



Welcome to the April 2022
Wine Taste Talk To Your Door pack!

The Short Story- An easy reference to the tasting notes

Wine Page

As a guide to choosing which wine to drink when, the wines in this booklet are listed from lighter to more intense, and white to red.

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Welcome to Autumn. There is a bit of a Victorian leaning in this pack.

Not on purpose, I just found some interesting wines that I wanted to share with you. I trust you will approach with an open mind and enjoy.



Wine Taste Talk...To Your Door

Tasting Note

Wine

2021 Tar and Roses Lewis Riesling

This wine is named after Don Lewis who was winemaking at Mitchelton Wines Nagambie from 1973 to 2004. Later, he and Narelle King started Tar and Roses and travelled to Spain to explore Mediterranean varieties, bringing the knowledge back to the vineyards and winery at Nagambie.

When I worked at Mitchelton, as I left each day, I would often see Don and his wife Jenny walking their little dog through the grounds. Unfortunately, Don passed away in 2017. His contribution to wine in the Nagambie sub region cannot be underestimated and so this Riesling is a fitting tribute.

Narelle King produces this wine under the Tar and Roses label, and she is joining us by zoom on Wednesday 4th May at 7.30pm as our guest winemaker for this pack. Narelle will talk about this wine but also the other wines that she produces and a little of the Tar & Roses backstory.

You may like to save your bottle until then to enjoy during the meeting and ask Narelle more about the wine, not essential though. I will send the zoom link closer to the time.

Region

Central Victoria

Predominantly Nagambie and more specifically Mitchelton vineyard.

Viticulture and winemaking

There is a Lewis Riesling block at Mitchelton, and I will let Narelle talk about that when we catch up.

This Riesling uses more traditional wine making than some of the wines that are in the packs. It is in the style of Riesling that Don would have made. A style that I enjoy and will age well.

The fruit was machine harvested, crushed and pressed using an air bag press, with SO₂ (Sulphur) added to protect the delicate aromatics.

Riesling is a low-key wine to produce, not many fancy winemaking tricks to see here. The wine should be an expression of the fruit and terroir.

The wine was fermented in cold tanks with temperatures ranging from 10 -14°C. After ferment the wines were protein and cold stabilised, to remove any sediment, blended and bottled

The Numbers

13.5% Alcohol, pH 3.05, Acid 6.09g/l, sugar <1.0gm/l

So, What's it Like?

This wine took me straight back to the Blackwood Park Riesling, which is the Mitchelton Riesling label. Unmistakably Riesling with Nagambie terroir. Whilst the lakes around the region help to keep evening temperatures lower, it is still a warmer region than Clare or Eden Valley so expect a difference.

The colour is a pale yellow.

On the nose I found lime lemon musk and floral notes.

The palate brought the lemon to the table, with rounded fruit flavours balanced by crisp acidity. It is showing some aged complexity. Enjoy some Australian winemaking history.

Best Drinking

Now to 2030

Food Match

Seafood in general, oysters of course, pan fried fish with lemon or scallops with prosciutto

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\$26



Wine Taste Talk...To Your Door

Tasting Note

Wine

2021 Nomads Garden Pinot Blanc

Pinot Blanc is a mutation of Pinot Noir where sometimes a vine might produce one white cane and all the others red. Its typical aromas are pear peach almond and lemon. This mutation was then propagated as a separate variety.

The Nomads Garden range of wines comes from the same stable as Eldorado Rd (see Quasimodo below). They have a nomadic approach to sourcing fruit in NE Victoria, including King Valley, Alpine Valleys, Beechworth, Rutherglen and Glenrowan. The main ethos for their wines is low intervention handmade wines, resulting in a true expression of the fruit.

This Pinot Blanc fruit was from Acacia Park in King Valley and the grower is Pat Murtagh. When winemakers develop good relationships with growers, they have access to some fabulous pockets of fruit grown to their specifications.

Region

King Valley NE Victoria

Viticulture and winemaking

Pat the grower planted these vines in the 90's following a trip to Europe. It had been mostly blended into other wines in what is a big Prosecco region. The vineyard is on a hillside away from the warmer valley floor which allows natural acidity to be maintained in the grapes.

The first single variety vintage was in 2017 as a small batch release and it is now a permanent wine in their range.

The fruit was picked in consultation with Pat, at just the right time ensuring the natural pH and flavours were just right. Hand harvested during the night and straight to the winery at Eldorado.

With many white wines the skins are separated from the juice early on, with this wine 75% of the fruit was crushed and whole bunch pressed gently in the wooden basket press and then into tank (stainless steel). The remaining 25% was crushed then had time on skins for 16 hours prior to pressing and then into the same tank. This time on skins extracts phenolics from the skins giving the final wine more texture.

