

01. *the sting.*

the newsletter of SCORPIION wines. ISSUE 01 summer 08



2006 BAROSSA VALLEY CABERNET SAUVIGNON: WE LOVE CABERNETS AND WERE DETERMINED TO MAKE A GOOD ONE. THIS IS OUR FIRST AND WE COULDN'T BE HAPPIER WITH THE RESULT.

In 2006 we sourced parcels of premium fruit from the Barossa Valley and McLaren Flat. Pete Schell vinified these separately and matured them in quality new and old French and American oak. The winemaking was fascinating with both wines giving us a tutorial on what Cabernet from these different regions can look like at each stage. Pete also gave us a lesson in making Cabernet as he was weaned on good French ones.

The wine is clearly special from the moment it is poured with brightness and clarity in the glass catching and intensifying the light making it very attractive to the eye. The colour is deep ruby.

The nose has a real richness with bags of Cabernet Sauvignon character. The usual cigar box and briary/blackberry characters are there and are very appealing but the hints of violets, mint, snow peas and wintergreen warn that this is a seriously rich and complex wine.

The palette exhibits a deep set richness with blackcurrant, huckleberry, cassis and violet characters as well as hints of wildflowers. The gentle oak treatment integrates with fine-grained tannins to frame and structure the wine and to carry it through to a long, satisfyingly clean finish.

“ ‘WINETASTIC’ BY MURRAY STILES www.winetastic.blogsome.com

This Cabernet exhibits fragrant aromas of tobacco and eucalypt swimming in an ocean of ripe plummy dark fruits and berries. Full bodied with loads of fruit flavour, well managed spicy oak, a velvety mouthfeel and fine, slightly powdery tannins. It's rich, well balanced and very modern in style, with a satisfying and clean finish.

The Scorpiion philosophy is to let the fruit do the talking, they have done a good job in producing a Cabernet that is approachable while young, without being overripe. As far as I can tell, the wine is only available direct via their website, or from Squashedgrape.

Score: 90/100

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WELCOME TO THE SUMMER 2008 NEWSLETTER OF SCORPIION WINES. WHAT A YEAR 2007 WAS! MARK “RETIRED” TO CONCENTRATE ON GETTING ON WITH LIFE, HIS STRAITGATE VINEYARD AND SCORPIION AFTER HIS FATHER SADLY BECAME UNWELL AND PASSED AWAY, PADDY TOOK ON NEW ROLES IN THE SA HEALTH SYTEM AND MICHAEL ENTERED THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE CIRCUIT AND HAS BECOME A “LEAN HEALTH CARE” GURU ON 3 CONTINENTS.

Unfortunately, the 2007 vintage was frost and drought affected across Australia reducing production dramatically. On the positive side the wine glut is gone, but unfortunately quality is also down so, buyer beware and choose carefully. On a brighter note there are some stunning 2005 and 2006 wines now becoming available and hitting their straps as they develop. We think ours are good examples of these especially our first cabernet which shows all the signs of being an icon. Not surprising we think, given the combination of great and distinct terroirs, a good year and the outstanding wine making talents of Pete Schell.

Overall we are pleased and proud of our new release wines. We hope you will enjoy them too. We have been trying to grow our business to the point where it is sustainable and can reasonably create some longer term expectations and confidence. “The Sting” is part of our growth plan and is to be sent to all customers for whom we have e-mail addresses a couple of times a year. If you know anyone

who is interested in fine red wine please feel free to e-mail it on and to friends who you think might want to join our mailing list for future editions. Don't worry about being bombed with offers, promotions, etc. We have not got time for this and will never pass on your personal information. We also don't have enough wine!

We intended to grow our volumes significantly in 2007 but nature intervened with frost, heat, drought and rain causing a, much publicized, reduction in yields across the country. Quality was compromised badly in many areas also. This meant we could not source the volume or quality of fruit we needed in 2007. Where we were locked in to grower agreements, we bought the fruit as promised. Many growers were unable to deliver any fruit at all to us and other winemakers. We will not be releasing a 2007 Shiraz and may not release a 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon as the wines we made with 2007 fruit, despite Pete Schell's Herculean efforts, can not stand alone. Curiously the GSM is looking good and will be released albeit in very small quantities.

2005 BAROSSA VALLEY SHIRAZ

This wine had big boots to fill after the 2004 which was both complex and elegant while still being strongly Shiraz fruit driven. In 2005 we aimed for more complexity. In addition to the fruit from low yielding Marananga vines we used in 2004, we sourced fruit from 3 other areas of the Barossa. Pete Schell vinified the 4 batches separately in a mix of new French and old 2 year old American hogsheads.

The wine is a deep mulberry colour with the brightness and clarity we associate with good fruit and good winemaking. The nose has opulent berry characters with overtones of

vanilla, cedar, nutmeg, juniper and quince.

