' photos taken in front of that church.

Then when Stephen started talking I fell in love. The bio dynamic/organic principles of the Henschkes and their passion and dedication is why they are a special and iconic winery not because they have lots of money. The quality speaks for itself.

There wasn't one of the wines we tried I didn't love. The Chardonnay was a revelation.

There is something quite special about being around someone whose family have started something so special. Stephen was so quietly confident about what they do and the wines produce you can't help but be on board.

We almost ran out of time as everyone just wanted to ask Stephen questions and then wanted to buy a wine Of course.

Everyone left that afternoon in love with my tinder date!

Guys I am happy to share.

Julius Riesling 2016

Light, Pale straw in colour, Lime, Citrus, Clean, Slight spice, Green peppercorn

Julius Riesling 2006

Darker yellow, Toasty, Orange, Marmalade, Dried fruit character, Spiced well balanced, Citrus, Clove, Orange peel

Louis Semillon 2014

Semillon vines 60yrs old, Light pale yellow, Grassy, Granny smith apple, Lemon, Clean slate

Croft Chardonnay 2015

Light oak, Stone fruit, Creamy, Nutty, Citrus notes, 30 year old vines, natural ferment

Giles Pinot Noir 2014

Light red hues, light berry cherry, slight pepper, floral, light finish, 25th vintage anniversary vintage 100% whole bunch, mixture of clones

Johann's Garden 2015

70% Grenache, 25% mataro, 5% shiraz, sweet liquorice, raspberry, nutmeg, black pepper, sweet orange, velvety tannins

Cyril henschke 2012

78% cabernet sauvignon, 15% cabernet franc, 7% merlot, dark crimson, blackberry, smokey, savoury, elegant fine tannins

Mount Edelstone shiraz 2014

102 yr old vines single vineyard, first vintage was 1952, oldest single vineyard that has produced a vintage most years, sage, floral, dark plums, blackberry, savoury, silky tannins, lower yield – 25% less than other vineyards

Hill of Grace shiraz 2010

dark, ruby red, oaky, savoury – herbaceous, liquorice, silky tannins

Hill of Grace shiraz 2002

dark blood red, blackcurrant, spices, frankincense, earthy, black plum, dark berries









DAY 10 - YALUMBA, Barossa Valley, by Dorian

Yalumba, means “ land around”, as one of 12 the Australian First Family winery member, owns history over 167 years, also as the oldest consecutive family owned winery in Australian, now chairman by Robert Hill-Smith,. Started with 30-acre parcel of land in 1849 in Barossa planted Shiraz and Mataro. Hill-Smith’s family continue to choose vineyards sites best suited to individual grape varieties: Viognier and Riesling in the cool area like Eden Valley, Chardonnay in the Adelaide Hills, Sparkling in Tasmania, Tempranillo and Shiraz on the Barossa floor, Cabernet Sauvignon in the Coonawarra and Margaret River.

Sustainable viticulture since 1990, all wines were announced vegetarian and vegan friendly as of 2011. Yalumba is the first wine company in the world to receive the Climate Protection Award from the US Environmental Protection Agency, 2007.





Robert Hill-Smith Joined the Busby Tasting

Tasting host : Red winemaker Peter Gambetta

1. Yalumba, Virgilius Viognier 2009

Yalumba Viognier was planted in 1980, is one of the leading viognier play in Australia. There are 11 clones selected by Yalumba nursery. All hand picked, wild yeast fermentation, there are touch of 5% new oak, and spend 9month on lees. Fresh apricot aromas with touch of restrained toasty oak, hint of honey, soft round texture balancing the moderate body, good length. 93

2. Heggies Vineyard Chardonnay 2013

Eden Valley sourced fruit, 41 years old vines chardonnay, Mendoza clone and Dijon Clone. Hand picked and stored in cool room overnight before crush, wild yeast fermentation, absent MLF, 9month on lees, 9 month in barrel and bottle aging respectively, no fining, vegan friendly. Youthful, bright stone fruit, citrus notes, fresh acidity balancing the soft round body, M+ length. 92

3. Heggies Vineyard Chardonnay 2010

4. Good vintage, ripe fruit, melon, peach, touch of vanilla and leesy notes, round and smooth texture. 92



Yalumba museum wines collection

5. Heggies Vineyard Chardonnay 2006
Nutty, toasty, and oyster shell notes, round and moderate texture, long length. 93
6. Heggies Vineyard Reserve Chardonnay 2006
West facing vineyard, Dijon clone only, 27 barrel samples were selected for reserve level from Heggies vineyard chardonnay. Intense white fruit, melon, touch of vanilla, nutty adds some complexity, chalky acidity balancing the moderate body and texture, still very youthful. 95
7. Yalumba The Scribbler 2013, Barossa Cab 55% and Shiraz blend
2013 was an even vintage, 15% new Fr. Oaked used. Sweet dark fruit, black current, cassis, peppery notes, luscious fruit but not too heavy, high and fine grained tannins, 14% abv, good integration on oak, vivid acidity, well balanced wine. 92
8. Yalumba The Signature 2013:
Cabernet blend with Shiraz, 35% new old used. Dark fruit, black olive, herbal notes, and black chocolate, fine grain tannin and ripe, refreshing palate, delicious to enjoy now and able to keep further maturation. 95
9. Yalumba The Signature 2005
Warm vintage, opulent dark fruit, olive, black current, , lifted tobacco, savory notes on plate, lively acidity and well-structured tannin, long... 96+
10. Yalumba The Signature 1999
90% in American oak, 1999 was a cool vintage, small crop, but fruit had good concentration in the end. Fruit are slightly fading, high VA, acidity is too harsh, past it peak. 89

Yalumba Nursery



Started since 2001, Yalumba nursery as the biggest nursery in SA and 2nd largest in Australian. there are total of 1.3 million vines are propagated at the Yalumba, 5% for internal use, and rest sell for other growers, price approx.. Au\$5/vine. It provide specialist varietal, clone selection, and rootstock for Australian wine growers, which is also leading the way with new and emerging grape varieties in Australian by supplying South Rhone and Spanish varieties, in addition, Vermentino, Prosecco, Pinot Gris, Marsanne, Roussanne, also the pioneer of study different Viognier clones.





DAY 10 - TEUSNER and HUTTON VALE, Barossa and Eden Valleys, by Maurice

We met the folks from Teusner, Tracey, Mick and Kym at the Valley Hotel Bar. This was the place that they had their first meeting to decide to create a winery. They have been in business for 15 years and have replaced many of the old uprooted vineyards with Grenache, the grape that was originally planted there. Their focus is making wines that they like to drink, more textural.

While at the hotel bar we tasted a few wines, but most importantly, we learned how to order a proper beer in an Aussie bar. A few rules to keep in mind, never ever turn your glass upside down, unless you are looking for a brawl. There are three sizes you can order. A schooner is 225ml and a pint is 425ml (a bit smaller than a US pint).

