

Fraser Gallop

ESTATE

SUMMER NEWSLETTER 2011

FRASER GALLOP ESTATE GOES TO NEW LEVELS OF EXCELLENCE



The last couple of years have been very exciting times for us all here at the Estate with some marvellous wines being made, numerous awards won, plenty of experimentation, and the on-going tweaking and improvement of the vineyard and new winery.

I suppose if any changes are made in the coming year, we will be moving more away from entering wine shows and focusing on media coverage of our wines. We have now proven ourselves in this area, so next year we plan to only enter three shows.

On the other hand, the press has real impact for us. For example, out of the top Australian Cabernet Sauvignon producers our 2008 Cabernet was rated sixth over all by Gourmet Traveller Wine magazine. Considering the swag of great producers we were up against, this speaks volumes for the standard we have achieved in a short period of time.

It is also really encouraging to have received such a great reaction to the Parterre, our new wooded Bordeaux-style white SSB. I've always been a fan of this white blend, and we are already producing a very smart version of it.

At a recent UK Wine Society tasting one of the head judges said of the Parterre: "I've never tasted a wine of this style that is this good that didn't come from France. Anyone who can make a wine like this is a great winemaker." I think this is 100% confirmation that we are getting things right.

Speaking of great Bordeaux wines, we are considering matching up both white and red French styles with Australian wines at our international tasting next November. So if you like great Bordeaux-style wines, then you won't want to miss this one! - **Nigel Gallop**

GOOD WINE GUIDE COVERAGE

Fraser Gallop Estate was very well represented in the Good Wine Guide 2011 with all our wines rated in the 90s. Each year the respected publication reports on, and rates, the top wines of their type in the country.

"The best examples of the respective styles are what you'll find in these pages, and there's strong emphasis on wines that carry a powerful sense of place," says the

Guide introduction. "Wines that are shaped by their origins and not made to a recipe in the winery."

We were pleased to see our Cabernet Sauvignon described as "a scintillating cabernet, and outstanding value"; while the Parterre was "a statement of just how good the best of these Bordeaux-inspired white blends perform in Margaret River." Our 2010 Semillon Sauvignon Blanc was judged Best Value White. The guide said the wine had "impeccable freshness and bright fruit aromas" and "punchy tropical fruit flavour that slides through crisp lemon citrus at the finish. Brilliant wine." All true!



Clive at the launch of the guide

ANOTHER GOOD VINTAGE IN 2010

It was another good season in Margaret River, with the 2010 vintage producing some fine wines.

A return to normal rainfalls in winter (855mm from May-September) saw the subsoil moisture replenish for the long, dry summer (76mm from October to April).

Warm Spring conditions without too much wind enabled most varieties to flower and set fruit well with more bunches per vine than normal, resulting in yields up by 15-20% across the board.

Yields would have been considerably higher if it wasn't for two days above 40C in mid-January that shrivelled and cooked berries that were fully exposed to the sun. However this event did not appear to affect quality in the reds as these berries dried up to nothing.

Chardonnay, on the other hand, was affected and sunburnt bunches were removed before harvest. Our grapes are all hand-picked at Fraser Gallop Estate so this gives us a second opportunity to cull out any unwanted bunches of grapes.

The warm weather accelerated the ripening of Chardonnay and Sauvignon Blanc and Semillon which all came off in a flurry and made for a vintage that started one week earlier than usual.

The conditions for March and April moderated, making it ideal for the ripening of reds and providing a good finish to the 2010 vintage.



Pickers in the vines during the 2010 vintage - another good one for us

AN INTERNATIONAL RED & WHITE TASTING MADE IN HEAVEN

Fraser Gallop Estate fans who attended our inaugural tasting of white Bordeaux and Australian Semillon Sauvignon Blancs in November 2008 will agree that the event was a roaring success.

Now we are pondering the idea of going one step further and not just matching up a selection of Bordeaux whites, but the great reds as well.

Margaret River more or less built its reputation on outstanding Bordeaux-influenced blends of Cabernet Sauvignon. Yet it was Bordeaux where the blending of the cabernet varieties and Merlot was first raised to a high art and, as we know, some sublime wines come from the famed south-west region of France.

We therefore thought it fitting to bring the best of Bordeaux red styles to Margaret River for our next match up. We are planning the event for November 2011 and will let you know exact dates as soon as they are locked away.

