

Vines don't grow when it's cold

Several weeks of cold and windy weather with frequent hail has already started to make a small dent in the greatest vintage ever.....2010.

This has followed what was regarded as a warm and early start to the season at bud burst in early September. Predictions abounded of an early vintage. However that has now all changed. The countryside is deeply green.

The vines responded to good winter rainfalls; 150mm in July and more in August and September.

More Weeds?

Like many of our neighbours, Vineyard Manager Russell Altus and I have become obsessed with healthy soils. There is a big increase in experimenting with the biological basis of soils and not just the physical and chemical. This is the way our viticulture has been moving in recent times...hence more mulching and composts.

A comparison of soil indices for an Australian soil, typically around 80,000 years old, and European soils of around 2,000 years old is sobering information- less porous, less organic matter, less fine roots, more dense etc etc. Often the roots of cover crops are the only viable way of improving soil structure and hence there is withdrawal of herbicides, and much less tidy vineyards. Whether you are looking at an Australian wine region or a European there is an obvious dichotomy in approaches with one vineyard sprayed clean undervine with herbicide and the next one mechanically weeded....or just full of weeds.

There is an extensive experiment in this region comparing 4 treatments: organic, biodynamic, low input conventional including composts and mulches, and high input conventional including fertilizers and herbicides.

We will be very interested in the results. Can we smell the difference in wine as well as soil?

Why does a handyman become a sculptor?

Craig Hill has done every job in the wine industry. He is the most recent Coriole employee, and can be found making new machinery, mowing the lawn, giving his considered opinion on the latest wine blending, or just entertaining at the coffee machine.

But suddenly there are new animals appearing at Coriole. Is this the natural evolution of a handyman or is it just a sign that there is too much junk lying around?



The Birthday Oil

Coriole is proud to celebrate 21 years of olive oil production with the release of the 2009 oil. We have come a long way since those early days. Olive oil culture was well understood in our early 19C history in this country but this had long been forgotten. Fresh seasonal local olive oil is now an accepted part of good eating.

In 1993 Coriole organized a lunch at Salopian Inn on behalf of the International Olive Oil Council to encourage the development of an olive oil based cuisine in South Australia. This terrific event was cooked by Kate Sparrow (then of Nediz Tu), the late Brigita Turniski (then of Mona Lisa's Bistro) and Russell Jeavons (then of the Salopian Inn).

As far as we know this was the first time Dukkah was introduced to SA, apart from a few Egyptian households. The tasty dipping mixture has since become a classic. A few years later Claudia Roden, (the original recipe was published in her classic book 'Mastering the Art of Middle Eastern Food', published in 1968.) visited SA and was surprised and delighted to find Dukkah as a commercial product for the first time anywhere in the world.



Emmanuel Giakoumis, Claudia Roden, Mark Lloyd, 1993.

Although now with such good olive oil in this country it is less necessary as no doubt it was invented to encourage consumption of olive oil even if showing old and tired flavours.

To celebrate 21 years we are offering a "Birthday Pack" of new seasons produce. See details on the order form.

* Halliday 5 red star rating

It was a great result for Coriole in James Halliday's new edition of his Wine Companion. 5 red stars - which is the highest winery rating available - and only 7% achieved this top rating.

And on a lighter note

Coriole has joined the ranks of social networkers on Facebook and Twitter. Coriole was voted "best cellar door" on the McLaren Vale Wines Twitter site last month "Coriole has the view, the feeling, the simple food, the high quality wines to take the crown."

The List

There are many new releases for this newsletter. The traditional rustic 2007 reds are such a contrast to the surrounding vintages.

2007 Estate Shiraz

The season was warm and the yields were low after a difficult flowering. The wines are rich and dense and quite savoury in a traditional style. Great to cellar and to drink. A favourite vintage for me.

2007 Redstone Shiraz

Redstone is made from shiraz from Coriole as well as other sub-regions of McLaren Vale...Willunga and Blewitt Springs. Very much in the style of the wine above.

2006 Lloyd Reserve

A great expression of the bright soft fruit of 2006 vintage from the oldest vineyard at Coriole planted in 1919

2009 Chenin Blanc

Just bottled and the style has been tweaked a little. I am of course a fan. It has a very fresh and clear aroma in the nashi pear and peach spectrum, and is rounded and delicate with quite moderate acidity. Recently Libby and I spent a few days in the original home of Chenin at Vouvray in the Loire Valley in France. If drinking Coriole Chenin can remind you of that beautiful spot in May then there is a double pleasure!

2008 Sangiovese

The new release Sangiovese (100% varietal) has hit the spot for me. It has a ripe raspberry aroma and while light has a full presence in the mouth. It shows just why

McLaren Vale is so appropriate for a strong and pure expression of this variety. It is also the fastest selling sangiovese at Coriole to date which will inevitably lead to a big empty hole in the warehouse very soon!

2009 Fiano

The fifth release of this exciting new Italian white varietal pioneered in Australia at Coriole.

2007 Barbera

This is a rare bottling of a varietal Barbera from the original plantings just above the winery at Coriole. These were the first vines to come into the country and are now over 10 years old. Barbera is naturally very low in tannin with bright fruit flavours. This wine has had extra time in oak which has given it some sense of maturity as well as tame the high natural acidity.

* 1 Day Wine Course - more events on the way!

We have started **The One Day Wine Course**, which is designed to build tasting confidence as well as an understanding of wine. The first two events were very successful and the attendants loved our "user friendly" and knowledgeable presenter Andrew Phillips - the winemaker with the best tasting diagnostic skills and apt vocabulary that we know. Comments included;

"The presenter was fantastic in that no-one was made to feel stupid or small. An extremely comfortable environment in which to learn"

"Superb venue, great lunch & Andrew was very informative & witty."

Demand is high for individual and corporate bookings. Check the website www.coriole.com for future dates.

The Gig: \$130 includes wines from around the world, lunch and a great price for the wonderful new wine text, A Taste of the World of Wine, edited by Pat Iland.

* Upcoming events - dates for your diary.

The People's Messiah

Sunday 13 December 2009: 5.30pm for a 6.00pm start

Shakespeare in the Vines

Sunday 24 January 2010: 5.30pm for a 6.00pm start
Essential Theatre presents *The Comedy of Errors* by William Shakespeare.

Coriole Music Festival

1st and 2nd May 2010 - weekend of three concerts and three meals featuring the finest Chamber Music players, directed by Christopher Burrell. The program for 2010 will be launched in January.

For more info on all events go to www.coriole.com