Riesling "The Empress" Eden Valley 2016

Dry grown, floral, lees, bright yet textural. Aromas and flavors of melon, grapefruit with a bit of heat. The label was designed around Liz Taylor in the movie Cleopatra

Semillon Barossa Valley Gabrielle 2011

Held in bottle for 5 years before release. Aromas of truffle, petrol, lime, flowers and nutty. Medium body with fresh lively acidity.

Hutton Vale has been around for 150 years. It is the last land still held on to by the Angus Family. John Angus, the father and his children now run the winery. It is located in the wilderness, and feels like "little house on the prairie". His ancestors, purchased the land sight unseen. They were merchant bankers and had to learn how to become farmers. John moved in in the 1960's and although has been asked to sell the property, he feels committed to stay. The Mt. Edelston vineyard was planted in 1912. They had 49 acres devoted to Shiraz. John's father along with Cyril Henschke took over the vineyards in the 1940's. Henschke eventually bought the vineyard in 1973. During the 90's they were grape growers and sold their fruit to Wolf Blass, who won best wine 2 times with their fruit. They began making wine for fun in the late 80's and had their 1st commercial release in 1999. The house, built in the 1840's, was not house, but a stable for horses. They were big into the racing game.

The difference between the Teusner and Hutton vineyards are 150 meters in elevations. The old vines of Hutton Vale are self-regulating, growing low crops with intense fruit. Whereas at Teusner, they have younger vines so it takes a more hands on approach. The Eden Valley takes longer to warm up and cools down quicker than Barossa, thus retaining more acidity.

Teusner Grenache 2011 "Righteous" Moppa vineyard Barossa barossa

12 yr old vineyard with corkscrew trellises. Ruby red color with aromas of cherry, black cherry, floral with a smooth mouth-feel. It has a lifted sour cherry flavor with balanced alcohol.

Hutton Vale Grenache/Mataro Eden Valley 2012

Mataro was peppered throughout the vineyard pick together and co-fermented with Grenache. Dark cherry, floral, licorice, tea, soft smooth sweet fruit, ripe, elegant and savory

Teusner Shiraz "Righteous" Barossa Valley 2012

Chicory, sweet spice, blackberry, cracked pepper, black fruit, jammy and spiced pie finish roasted coffee, oak

Hutton Vale Farm Shiraz Eden Valley 2013

More savory, herbaceous, straw, floral, soft texture, tea, dry tannins, big and chocolate raspberry, licorice.

Teusner "Avatar" Barossay Valley 2014

Made from Grenache, Syrah & Mataro. Red pie, oak, tart red fruit with warm graham cracker, spicy jam, silky tannins.

Hutton Vale Farm Cab Sauv Eden Valley/Barossa Valley '13

Lighter color than gsm with cassis, blackberry, herbaceous, rich mouth-feel, dry tannins, herbal and straw, long tannins in the finish.

Teusner "Joshua" GSM Barossa 2015

Red fruited, leafy, chocolate, smooth tannins, fruit forward with spicy finish, good acidity.







those lamb lollipops though, I still dream about them - ed





DAY 11 - d'ARENBERG, McLaren Vale, by Ian and Sebastien

Ian :

D'Arenberg, and Chester himself are pretty much icons of the Australian wine scene, and deservedly so. While the wines may not be as progressive as some we tasted on the trip, I think they represent a lot that is good about the wines scene in Australia. Genuine care and thought goes into the wines, and the ability to run a winery of that size biodynamically & organically should be an inspiration to many.

Wines – Amazing sites tasting of 2010's

The Fruit Bat- *Sand on limestone. Pepper, fennel, spice. Elegant. 20yr old vines*

The Little Venice- *red/brown earth. Shows richer fruit & more weight on palate. 20yr.*

The Bamboo Scrub- *Inland. Deep sand on clay. Sweet, juicy, med-weight. 20yr*

The Vociferate Dipsomaniac – *red earth on limestone. Earthy, blood, pepper, fennel. 50yr*

The Swinging Malaysian– *sand on sandstone. Flowery elegance, fine tannin, Asian spice. 50yr*

Shipsters Rapture – *grey loam on limestone. South facing, less sunlight. Earthy & floral. 50yr*

JRO Afflatus – *Sand on sandstone. Deep & concentrated. Soot, iodine, iron. 100yr*

The Garden of Extraordinary Delights – *inland. Sand on sandstone. Bright, briar fruit. 50yr*

The Other Side- *limestone & sandstone. Usually tannic. Wine-wood, peaty, chocolate. 100yr*

The Blind Tiger – *sandy soil. Fruit driven, good intensity of flavour. Some woodiness. 90yr*

Tyche's Mustard – *close to the sea. Typically tannic & intense. Coffee, spice, tannic. 20yr*

The Amaranthine – *sand on sandstone with clay. Dense, gutsy, liquorice, spice. 50yr*

The Dead Arm Shiraz – *80% from the previous 12 sites, other 20% from growers. Surprisingly elegant, warm spice, good grip.*

Notes

500ha of organic & biodynamic vineyards. Biggest Bio producer in Australia.

Soils date back 750million years.

Use basket press for whites- can be done in small batches as the grapes come in.

Red loam give the fennel, blood, liquorice flavours, grey loam more earthy.

For 100 points, can anyone remember the name of Chester's hangover pills? Liz? Points...?

(it was Hydrodol - ed)



the d'Arenberg cube nears completion



Sebastien :

The company owns 500 acres of vines all certified organic and biodynamic.

Chester Osborne graduated from oenology school in Australia in 1983 and then decided to go to Europe to do several vintages and learn about winemaking and vineyard management.

Upon his return to Australia he wanted to work with dry vineyards and no longer use chemicals products in the vineyards, he started his organic approach.

Up until 1983 / 84, they used to have no weeds in between rows, the earth was "dead", the vines were lacking roots especially deep in the soil.

In 2009, Chester bought a new crusher, gentler, extracting 20% more juice from the grapes but without the harsh tannin. The style of the d'Arenberg wines changed after this new piece of equipment was brought on board.

They only use large wooden cask, up to 55,000 liter cask. Largest barrel available in Australia: 40,000 liter, made in the USA in the 40's from American oak and originally used in the beer industry, still use today at the winery. No new oak barrels.

Average yield at d'Arenberg: 1.7 ton / ac.

2 tons basket press used. One of the few winery to use 100% basket press, one of the rare ones to use and produce wine at the scale they do. Dry ice is used around the basket press in order to avoid oxidation.

Each fermenter is kept separated. No racking, no filtering, no fining.

Tasted the 12 single vineyards components of the Dead Arm.

Dead Arm, the name comes from the fact that if you drink too much of this wine you would pass out and fall asleep on your side and your arm will become numb after a while.

1. The Fruit Bat vineyard 2010.

No new oak, all old French oak. No oak tannin added to the wine. 22 years old vines. Sandy soil.

2. The Little Venice vineyard 2010.

Limestone, more tannic wine, earthier, more soil expression. South facing vineyard, 22 years old vines.