Only natural yeasts indigenous to the grapes were used for fermentation which can take a few days to kick off. During that time the winemakers protected the juice with CO₂ to retain the aromatics and freshness of the wine. If not, spoilage could set in and dull the wine.

The ferments were also kept cool at 17°C again to retain the delicate aromatics of Pinot Blanc. Following fermentation, the wine was placed into oak barrels (I'm thinking older barrels) on yeast lees which brings texture creating the lovely mouthfeel of this wine.

This wine was lightly filtered before bottling in June 21.

The Numbers

12.3% Alcohol

So, What's it Like?

This is a young fresh white wine with plenty of texture, a great combination.

The colour is light gold to almost clear.

The nose is citrus apple and pear.

The palate is lemon with texture on the back palate and it had great length. A hint of grapefruit on the finish. A crisp dry wine with a lot of interest.

Best Drinking

Now to 2024, enjoy it while its young and fresh.

Food Match

When tasting this wine I craved a smoked salmon pasta dish with dill, capers, a little garlic oil and lemon zest. Must get the CFO onto that one.

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\$27



Wine Taste Talk...To Your Door

Tasting Note

Wine

2019 Collector Lamplit Marsanne

Why? Because we could all do with more Marsanne in our lives.

Region

Murrumbateman Canberra. The Collector winery is oddly enough in Collector a small village between Goulburn and Canberra. The fruit for this wine is sourced from Murrumbateman.

Viticulture and winemaking

Following a warm growing season, the fruit was harvested relatively early to retain grape acidity and aromatics. The fruit from a range of clones is sourced from vineyards on lean pink granites and reddish shale loams of the Canberra District.

The fruit was whole bunch pressed and the juice went into French oak and stainless steel. The oak was a mixture of new and seasoned (older previously used oak) from Allier having tighter grain and giving spice notes and Vosges which is still tight grained but not to the same extent. Tighter grained oak is slower to impart oak flavours to the wine.

Each parcel went through malolactic fermentation (MLF) a secondary bacterial fermentation carried out in most reds and some whites. It softens the acids in the wine and adds the buttery notes to whites that we most commonly associate with Chardonnay.

The wine was also aged on yeast lees (dead yeast cells) that imparts even greater complexity. The parcels were blended and bottled in February 2020.

The Numbers

13.3% Alcohol

So, What's it Like?

Mid yellow, golden glints, quite intense right to the margins

The nose is honeysuckle, with white flowers spice and talc with a hint of marzipan and nutty cashew.

The palate is rich and complex buttery and mealy, lemon on the finish. The complex flavours and the natural acidity bring balance to the wine.

Mid weight and full of texture. The wine is an expression of a warmer year and Marsanne with time on oak and full MLF. Don't expect a lightweight and prepare a meal that will match the weight and texture of this wine to make the most of it.

Best Drinking

Now to 2028, this is a white that will age well and develop lovely, aged nuances, although I enjoyed it in its relative youth.

Food Match

Rich seafood chowder, a carbonara pasta or chicken and mushroom casserole.

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\$38



Wine Taste Talk...To Your Door

Tasting Note

Wine

2020 Passing Clouds Macedon Ranges Pinot Noir

I have had a few Pinots in the packs so far, partly because they are delicious, but also great drinking over the summer months. I felt I had to include one for Autumn to go with the forest mushrooms coming into season, or gourmet mushrooms from good providores. We have already been foraging, yum.

This may be the last Pinot for a few months as we venture into bigger reds to match heartier winter fare. So, enjoy.

Full disclosure here, the winemaker Cameron Leith was also studying wine and viticulture with me, as was Justin from Ghost Rock in the last pack.

Cameron, bless him, was always very generous with tastings at our residentials and I enjoyed trying his wines from different sites and using different winemaking techniques. He has since grown the business and moved the winery to Musk in the Macedon ranges. Worth a visit.

Region

Macedon Ranges Victoria

Said to be the coldest grape growing region on the mainland, famous for Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and of course sparkling wines.

Viticulture and winemaking

This fruit is from sites around the Macedon Ranges that Cameron has good relationships with. Namely Paramoor, Denver and Lord Malmsbury they range in altitude from 440-590m above sea level.

Cameron employs bio dynamic and regenerative agriculture at the estate vineyard in Musk.

Following a long ripening period, the fruit was picked on April 7th and 29th just in time to avoid a rain event,

Each block was fermented separately, with around 10% whole bunches in each ferment. A short cold soak of 3 days for extra intensity was carried out prior to yeast inoculation. The ferments were hand plunged twice a day for 14 days. Following pressing, the wine went into French oak Hogsheads, 10% of which were new, for 6 months.