We didn't enter a wine in the 2008 white tasting, because we hadn't produced the wooded style at that stage, but naturally we will be matching our own SSB "Parterre" and award-winning cabernets in the next Bordeaux-Australian match-up.

It should be a tasting like no other, especially since our own region is now undisputed king of cabernets in Australia - well, at least according to Ken Gargett of *Gourmet Traveller Wine* magazine.

"Margaret River has recently achieved the impossible - usurping Coonawarra as the producer of the finest Cabernets," wrote Gargett. "And it has done so in a surprisingly short time."

"The wines have an elegance matched by underlying power and finish with gravelly tannins. The fruit can be gloriously lush."

Bring it on. Next year's tasting at Fraser Gallop Estate will see some of the world's greatest Bordeaux style reds and whites tasted in Margaret River.

THE AUSTRALIAN STRING QUARTET CAME...AND SHALL RETURN!

It is pretty hard to imagine a more delightful setting for playing great music than right here in our beautiful wine region.

Therefore it's little surprise that the inaugural Margaret River Weekend of Music featuring the Australian String Quartet (ASQ) earlier in the year was such a smash hit.

Quartet musicians Sophie Rowell, Anne Horton, Sally Boud and Rachel Johnson wowed packed houses across the region, including at Fraser Gallop Estate.

Packages included recitals by the ASQ, wine master-classes, garden tours, dinners and picnics in the vineyards.

"Schoenberg's expressionist *Verklarte Nacht* was performed in the French grandeur of Dorothy and Nigel Gallop's home," said West Australian reviewer Rosalind Appleby of our part in the program.

"The ASQ was joined by viola player Jurg Dahler and cellist Emma-Jane Murphy for a volatile and lush performance of Shoenberg's masterpiece."

The event was such a success that the ASQ will be back in 2011. This time the

ensemble teams up with Fraser Gallop Estate, Howard Park, Vasse Felix and Wallcliffe House to bring music and wine lovers three wonderful days of indulgence.

Enjoy a program of four concerts performed by the ASQ and guest artists Irina Morozova (viola), Emma-Jane Murphy (cello), Marshall McGuire (harp) and Sara MacIver (soprano).

The weekend opens with a concert at Howard Park which is situated in the Leston Vineyard. On Saturday, there will be a concert in the Holmes à Court Gallery at Vasse Felix followed by a picnic lunch in the sculpture garden.

That evening, Fraser Gallop Estate will be opened for an exclusive house concert, followed by a gala dinner prepared by award winning chef Dany Angove.

The weekend concludes Sunday at Wallcliffe House, on the banks of the Margaret River,

followed by lunch on the verandah prepared by leading chef, Stephen Reagan of Newtown House. More information about ASQ's 2011 visit to the Margaret River region can be found on-line at www.asq.com.au



The ASQ at this year's fabulous recital at the Estate

A FEW WORDS FROM THE EXPERTS

Gourmet Traveller Wine October 2010 - Best Buy Wines - Huon Hooke - 2009 Chardonnay

Clive Otto, former longstanding Vasse Felix winemaker, is now at Fraser Gallop, a fairly new winery on the hallowed turf of Wilyabrup, which has hit the ground running. Otto knows a lot about how to make fine chardonnay: this is a powerful, concentrated chardonnay with toasty oak inflections and a richly smoky-toasty and stone-fruit laden aroma and flavour. It's penetrating and long in the mouth, and promises to reward time in the cellar - say up to six years. Just 13.5% alc.

James Halliday Review June 2010 - 2009 Parterre

A range of fermentation vessels from stainless steel barrels to French oak barriques and puncheons, some old, some new were used for this Semillon/Sauvignon Blanc blend, the inspiration coming from Domaine de Chevalier in Bordeaux. Put more simply, this is a wine tailor-made for food of many descriptions. Screwcap. 13% alc. Rating 95 Drink 2015 \$35 Date Tasted Jun 10

James Halliday Review September 2010 - 2010 Semillon Sauvignon Blanc

A 66/34 blend, partially barrel fermented; the grassy notes of the semillon are neatly balanced by the gently tropical sauvignon blanc component, and the oak is largely invisible; the wine really scores with its length, finish and persistent aftertaste. 94 points, drink to 2012, \$20, Screwcap, 13% alc.