3. The Bamboo Scrub vineyard 2010.

Formerly known as the Inland vineyard. Bamboo trees are on one side of the vineyards. Deep sand and clay soil. Elegant and fruity. 22 years old vines.

4. The Vociferate Dipsomaniac vineyard 2010.

50 years old vine. Red & brown earth on limestone. Similar soil than Little Venice but different exposition. Fresh, earthy wine with some notes of licorice.

5. The Swinging Malaysian vineyard 2010.

Vineyard located on the right end side of the road when you drive up to the winery. 50 years old vines. Sandy soil on sandstone.

6. Shipster's Rapture vineyard 2010.

50 years old vines. Cooler site, grey loam soil. Vineyard planted in the late 1880's. The wine has notes of mint, earth and chocolate.

7. J.R.O Afflatus vineyard 2010.

Joseph Rowe Osborne: Chester's grandfather. 100 years old vines. The most complex wine thus far.

8. The Garden of Extraordinary Delights vineyard 2010.

Deeper sand soil. 50 years old vines.

9. The Other Side vineyard 2010.

Vines planted in 1919. Most tannic wine of all so far. Aromas of cacao, mocha and coffee.

10. The Blind Tiger vineyard 2010.

Vineyard planted in 1926, named after a speakeasy in the USA operating during the prohibition.

11. Tyche's Mustard vineyard 2010.

Vineyard situated 4kms from the sea. Tyche is the goddess of fortune. The land is 80 acres large and 75 acres are planted with vines.

12. The Amaranthine vineyard 2010.

Vineyard planted in 1968. Fullest body of all, bigger tannin.

13. The Dead Arm 2010.

Has a 80% of some of the 12 wines mentioned above as well as 20% from grapes from contracted growers.

All 12 single vineyards wines are A\$100 / bottle retail price in Australia. The Dead Arm is A\$65 / bottle.





90, still got it

DAY 11 - WIRRA WIRRA, McLaren Vale, by Mary and Fredrik

Mary:

Wirra Wirra Vineyards was originally established in 1894 by known South Australian eccentric and cricketer Robert Strangways Wigley. The winery prospered in its early days, producing many wines including a much acclaimed Shiraz, which was exported to England and the Empire until his death in 1926. The winery ran into disrepair and was eventually abandoned. In 1969 under the watchful eye of the late Greg Trott and his cousin Roger, the winery was rebuilt from the remnants of two walls and some slate fermenting tanks. As with all subsequent Trott endeavours, it was the sheer magnitude and unlikeliness of the project that made it so attractive. Greg Trott and Robert (Bob) Strangways Wigley never met. Trott, who rebuilt the winery in 1969, wasn't born when the founder of Wirra Wirra Mark 1 passed away. But they shared much in common. A love of the game of cricket is probably a good place to start. Wigley represented his State in the game and in his time was deemed to be one of the great authorities on the subject. Trott never reached such lofty heights, but dreamed of representing his country (see The 12th Man) and went to the extreme of converting the hallway in his house into a cricket pitch, complete with creases marked on the floor and stumps painted on the end wall. Did we also mention that they were both rather eccentric...

Winemakers:

When you speak with Smithy, Tom and Kelly about their winemaking philosophy, there is a continuing theme of "letting the fruit shine". They want our wines to look bright and lively in the glass and reflect the site or vineyard that spawned them. The fruit source is paramount, whether it is from the old vines on our estate, or from our loyal band of growers across McLaren Vale and the Adelaide Hills. That's why Smithy spends so much time in the vineyards. At the height of vintage, he is out and about for as much as 50% of his time walking between the rows, tasting fruit and talking with growers to time the harvest to the minute. When the fruit is in, wines such as the 12th Man Chardonnay give the team a chance to flex their winemaking muscle, while others like the Lost Watch Riesling will be best left to their own devices. The only certainty is that when it comes to Church Block, everyone feels the weight of expectation to "get it right"*. *Internally referred to as "Don't \$#@! it up!"

VISIT

This was a really fun visit. We blended, launched, rang bells, mic dropped and laughed a lot. The wines were fantastic but the people made the whole experience even better!

WINES

Wirra Wirra "The Original Blend" 2015 Grenache Shiraz

70% Grenache, 30% Shiraz. Garnet color to ruby edges. On the nose, lead with stewed black fruit and acidic brightness. In the mouth it has a very vibrant texture with *v e r y p r e t t y* stewed plum and macerated blackberries. Long elegant finish with lean tannic structure.

Wirra Wirra "The Absconder" 2015 Grenache

Garnet color with rose edges. Stewed blackberry and cassis on the nose with bright acid in the mouth with notes of bright blackberry, brewed tea and savoriness. On the finish it is a little hot, with good tannic structure and long lasting.

Wirra Wirra "The Dead Ringer" 2014 Cabernet Sauvignon... Called Angulus when made in AU

Vibrant violet color with ruby edges. Dusty rose, bright cranberry and heat in the nose. Real high note acid with ripe blackberry, mouth-coating tannin is super prevalent.

Wirra Wirra "The Dead Ringer" 2006 Cabernet Sauvignon

Intense ruby color with rusty edges. In the nose, intense concentration of stewed black fruit and herbs. In the mouth it leads with tannin and acid with good structure and bright black fruit in the background.

Wirra Wirra "Catapult" 2015 Shiraz

Dense ruby color with rose edges. On the nose, brewed tea and stewed black plum and cassis. Ripe black berry and macerated blue fruits. Almost salty quality to the finish.

Wirra Wirra "Woodhenge" 2014 Shiraz

Dense violet color with ruby edges. Tons of more intense color than Catapult. On the nose, tea with alcohol and voluptuous fruit notes. Intense brewed tea in the mouth with stewed blackberry and intense tannin and structure.

Wirra Wirra "Scarce Earth Whaite Old Black Single Vineyard" 2014 Shiraz

Dense violet color with ruby edges. Heat and spice in the nose with underlying blackberry notes. Very giving in the mouth with tons of stewed plum and roasted blackberries. Black pepper spice, salinity and wood tannin. High note acid on the finish. 50 case production

Wirra Wirra "RSW" 2014 Shiraz

Named after Robert (Bob) Strangways Wigley. Dense violet color with ruby edges. On the nose, stewed cassis and plum with tons of spice. In the mouth, roasted blackberry and brewed tea with bright acid and grippy tannic structure.



Fredrik:

We had a great day at Wirra Wirra in McLaren Vale...

We started the day by visiting the wine cellars and then after that , we went to the barrel room and divided us in 2 teams to make a PERFECT Church block 2014 that consist of Cabernet Sauvignon, Shiraz and Merlot.

The teams had to blend the best/perfect church block by blending these 3 grapes..

My Team, Dingos in the Vale was not that team the won... but it was great fun.



The winning team: don't remember the total blend but it was close to the original.