The palette is all classic Barossa Shiraz with elegance and a mouth full of layered berries and spices. This wine has the depth of the 2004 wine with even more complexity and length. The hints of quince, juniper, and nutmeg evident on the nose are there in the palette also with just the slightest hint of white pepper. The oak and fine grained tannins are in balance and underscore the wine's fruit and spice characteristics. The wine finishes with clean acidity which, with its depth and richness, indicates it should be good for 10+ years of cellaring.





2006 BAROSSA VALLEY GRENACHE SHIRAZ MATARO

This is a very similar wine to the 2005 which sold out in weeks. It is slightly lighter in style but is satisfyingly rich, warm and complex.

The wine is a luminous, cherry red with clarity and depth. Its abundance of fruit evident on the nose is followed up on the palette. The slight sweetness of the Grenache is enfolded in the rich berry fruits of the Shiraz and lengthened and deepened by the Mataro. Like the Shiraz, the mouth fill of this wine is awesome with hints of allspice, strawberries, summer pudding and vanilla.

The wine had no new oak but hints of the older American oak casks used for maturation can be picked up in the nose and palette. This gentle oak treatment and the old Mataro (85 year old vines) give the wine a tight structure and surprising length for a GSM. It finishes clean.

AVAILABILITY: The 2006 Rose is gone except for a few cases at Michaels which he will drink if you don't get in quickly. We did not make a 2007. The 2005 GSM and 2004 Shiraz are also gone – typically these were mostly gone before the great 2008 Wine Companion Review. I know some of you are still holding some 2004 Shiraz – lucky you! The 2005 Shiraz is selling very quickly and we continue to get very good feedback. The Apothecary (Adelaide) like it and are just

about to stock this wine. We still have good stocks of the 2006 Cabernet Sauvignon having only just released it but, given the reviews we are getting (see Murray Stiles in this Sting), we don't expect it to last through to the release of the 2008. We also have some stock of the 2006 GSM (please see Ian Robertson's review) but, as we never make much of this (limited 85 year old Mataro) we can't be confident it will be around for long. The 2005 sold out in weeks.

2008 Vintage Report

Yields are clearly going to be up from 2007 in our target areas but will still be lower than average due to the continuing dry conditions. At this stage with 2-7 weeks to go until vintage, quality also looks good.

We are buying grapes from wonderful micro terroir from Blewitt Springs in the Fleurieu Peninsula to Eden Valley and the northernmost parts of the Barossa Valley this year and it's all looking pretty good so far. We'll be sourcing Shiraz from 9 vineyards this year – up from 4 in 2005. We are really excited about some of the small parcels of fruit we have been able to get and plan to continue to improve our wines in 2008.

SUMMER FOOD MATCH: THE RECIPE BELOW IS COURTESY OF THE DOYENNE OF 'SPECIAL MADE SIMPLE', DONNA HAY*. THE SWEET AND SALTY FLAVOURS ARE A PERFECT MATCH FOR OUR GSM.

Quince roasted Pork with Prosciutto



2.3kg (5 lb) pork loin
vegetable oil, for brushing
sea salt and cracked black pepper
½ cup quince paste
¼ cup sage leaves
20 slices prosciutto
1 cup (8 fl oz) chicken stock

Preheat the oven to 180°C (355°F). Carefully remove the rind and fat from the pork and set aside for the crunchy crackling strips. Brush the pork with vegetable oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Heat a large

frying pan over high heat. Cook the pork for 2–3 minutes each side or until browned. Remove from the pan and spread over the quince paste. Top with sage, wrap with prosciutto and secure with kitchen string. Brush the prosciutto with vegetable oil and place on a greased rack in a baking dish. Pour the stock into the baking dish and roast for 1 hour or until the pork is cooked to your liking. Rest pork for 10–15 minutes before carving. Serve warm or cold. *Serves 8.*

* Donna Hay magazine, Issue 36

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James Halliday Wine Companion 2007

★★★★☆

Scorpiion Wines was the concept of Mark Herbertt who decided to buy a small quantity of McLaren Vale and Barossa grapes in 2002 and have the wine made for himself, friends and family. In 2004 Paddy Phillips and Michael Swarcbord, like Mark Herbertt sharing the Scorpio birth sign, joined the partnership. It is a virtual winery, with the grapes purchased, and the wines contract-made by various winemakers including the brilliant Peter Schell. They say 'We share a number of likes and dislikes in relation to Australian red wines - apart from that, we don't really agree on anything... We aim for a fruit-driven style with elegant oak, rather than a big, oak-driven style.' Oh, and they are united in their insistence on using screwcaps rather than corks.

BAROSSA VALLEY SHIRAZ 2004

Bright purple-red; luscious blackberry, plum and a touch of prune tempered by good acidity; fine tannins and exceptional length. Screwcap. 14.5% alc.

Rating 94 To 2024

BAROSSA VALLEY GRENACHE SHIRAZ MATARO 2005

Light to medium-bodied; the juicy berry fruit is strongly regional, almost lemony; good length. Cork. 14.5% alc.

Rating 89 To 2013

BAROSSA VALLEY ROSE 2006

Has flavour without sweetness or phenolics; spicy notes through the palate and finish. Screwcap. 13.5% alc.

Rating 88 To 2008

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