2011 Good Wine Guide - Nick Stock - 2009 Cabernet Merlot - 92 points

Very charming soft-smelling blue fruits on the nose of this young blend - really fresh and lively. The palate has essence-like blackcurrant and plum fruit flavour, delivered on fine, sturdy and gently grippy tannin structure. Juicy finish.

MAGNUMS OF WORLD BEATING CABERNET

Perhaps our most memorable achievement at Fraser Gallop Estate to date was last year winning the Decanter International Trophy for the Best Red Bordeaux Varietal over £10.

The Estate took out the first prize for our 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon, an outstanding Margaret River red.

Naturally, after the win, there was something of a mad rush on getting hold of a few bottles of this marvellous wine, and hence it is now as rare as hen's teeth.



The 2007 Cabernet was good from the start

However, we didn't let it all rush out the cellar door. In fact have a limited release of single bottle magnums ready for the first takers. The quality of the wine certainly makes it a collectors item for your cellar, with admirable aging potential. However if you would like one of the world's best cabernets on

your table this Christmas Day, then this one is for you.

Due to the quality and rarity of the wine we are selling single 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon magnums for \$180 each. Just two per buyer.

But remember: it's a first in, first served...so get in fast! The wine was also a Jimmy Watson Finalist and won Gold at the Margaret River Show, UK Wine & Spirits Competition and the Melbourne Wine Show. No slouch! Call us to order your magnums for the holiday season!

KATE REPORTS IN FROM THE OLD WORLD

Fraser Gallop Estate assistant winemaker Kate Morgan spent much of the northern autumn on a working holiday in two of the world's great old world wine regions - the Douro Valley and Bordeaux.

"Two months off work and what to do?" mused Kate. "Holiday at the beach, or a ski trip perhaps?"

"No I chose to spend my time working in other wineries and visiting vineyards and producers. This is the major pitfall of having a job you are so passionate about - you spend your holidays working!"

"I spent two weeks in the Douro Valley, Portugal at one of the top producers, Quinta do Noval.

It was a really amazing experience seeing the terraced vineyards and treading the port lagars (special shallow fermenters)."

Our trusty world traveller then moved due north-east to Bordeaux, where she did the rounds of some of the most prominent and renowned producers.



Kate enjoying a little sun at Chateau d'Yquem

"While in Bordeaux I visited the likes of Domaine de Chevalier in Graves, Chateau d'Yquem in Sauternes, Chateau Latour in the Medoc and Petit-Village in Pomerol," she said.

"I have learnt a lot, but I think the one thing which is inconsistent across all these producers is a passion for the wine, vineyard and their region. I believe that it is these qualities, along with an uncompromising commitment, that sets them and us at Fraser Gallop Estate, apart from the rest.

After France it was on to working with a new producer making sparkling wine in the UK. "There was plenty of challenges there, but it was great learning experience for me."



Clive and Nigel in the Estate Parterre gardens - the inspiration for the name of our new SSB

"PARTERRE" LEADS MR IN WHITE BORDEAUX

During its relatively short history the Margaret River Wine Region has gone through clearly defined periods of discovering wines that have become regional icons.

There has been the Cabernet Sauvignon and Chardonnay revolutions, unwooded Sauvignon Blanc and Semillon (and blends of the two), cool climate shiraz and others - all were the result of experimentation and trial and error.

Now the Fraser Gallop Estate "Parterre" wooded Semillon Sauvignon Blanc has arrived on the scene, and it is already getting rave reviews from wine connoisseurs. It seems Margaret River has a new champion in this high-end oaked SSB.

The wine's name was the brainchild of Dorothy Barlow, taken from the French Parterre garden arrangements around the Gallop private residence at the Estate.

It was a great analogy as, like the white vines of Bordeaux, Parterre gardens are planted close to ground and meticulously tended. Their design also combines texture, balance and symmetry - which are all great descriptions for the wine itself! The Parterre has a complex and intriguing nose which draws you in with aromas of honeysuckle, lemon balm and barley sugar, alongside spiciness and almond meal from the use of French oak. On the palate it is a medium bodied wine and is a pleasing mix of lemon curd like creaminess and a dry persistent minerality. There are flavours of lime and lemongrass with cream and it finishes with a flinty grip and juicy acidity. This is a wine which you constantly want to return to and savour.

Yet the Parterre remains a bit of a rarity with only 450 six pack cases of the wine produced, and only a few left! Hence, it is still the nectar of a privileged few. But its popularity will have us making more in the future.