Back to the the tasting room we tasted:

- 2015 Original blend that are 70% Grenache and 30% Shiraz
- 2015 Absconder Grenache
- 2014 Dead Ringer Cabernet Sauvignon
- 2006 Dead Ringer Cabernet Sauvignon
- 2015 Catapult Shiraz
- 2014 Woodhenge Shiraz
- 2014 Old Block Shiraz
- 2014 RSW Shiraz

All the wines are Really good but for me the one that stood out was the 2006 Dead Ringer Cabernet Sauvignon, maybe because the 2016 were harvested a little bit more early..

And today it full balanced and lots of spices and herbs...

After the tasting we went out to the catapult...

And as a tradition we had a competition more, of shooting pumpkins with the catapult...

And it not a small one.

We had a great day at Wirra Wirra





#1 DUST THE SHOULDERS



#2 DAB



#3 DROP THE MIC



DAY 11 - RUSSELL'S PIZZA NIGHT, McLaren Vale, by Sophie

Noon, Brash Higgins, Inkwell, Chalk Hill, Bekkers, Battle of Bosworth, Ministry of Clouds, Gemtree, Hickenbotham (by Yangarra)

If I ever open a restaurant I want one like Russell's Pizza. Funky chairs, leather couches, bric a brac everywhere, homely and all topped off with yummy pizza....

Ideally I would have many different wine makers to hand to entertain and keep everyone in delicious wines. But hey you can only be that lucky once.

Firstly I will say this was the one time did introduce myself first. Just saying!

As this was my note taking night I had my lovely assistant mary taking my photos. I would like to take her everywhere with me but 'apparently' she has to go back to America. Rude!

You know you are onto a good thing when American and charming English crudeness and charming American brashness (Myself and mary) is met with an equal amount of sass and sarcasm. We knew tonight would be hilarious.

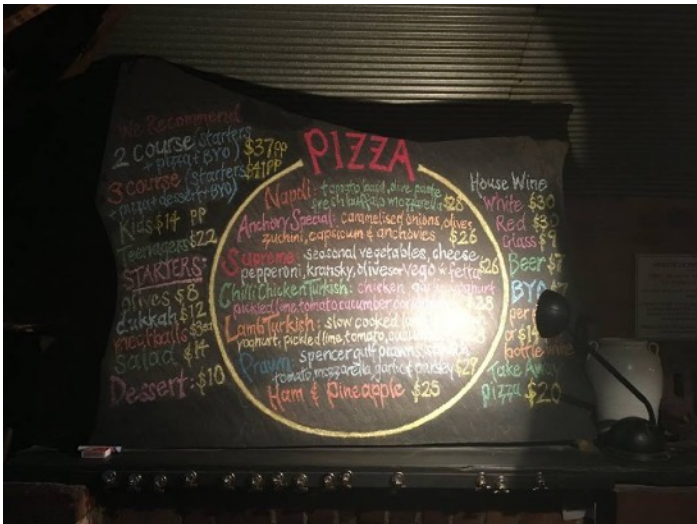
In Between the talk of cricket (for my benefit, although I know jack shit about it), offending an asian nation by wearing a green and gold Australian hat (I think that was something to do with being a pimp or your mother being a prostitute), viognier not tasting of vomit and the constant dropping of the c bomb (you know you have made friends if this is allowed) we ran around and tried some delicious wines.

This was the most like a traditional tasting with lots of producers all being lined up. It worked really well and it was lots of fun and was really relaxed running around tasting.



I loved seeing the different styles and personalities side by side. Seeing the ZBO alongside the Noon wines and a fiano alongside a traditional shiraz showed the diversity and brilliance of what is going on in Australian at the moment.

Once the pizzas came out everyone's focus shifted to them and the pizza wines.... Soooo yummy! Home to bed to get up for squidding early the next morning!





DAY 12 - SQUID FISHING, McLaren Vale, by Dorian and Sophie

Dorian:

I was told by a previous Busby trip friend, he said that there is ONE activity you shouldn't miss on this trip – Squid fishing. Since then I was so excited about that... There were three wineries were hosting us after the Russell's Pizza night:

Joch Bosworth from Battle of Bosworth

Mike Brown mike from Gemtree

Toby Bekkers from Bekkers

After 11 days super intensive visits and tasting, we were told to meet at 5:30am for squid fishing... 5am, I was really struggling, to go or not to go.... It was cold, dark, windy, bleary-eyed, a shivering body jumped into the car, then we were told by Joch that the water wave might be too rough to fish...



Several experienced fishermen discussing the fishing plan

In reality, here is what happened:

- 5:50am, Aldinga beach: start drinking ice cold beer; I still don't understand this from my Chinese drinking culture!



- 6am : International refugees were on the cars eating m&m and Tim (Tim Tam not Tim Wildman MW), covering towel courtesy by Mike from Gemtree



➤ 6:30am: first fish was caught



➤ 6:40am: 2nd fish was caught, and many many more... as many or size that you wish...



It was such efficient (E-Fishing) morning, we caught so many big fish, and they all can look exactly the same. (Different fish can be available but will cost Tim another \$9...), then fish news went to Chinese social media wechat, here is part of moment to share, most people comment: great team, great catch 😊. (I just love this - ed)



And, the people who went on fishing, we earned 500 points. (James Busby Travel Point System)

END! But want to continue...

Sophie:
Squidding morning
Sparrow fart!

No ones alarm should ever go off this early and you should never see this time of the day unless you are still up from the night before.

First lesson of the day....
Never listen to Tim 'no it wont be cold, and it will be best to wear shorts.....
well Tim It is fricking cold and I dutifully did as I was told, am in shorts and am freezing

Second lesson
Bundy and coke and mars bars are the grossest yet best breakfast ever

Third lesson
Not going squidding was a blessing

Fourth lesson
getting up early to see the sun rise made it all worth it

fifth lesson
fish apps are genius and can fool the smartest of people (liz) but only for a short time

sixth lesson
coffee saves lives







DAY 12 - YANGARRA, McLaren Vale, by Young

On Wednesday 26th, second day in McLaren Vale region, we visited biodynamic wine farm Yangarra for the first tasting in the morning. Located in the north eastern corner of McLaren Vale, Yangarra is blessed with 100 ha vineyard in 35 individual blocks. Organic farming started in 2008 and got certified organic and biodynamic by ACO in 2012.

Upon our arrival, newest vintage Pet'Nat was served alongside with freshly ground coffee and hot bun sandwiched with bacon/eggs.



Pet'Nat is short for petillant natural, giving lightly bubbly character from native yeast fermentation without addition or adjustment. 2016 Yangarra Pet'Nat is red fruit driven, youthful and pleasant, with vibrant freshness cutting through the bacon oiliness. Perfect match!

Peter Fraser led us into the winery while expressing his satisfaction with the berry sorting table. Instead of manual or optical selection, Yangarra chose to have the function of bouncing berries to spread them out, when the measurement of weight automatically start. Any berry not up to the required weight will be blown off.

Egg-shaped fermenter is another exciting experiment going on here in Yangarra. People here is not short of ideas and motivations. Apart from a dozen of ceramic egg fermenters along the wall, stainless steel egg was also installed and tried. The conclusion so far is that the impact of material difference is neglectible. What matters more is the egg shape which provides vortex as well as different oxygen ingress parameters compared with oak and stainless steel.