The wine was bottled in October 2021

The Numbers

12.5% Alcohol. This is a cool climate Pinot so you would expect a lower alcohol content.

pH 3.25, TA 8.0, Baume 12.5

So, What's it Like?

This wine is definitely cool climate in style yet with good aroma and flavour intensity. It could be worth a decant, but I found it fine without.

The colour is a light purple/ruby red and clear at the margins.

The aroma was delicious on its own, it has some savoury earthy and mushroom notes leading to beetroot spice and floral.

The palate had cherry and red fruit, with some spice black olive and bay leaf. The acidity was well balanced, and the tannins were supple and just a touch chalky. There was good length to the flavours. The oak is present but very subtle. This wine delivers a lot at this price point.

There is freshness and depth of fruit here that shows what Macedon can do without taking itself too seriously. Enjoy.

Best Drinking

Enjoy it while its young. This is a fresh and approachable Pinot Noir.

Food Match

We tried this with a pork and coriander stir fry with plenty of red capsicum and a hint of Chilli and it went really well. The CFO has chosen a duck with fig recipe to pair with this dish. It has a mushroom alternative. See the recipe below.

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\$28 Very good value for the quality of the fruit.

Duck with Fig Sauce and Spinach Risoni

This is a classic autumn dish which we first saw in a WW cookbook (don't judge they work) and will pair beautifully with the Passing Clouds Macedon Ranges Pinot Noir in your pack.

For the duck, if you don't have access to duck at your local providore, we buy Luv a Duck breasts, available at major supermarkets. They are a family-owned Australian business in Nhill in country Victoria well worth supporting.

For Two

2 duck breasts, skin on

2 sprigs fresh rosemary

2 bay leaves

100g risoni

10g butter

100g baby spinach, trimmed

1 small brown onion, finely chopped

3 dried figs (45g), quartered

1 cup (250ml) port wine (substitute red wine or dry sherry due reduce sweetness)

1 cup chicken stock

20g butter to finish



Method

Bring a large pot of salted water to the boil. Whilst waiting, score the skin of each breast being careful not to cut through to the flesh. Then, using either a small sharp knife or your fingers make a little pocket between the fat and flesh of each breast. Stuff this pocket with a rosemary sprig and bay leaf.

Season the breasts with salt and pepper, then gently cook skin down in a fry pan.

This is important, we want to render the fat from the breasts without overcooking them. The pan should be very gently bubbling only, not sizzling and spitting! Once the skin side has browned, about 8-10 minutes, drain off the fat (reserve for duck fat potatoes!), remove the breasts and increase the heat. Pop the breasts back in the pan flesh side down first, brown, then turn over and brown the skin also.

Remove the breasts and keep them warm. Keep the pan on the stove – do not clean it but drain off any further fat from the pan.

While the duck is cooking add the risoni to the boiling water and cook until *al dente*. Drain and place into a bowl with the spinach and butter, toss until fully incorporated then put aside covered to keep warm.

Cook the chopped onion in the frypan until it is clear and soft, add the figs, wine and chicken stock and bring to the boil. Stir with a wooden spoon and be sure to scrape up all the little goodies that are stuck to the pan (deglazing). Reduce the heat and simmer until the sauce thickens, then whisk in the butter until fully incorporated to finish.

Slice the duck breasts thinly across the grain and put back in the pan to pick up the sauce a little. Make sure to add any juices which have leaked during slicing.

Place a generous quantity of the spinach risoni in a serving bowl or plate and arrange a sliced breast on top. Spoon the fig sauce over the dish and serve.

As a variation to this dish, you could use nice wild mushrooms and a red or white wine to replace the figs and port.

Buon appetito!



David Jacobs
Aka the Chief Firepit Officer



Wine Taste Talk...To Your Door

Tasting Note

Wine

2019 Eldorado Road Quasimodo Nero d'Avola Durif Shiraz

Quite an unusual blend, hence the name. Each variety brings interest to the final blend which I found to be complex and delicious. The blend varies each year and is reflective of the season.

The wine is produced by two vigneron, Paul Dahlenburg and Laretta Schultz who are doing interesting things in this pocket of NE Victoria.

Region

Eldorado and Rutherglen Victoria. Eldorado is a small town between Wangaratta and Beechworth. The area can get warm days yet cooler nights as it is close to the NE Victorian Alpine regions, giving great flavour development yet with an elegance that slow ripening brings.