The plantings of Yangarra includes Grenache, Shiraz, Mouvedre, Cinsault, Roussance, Viognier, Picpoul etc, but what is most well known is its devotion to bush vine Grenache production from single vineyard. To my great delight, the tasting today focused exactly on this theme, listed below:

- Yangarra Estate Vineyard Old Vine Grenache 2014
- Yangarra Estate Vineyard Ceramic Egg Grenache 2014
- Yangarra Estate Vineyard High Sands Grenache 2014
- Yangarra Estate Vineyard High Sands Grenache 2013
- Yangarra Estate Vineyard High Sands Grenache 2012
- Yangarra Estate Vineyard High Sands Grenache 2006



The fruit in 06 is getting a bit tired. What showed best for me today are the Ceramic Egg Grenache 2014 and single vineyard High Sands Grenache 2012.

The former presented medium intensity aromas of subtle herbaceous, mineral, opening up sour cherry, cumin seeds, less fruity than the previous 'Old Vine' sample. On palate, it gave sweet sour cherry entry, more marked iodine, salty savory long finish. Vibrant fresh mid-palate, full of energy. Med body, moderate abv, med+ length, firmly structured, interesting and charming.

The later was much more challenging. The appreciation demands much better trained palates and more patience to the detailed and subtle evolvement in the glass.

This wine started with nearly muted nose with not much fruit going on. Drying tannins. Not obviously appealing in the first few minutes. But if one is patient enough to taste it three times in 20 minutes, it's impossible not to notice the amazing development in the glass. The locked-in life gradually woke up, increasingly releasing energy and opening up flavors.

I've been noticing this phenomenon in various good samples of biodynamics wines, presenting challenge and excitement at the same time to the tasters. A fast run-through potentially leads to misjudgment of this sort of wine which takes time to unfold what it has to offer.

A vineyard tour followed the tasting. Relevant topics of pests/diseases, as well as pruning on these old bush vines in High Sands single vineyard etc, were thoroughly discussed. Without easy resort to the artificial chemicals as a certified organic/biodynamics grower, Yangarra has come up with different practices to apply natural food chain and resources to combat the vineyard problems, which is absolutely fascinating.

According to Yangarra, the estate has seen immense vineyard changes and quality improvement since farming organically in 2008 and biodynamic in 2012. It takes immense courage, dedication and vision to make this decision, but the tasting has strongly proved that the Nature doesn't lie. Full respect to the Nature results in wines representing a true sense of place, which is exactly the highlights of today's visit to Yangarra Estate Vineyard.

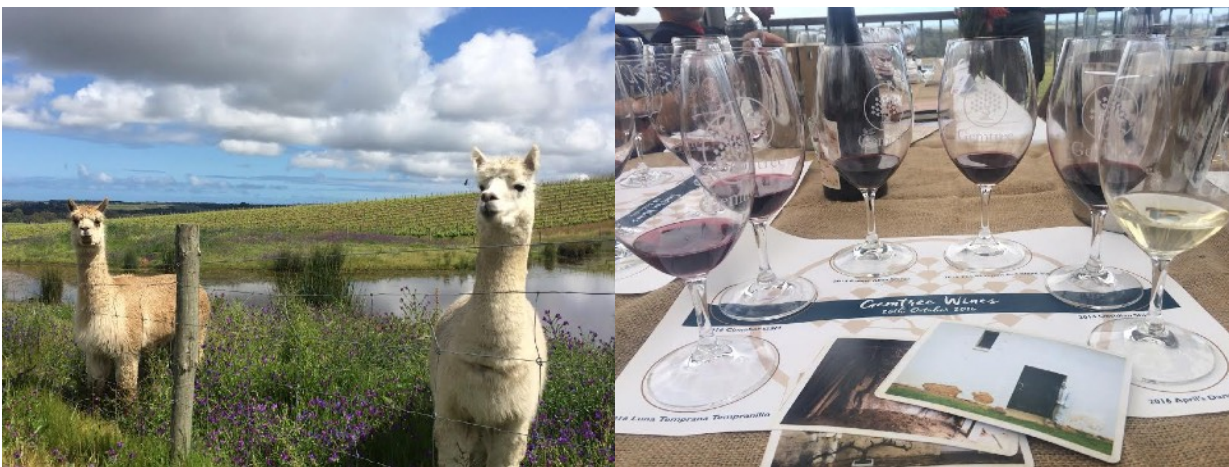




DAY 12 - GEMTREE, McLaren Vale, by Liz

One thing I didn't expect to see on this visit was the amount of great biodynamic viticulture. Big and small, there were so many wineries using either organic or biodynamic practices, it was great to see! One of the most clear examples we saw for biodynamics was Gemtree, who has been steadfast bio since 2008. They started the process of transitioning in 2005/2006 when they became inspired and they fully believe that bio is the best way to create clear vineyard expression within a wine.

We went on a beautiful walking tour of their vineyards, where we also spotted a few Alpacas. Now, in our tour, we affectionately refer to the Alpacas as "Lamb-Giraffes" courtesy of our French compatriot, David. On the very first day of the tour we saw an Alpaca, which is something he'd just never seen, so his only thought was that it must be a "lamb-giraffe". I will still never think of them the same.....



After the tour we went back around for the tasting, and I learned a lot about biodynamics that I didn't know before. It was great learning about soil composition and what the parameters are. Also, this was the very first time that I had actually been able to hold a cow horn filled with manure, which was oddly exciting...a bit stinky, but exciting for a nerd like myself. As for the wines:

2016 "Luna Temprana" Tempranillo

2016 "Cinnabar" G.S.M.

2014 "Ernest Allan" Shiraz

2015 "The Phantom" Red Blend

2014 "Obsidian" Shiraz

2016 "April's Dance"



STAR OF GREECE LUNCH by Liz

Being a California girl born and raised, I relish any chance to go to the beach. I don't think I've ever lived more than 10 miles away from it. So imagine my joy and amazement when we pop out of the bus, right onto the water at this beautiful restaurant called "Star of Greece". Apparently it's Kylie Minogue's favorite place in McLaren Vale?! (yes, I may have made that up - ed) Here's a gratuitously large photo of the "Star of Greece"





Danish bacon (with an Irish sausage)





DAY 12 - BATTLE OF BOSWORTH, McLaren Vale, by Sebastien

We were greeted by Joch and Louise.

The name of the winery comes from a text from Shakespeare. The vineyard is on a former almond farm. The area was mainly a mix farmed area with some mining business (slate). This is a young soil, mainly alluvial. Barley used to be grown on the property. 1st certified organic barley in Australia, it was used to make whisky.

The vineyards have been certified organic for the past 21 vintages. Since 1995.

They grow: shiraz, cabernet sauvignon, Semillon, pinot noir, chardonnay, pinot gris, sauvignon blanc, graciano, touriga nacional and viognier.

Joch: "People use conventional agriculture because they fear to lose their crop. Moving on to organic scares people".

Wine tasted:

- 2016 Muscat. 100% Muscat de Frontignan
- 2016 Touriga Nacional. The Touriga is planted on Chardonnay rootstock as the chard rootstock is not prone to diseases. Same for the Mataro and the Graciano, all grafted onto chard rootstock.
- 2016 Mataro.
- 2014 Shiraz. Chante Clair
- 2012 Cabernet Sauvignon. White Boar. Lots of skin tannin. Amarone style cab sauv / shiraz with 15% alc.
- 2014 Ding's Block Shiraz.

Tour of the vineyards on the back of Joch's tractor, seating on pews. Joch is passionate about his vineyards. Especially the rootstocks work he has been doing as well as tending the rows of vines.

BBQ in their garden with fresh, local, organically sourced ingredients. The owners of Gemtree joined us over dinner.

Joch was very proud to show us his new toy: a brand new drone.





DUST.....

.....DAB.....



.....DROP THE MIC!





Oscar - best dog in the world



DAY 13 - SHAW & SMITH, Adelaide Hills, by Mary and Fredrik

Mary:

Michael Hill Smith AM MW: Vintage 1954

In 1988 Michael Hill Smith became the first Australian to pass the Master of Wine examination and was awarded the inaugural Madame Bollinger Tasting Medal the same year. In 1989 he established Shaw + Smith in the cool Adelaide Hills with his winemaker cousin Martin Shaw and specializes in Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc, Shiraz and Pinot Noir. In 2011 following a road trip to Tasmania Michael and Martin brought the highly rated Tolpuddle Vineyard near Hobart. This 20 hectare vineyard is planted to Chardonnay and Pinot Noir and is considered by many to be one of the great single vineyards of Australia.

27 vintages, winery built in 2000

Michael & Martin: OG, New MW David & Adam, winemaker, of new guard of team.

Winebow/Henry is distributor

WINES

Shaw & Smith Sauvignon Blanc 2016

Best known for this, available first. Consistently sells out. Largest production of all of the wines made.

Tinges of straw coloring with watery edges. Vibrant citrus in the nose with grapefruit, lemon and lime peel. Tart grapefruit, lemon and freshness in the mouth with popping acid and a vibrant mouthfeel. Light, super fresh, bone dry & lively.

Shaw & Smith M3 Chardonnay 2014

Savory sophisticated chardonnay built around acidity. Lees time, moving to larger barrels, minimal battonage. Aim is freshness. 2015 had low yield and bad conditions at flowering. Great balance, great natural acidity.

Hay colored with watery edges. Macerated green apple and supple citrus with a sense of creaminess. Very pretty texture in the mouth with a vibrant pop of granny smith apple with a bone dry finish.

Shaw & Smith M3 Chardonnay 2015

Probably one of the best vintages that has been seen. Fine growing season.

Hay colored with watery edges. Extremely creamy in the nose with notes of lemon curd. In the mouth, opulent texture, vibrant bright lemon and grapefruit in the mouth with a bone dry finish and high note acid.

Shaw & Smith Lenswood Vineyard Chardonnay 2015

Straw colored with golden flecks and watery edges. Definite the creaminess of malo in the nose with bright lemon notes. Bone dry in the mouth with citrus as lemon, lemon pithe and grapefruit in the mid palate with a long finish. Texturally very lush

Shaw & Smith Pinot Noir 2014

First vintage of Pinot Noir was 2005, invited to IPNC to speak and show wines.

Garnet color with watery edges. Very perfumed in the nose with notes of bing cherry and spice. In the mouth, the weight is quite light with supple tannic structure and bright black cherry, bing cherry and black raspberry. Long lean structured finish.

Shaw & Smith Shiraz 2014

Try not to filter. Started using basket presses.

Deep violet color with garnet edges. Tart roasted blackberry on the nose with a touch of mulling spice. Tart blackberry and cranberry with brewed black tea and supple tannin. A touch of heat in the mouth and surprisingly elegant body & weight.

Shaw & Smith Shiraz 2015

Vibrant violet color with ruby edges. In the nose, ripe blackberry and roasted cassis, subtle mulling spices. In the mouth, bright and lifted black fruits: blackberry and boysenberry with a touch of cranberry and brewed tea. Very pretty wine with surprising pop.

Shaw & Smith Balhannah Vineyard Shiraz 2014

Inky violet color with ruby edges. In the nose, stewed fruits: blackberry, boysenberry and cranberry with spice underpinnings. Very juicy in the mouth with roasted blackberry, black tea and wood spice. Mouth coating but with a structure tannic, bone-dry finish

Tolpuddle - Tasmania.

"If ever a new winery was born with blue blood in its veins, Tolpuddle would have to be it."

James Halliday Australian Wine Companion 2014

Tolpuddle Vineyard was established in 1988 and it took its name from the Tolpuddle Martyrs: English convicts transported to Tasmania for forming an agricultural union (1837/38). The leader of the Martyrs, George Loveless, served some of his sentence working on a property near Richmond, part of which is now Tolpuddle Vineyard.

The vineyard is planted with mature Chardonnay and Pinot Noir vines, facing north-east, and sloping gently up from Back Tea Tree Road. The soil is light silica over sandstone and of moderate vigor, ensuring well-balanced vines producing grapes of great flavor and intensity.

In 2006 Tolpuddle Vineyard won the inaugural Tasmanian Vineyard of the Year award, reflecting the performance of this unique and distinguished site.

Martin Shaw and Michael Hill Smith MW purchased the vineyard in 2011 and are fully committed to seeing Tolpuddle Vineyard recognized as one of Australia's great single vineyards. 50% Chardonnay, 50% Pinot Noir, 50% whole bunch on the PN. First commercial production in 2012.

Now grapes are brought back here since 2014 to finish the wine. 300 kilos bins onto reefer trucks and boats.

Tolpuddle Vineyard Chardonnay 2014

Vibrant hay color with watery edges. Elegant and restrained nose of lemon pithe and vibrant acid notes. In the mouth, very high note acid with a weighted pretty texture with notes of bright lemon, lemon pithe and bright white grapefruit and tart granny smith apple.

Tolpuddle Vineyard Pinot Noir 2015

Ruby color with watery edges. In the nose, bright black cherry and roasted cranberry. Dancing acid in the mouth with red cherry and brewed tea in the mouth with a lifted tannic finish.



Fredrik:

We started at the beautiful vineyard in Adelaide Hills with some samples for the barrels of 2016 Chardonnay and 2016 Pinot noir and that always kickstart one at 09.30 in the morning. Shaw and Smith have in one vineyard made high density by cutting the vine and prune through the soil, I seen that before but not of the same reasons. (the technique is called "layering" - ed)



We went back to the winery and had a tasting together with Michel Smith MW back for 1988

We tasted:

- 2016 Sauvignon blanc
- 2014 Chardonnay M3
- 2015 Chardonnay M3
- 2015 Lenswood Chardonnay
- 2015 Tolpuddle Chardonnay, Tasmania

All the Shaw and Smith wine are very good and it looks like the last years it got more balanced and fresh.