Viticulture and winemaking

Whilst this wine is low intervention in its winemaking the attention to detail around individual parcels of fruit is evident in the final product. The winemakers have provided a lot of information regarding the individual parcels, and I have included this to give you an insight into the level of care that is taken by some.

The two Nero ferments were picked 10 days apart with varying ripeness (12.3° & 13.1° baume). They both used indigenous (wild) yeast and one ferment had 20% whole bunch. They were basket pressed and spent 16 months in large, older format French oak barrels, on gross lees (the solids leftover following fermentation).

The Shiraz fruit in the blend came from The Mount Pilot Estate vineyard in Eldorado and Battley vineyard in Beechworth. The winemakers have particularly high praise for the fruit from Mt Pilot. Just outside the Beechworth GI (region) grown on the same red granite of the Beechworth Plateau.

The isolated hillside location is very low yielding giving great concentration to the fruit which is picked at 13° baume. This helps to retain the freshness so evident on the palate. The fruit from Mt Pilot was separated into two ferments and gently destemmed so that the berries remained as whole as possible, and again one ferment had 20% whole bunches that contributes to the perfume of the wine.

The Shiraz from the Battley vineyard (managed by the winemakers) were from two separate ferments that both used gently destemmed whole berry fruit. The winemakers felt these ferments brought fresh fruit and graphite tannins to the blend.

The Durif for the blend was also from 2 sites, their own Eldorado Vineyard and from the newly grafted vines at the Mount Pilot Estate vineyard. Being cooler sites than the nearby Rutherglen vineyards, they can produce a more elegant and restrained style of the variety.

The winemakers did not want to over extract the fruit which can lead to increased tannin. Instead, they chose to hand plunge the ferment only once per day and then gently basket press to oak.

The wine is unfinned and only lightly filtered prior to blending and bottling in July 2020.

The Numbers

13.5% alcohol.

Nero d'Avola 40% Durif 32% Shiraz 28%

So, What's it Like?

The winemaking notes above give an indication as to the style of this wine. It is medium bodied, and the aim was for it to be enjoyable in its youth with and without food. I feel they have knocked it out of the park with these parameters. I really enjoyed tasting this wine on its own, which couldn't often be said with these varieties individually or in a blend. It is vibrant, elegant, interesting and very drinkable.

The colour was purple red with crimson at the margins.

The nose was highly fragrant with a mix of savoury and blue and red fruit sweetness. Layers of fresh herbs such as thyme along with charcuterie.

Best Drinking

Now to 2026

Food Match

This wine would pair well with arrange of dishes from a hearty chicken casserole to a lamb or beef dish. We tried it with roast lamb shoulder and a Mediterranean vegetable sauté, which worked really well. It would work well with pork or a vegetarian bean and tomato dish.

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\$29



Wine Taste Talk...To Your Door

Tasting Note

Wine

2017 Skillogalee Basket Press Cabernets.

This wine is a blend of Cabernet Sauvignon 96% Malbec 2% and Cabernet Franc 2%.

Region

Clare Valley SA north of the Barossa, the Clare Valley being higher and cooler produced crisp Riesling and elegant Cabernet and Shiraz.

Viticulture and winemaking

Skillogalee focus on sustainability in the vineyards and winery by minimising chemical use and cultivation of the soil

The vineyard sits at approximately 450m above sea level. The vines are forty years old, hand pruned with deep roots and are dry grown, that is they don't receive any irrigation.

A relatively dry growing season with moderate but not intense heat, provided good fruit quality.

Fermentation was in small open fermenters, the skins were basket pressed and the wine went to Hogshead barrels which at 300l are slightly larger than the commonly used 250l Barrique for 2 years.

The wine is unfinned and was bottled in April 2019.

The Numbers

13.5% Alcohol

pH 3.81

Yield 1.25 tonnes/acre

So, What's it Like?

This wine is already five years old so it's a bit of a treat as it is drinking beautifully.

The colour was medium purple/red, with good intensity of colour to the margins.

The nose is so Clare Valley, of which I am a fan, and whilst I did not name my eldest because of this, its an added bonus. I noticed hints of minty eucalypt when first opened, then chocolate and blackcurrant jumped from the glass.

The palate did not disappoint the blackcurrant shone through and the cedary oak whilst apparent, was well integrated, a benefit of age. There was mint and earth and a hint of freshness that balanced the fruit intensity. The tannins were smooth with a little grip at the end, again, these have softened with age. A great food wine.

Best Drinking

Now to 2027 at least. It will cellar well but is drinking so well now why wait.

Food Match

A Moroccan Lamb tagine, not too heavily spiced would be delicious with this wine.

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\$32