The one for me that stood out was 2014 Chardonnay 2014...

- 2014 Pinot Noir
- 2014 Shiraz
- 2015 Shiraz
- 2014 Balhannah Shiraz

DAY 13 - LUNCH at BK WINES with MURDOCH HILL and NGERINGA, Adelaide Hills





by Sophie

I love London but i often have these moments of 'what the hell am I doing living here?' why am I walking the streets with millions of people daily, never looking anyone in the eye or smiling at strangers. As a consequence of this I would love to live in the middle of no where in beautiful surroundings, with my friends and family, cook outside, drink delicious wines and do good meaningful stuff.

So today was like walking into my daydream. It made me so super happy to know that is possible. It was all about Lovely people, working hard, supporting each other and making delicious wines.

These guys in the basket range of Adelaide hills are the hottest thing in Australian wine making currently. Everyone is talking about what they are doing and it is easy to see why.

We started out on a weird kind of speed wine tasting/speed dating, which we immediately messed up going the wrong way around with us being without a tasting home..... typical!

It became clear starting with erin from ngeringa (biodynamic from the get go) these guys are doing some really funky exciting stuff and also by following the bio dynamic processes from the start something they are shaping the future of Australian winemaking.

We all really loved the Murdoch hill wines. What the hell was that pinot meunier/ pinot noir all about.... And the 100% pinot meunier, that was a revelation. Delicious.

The bk wines pet nat has started a total obsession.

Lunch was again amazing and having Brendan and Kirstyn's family around was very special. their kids were never going to be anything but very cool and Kirstyn's mum was lovely.

Loved the skate ramp adventure.... There is video evidence of tim stacking it quite spectacularly if anyone wants it!

My favourite americans found the trampoline.... Not sure how we got them off that.



It looked like we had lost young to the very cute Michael downer point.....



at one

Perhaps she



sabotaged

the bus

at the end of the afternoon so stay a little longer..... or maybe I subconsciously did as I didn't want to leave.

It became
f a r c e

like a
trying





3 ticks



to move the very stuck bus at the bottom of the driveway.

'The men' found wood, made ramps, got tractors and trucks, yelled a lot of advice well not all the men actually, tim crossed the road and took photos of the kerfuffle

A hilarious end to a very special daydream!





Wayne giving us our Top Gear moment



DAY 13 - THE LANE, Adelaide Hills, by Maurice

We arrived in the evening to the Lane Vineyard located in the Adelaide Hills. We were greeted by Marty Edwards and Michael Schurers. The Lane was started by Marty's parents in 1993. It is located on Mount Lofty, one of the coldest and wettest parts of the hills. The vineyard is planted with Sauvignon Blanc, Shiraz, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, and Pinot Grigio. They doubled their planting in 2001. We were greeted with a glass of Louis Lane Rose Sparkling made with Pinot Noir, it had just been bottled.

The Lane has 3 tiers of wine. We tasted their first tier and then went into the winery and had a few barrel samples. The winery, cellar and restaurant were very clean and very organized. The wines tasted clean and were a reflection of the people and place. After our tasting of their mid-tier wines we were treated to a delicious dinner in their restaurant. During dinner we tasted the top tier reds.

The Lane Sauvignon Blanc 2016

Low aroma intensity compared to other SBs. Aromas of white apricot, currant leaf, very little pyrazine, limestone, citrus and clean finish.

Pinot Gris 2016

Ripe pear and yellow apple, lean and clean, phenolic bitterness. They want to create a PG in between Alsace and Italian PG.

Chardonnay "Block 1A" 2016

"A" stands for all. 7 parcels and blend of all 7 parcels. Pear, apple, honeysuckle, has weight, small % new oak, creamy, rich, fruit forward wine with candied fruit, crisp and fresh.

Rose of Shiraz, Pinot Noir, Merlot 2016

Pale dry, watermelon, strawberry, clean crisp sweet fruit. Shiraz and Merlot was picked for rose, Pinot was sanguis.

Shiraz "Block 5" 2015

Sweet bread, graham cracker, bluefruit, red berry, cherry, vanilla, med body, soft tannins.

Semillon Barrel Sample: Sweet fruit, candied, citrus clean crisp. Should be able to age well.

Gathering Semillon/Sauvignon Blanc 2105

Citrus, green herbs, lemongrass, fat, rich, melon and cantaloupe with crisp finish

Chardonnay "Beginning" 2015

Creamy, apple, honeysuckle, full weight, fresh, candied fruit, forward wine with freshness.

Chardonnay "RG" 2012

Handpicked, whole bunch new oak named after parents.

Toasty, creamy, tree fruit, wines are fresh and clean. They show a reflection of the winery and people.

Shiraz "Block" 2014

Highest 450 m hand pick, portion of whole bunch, old puncheons.

Fruit forward blue fruit, violets, raspberry, smooth tannins, spiced oak smooth, Black tea

19th Meeting Cabernet Sauvignon

Raspberry, blue fruit, smooth rich oaky, elegant, clean.

JC Cab/Shiraz 2012

Named after grandfather from the best barrels. Long maceration new oak.

Spicy, peppery, raspberry, cassis, plum, juicy, opulent, candied fruit, oak is tied in, vanilla, clean.



DAY 14 - PENFOLDS, Adelaide, by Ian

People- Kim Schroeter – white winemaker, and Matt Woo –fortified winemaker.

No pets apparent.....

Tasting held at Magill Estate, with the Grange Cottage on the grounds. Visit started with a tour of the cottage, then the winery & cellars (spot the Helen Keller cask) then into boardroom #10 for the tasting.



Wines

Bin 51 Eden Valley Riesling 2015 – *bone dry, gently aromatic. citrus fruit, floral.*

Max's Chardonnay Adelaide Hills 2015 – *9mts in oak, of which 33% new. Yeast stirring every 2/3 weeks. Ripe apple & melon. Obvious oak influence.*

Bin 311 Tumbarumba (NSW) Chardonnay 2015 –*vineyards are at the foot of the snowy mountains. 9 mts in (90%) old oak. Model is Chablis, shows slate, mineral character.*

Reserve Bin A Chardonnay Adelaide Hills 2015 – *9mts in both new (40%) and 1yr (40%) French oak. Good concentration & length. Oak well integrated.*

Yattarna Chardonnay 2014 (Tasmania 73%, Adelaide Hills 27%) 8mts in new (70%) and 1 yr French oak. *Finely textured, linear with super length. Pretty classy actually.*

Cellar Reserve Grenache Barossa Valley 2002 – hot, porty aromas, dried fruit, spicy. Slightly less (over) mature on the palate.

St. Henri Shiraz 2010 Multi Regional (Barossa, McLaren, Coonawarra, Adelaide Hills, Wrattenbully, Clare Valley) -Dark, opaque. *Lifted spice aroma, sweet dark fruit, then long savoury finish of dark chocolate, coffee, pepper.*

RWT Barossa Valley Shiraz 2012. 16 mts in new (75%) and 1yr (25%) French hogsheads. *Opaque, chocolate and blackberry fruit. ripe & lush with some tannic grip on the palate. Very spicy/peppery finish.*

Grange 2010 96% Shiraz 4% Cab. Barossa, Clare, Adelaide, McLaren & Magill Estate. 17 mts in new American hogsheads. *Looks youthful, very inviting nose of ripe (but not sweet) fruit. surprisingly elegant on the palate, very long, lots of warm, aromatic spice – mace, nutmeg, cinnamon etc.*

Block 42 Kalimna Cabernet Sauvignon Barossa 2004. *Big, rich & smooth. Deeply flavoured of blackcurrant, chocolate, showing some age. Bloody expensive though.*

Bin 620 Cabernet Shiraz Coonawarra 2008. 51:49 blend. *Warm, rich, medicinal (menthol, eucalyptus) Good wine, but would seriously struggle to justify the \$1200 price tag.*

Great Grandfather Rare Tawny. *average age 30yr, blend includes -but not limited to- Mataro, Grenache, Shiraz. Figs, dates & dried fruit but not as sticky or sweet as expected. Last line reads "pretty f**king tasty".*

Random Penfolds notes

Magill Estate is the closest working winery to a city anywhere in the world.



Penfolds produced a 'medicinal' wine, fortified with iron, until the 1950's.

Have 2500ha under vine from Clare Valley to Mt Benson, and another 3000ha under contract.

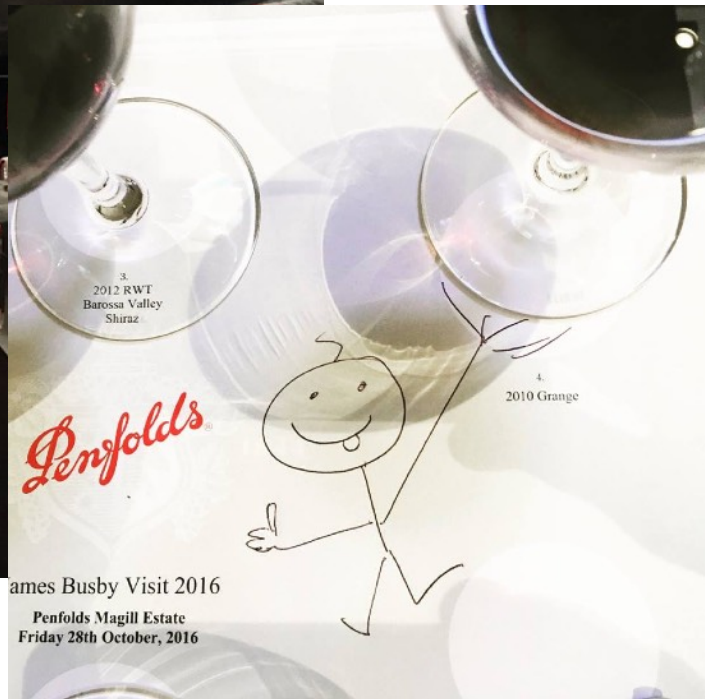
Penfolds Grange-

First vintage 1951

hidden vintages 1957,1958,1959

100% Shiraz vintages – '51, '52', '63, '99, 2000, 2011.





James Busby Visit 2016
Penfolds Magill Estate
Friday 28th October, 2016



DAY 14 - CLELAND WILDLIFE
PARK, Adelaide Hills, by Mary

Cleland Wildlife Park was an amazing opportunity to see some of the animals that call Australia home. It was absolutely the coolest to see kangaroos hopping around and be able to feed them. I suppose that not everything in Australia is trying to kill me ;)

Also... Koalas are super lazy



DAY 14 - OCHOTA BARRELS with JAUMA and GENTLE FOLK, Basket Range, Adelaide Hills, by David and Fredrik

On our last day we had a day spend together with Ochota Barrels, Jauma and Gentle Folk. We started the tasting at Taras at Ochota Barrels in the backyard and then moved on to James at Jauma in the cellar and then up to Gareth at Gentle Folk...

I will say that I never try the wines before, and I am not going to rate the wines and say how it tastes.... BUT I will say this visit was a great experience in all the wines.

The show so much, and express a lot with structure and vibrant.

In Taras back garden we tasted:

- 2016 Gewurtztraminer "Weird berries in the woods"
- 2016 Chardonnay Slint
- 2016 Surfer rosa Grenache

this is possibly my favourite photo of the trip





- 2016 Texture like the sun sector red (Blend of Grenache, Pinot Noir, Gamay, Ponot Meunier, Riesling, Gewurtztraminer and Merlot
- 2016 The Price of Silence Gamay
- 2016 A Forest Pinot Noir
- 2016 Fugazi Grenache
- 2016 Go with the flow Mataro

All the wines are good but the 2016 Fugazi Grenache stood out, but again the wine needs to be tasted, i keep it as Taras says on the gamay label: The price of silence !!!

We went back to James place at jauma and tasted barrel samples...
And had some Pat Nat from barrels with some sprinkled fairy-dust together with that



It's amazing how clean the wines are from James, and there are no sulfur and it is the most clean I tasted

The wines we tasted for dinner at the evening was:

- Rastacondria Rose Grenache
- Mary Lou Semillon (from barrel at the winery)
- Tikka the cosmic cat Grenache/Shiraz
- Shinya san Cabernet Franc
- Helu carbonic Shiraz/ Grenache

The last tasting we had that day was together with Gareth at Gentle Folk...

This wine are so expressive and cool.

When I found out that Gareth started in 2013 and never tried making wine before, it is going to be fun to follow this wines.

The wines we tasted in the barrel room was:

- 2016 Chardonnay
- 2016 Vin de Sofa 85% Pinot Noir, 5% Cabernet Franc, 5% Pinot Grigio and 5% Gewurtztraminer.
- 2016 Syrah
- 2016 Petit Verdot
- 2016 Pinot Noir Village
- 2016 Pinot Noir Fathers Milk together with Taras

- 2016 Ashton Pinot Noir

And after all this tasting that day, we had a dinner at Taras barrel room
Its was good times !!!!





Quentin finally breaks bad on the last night of the trip

EPILOGUE by Mary

The Quokka formerly known as Quentin (aka Sweet Cheeks, Lil' Pumpkin, Mon Amour) is currently bouncing through safe houses within the greater Los Angeles area. He is currently living under an assumed name and may be living under false pretences with a young American girl. The picture here is surveillance footage from a bus he stowed away on.



He is wanted by Australian Authorities for lewd behavior, public intoxication, defacing property with swears words and over all bad taste.



His known hideouts are cellar doors, vineyards and dive bars. Don't let that adorable face fool you, if you see him do not approach as he is known to bite and spit (wine).

His known accomplices are winery dogs, kangaroos and lamb giraffes.

See you in 2017

Same time, same place, new vintages, new faces, same old bad wombats...

