

Red Vertical Tasting

Twenty eight members and guests were at our home base for Ian to present a vertical tasting of shiraz. After the welcome wine (2015 Feral Row shiraz) and nibbles, Ian commenced with a 'mystery' wine that was nor part of the vertical tasting but was from the same winemaker. Members correctly identified it as a Barossa shiraz but most thought it was older than its actual vintage (2017). Ian did not reveal what it was until after the tasting of the second wine. This was also 'blind' tasted and recognized by members as a Barossa shiraz. They thought it superior to the previous one but once again missed out on the vintage thinking it was younger than it actually was—2004. One taster correctly identified as a Wolf Blass wine—it was a Grey Label. Ian now revealed the first wine was a Wolf Blass Eaglehawk shiraz with a retail price 10% to 14% of the Grey Label. Some of our tastings were small an Ian had been able to obtain only one bottle.



The next wine of the vertical tasting (not masked) was the 2008. Most felt this was even better than the 2004 which might have been past it best.

We continued with the 2010 and the 2012 both very good wines though Ian noted that James Halliday had rated them slightly less (94) than the previous two (95). An added complication was that one 2010 bottle had a cork and the other a screw cap. We tasted them separately—about half preferred the cork and half the screw cap.

The final two were the 2014 and 2016. Both were not thought to be as good as the 2010 and 2012, perhaps needing more bottle age. Halliday only gave the 2014 92 points.

There was no agreement as to the wine of the night with opinions divided between the 2008, 2010 and the 2012, but all agreed the tasting was an interesting exercise.

The door prize winners were Greg Riechelt, David Jeffery and Simon Grandfield.



Coming up:

- ◆ May Z Wines (Away)
- ◆ June: AGM Tenafeate Creek Wines (Home)
- ◆ July: Birthday at St Hallet (Away)
- ◆ August: James Haselgrove (Home)
- ◆ September : Kellermiester (Away)
- ◆ October Bruce Commemoration (Home)
- ◆ November Kalleske Wines (Away—3rd Tuesday)
- ◆ Christmas at Lamberts with Wives & partners.

BRING A FRIEND

Remember, at home shows you can introduce a new guest for just \$25.

Special thanks to **Mark Cooper of Cooper Burns Wines** who obtained most of the wines at no cost to the club.



GUEST INVITATION

You are invited to join a group of like minded men at a Bruce Thiele Red Wine Club dinner meeting to taste, talk about, learn and enjoy wine.

Inquiries Peter Frick btredwineclub@gmail.com

Reds Vertical Tasting Continued



Our guest was Noel Skinner—we hope he enjoyed himself.

The Meal

We were fortunate to have Rachael Duncan as our caterer. She was invited to discuss the meal she had ready for us. Firstly she suggested we smell samples of some of the middle eastern spices she uses in her cooking. They were Fennel, Baharat (a mixture of finely ground spices which may include black pepper, coriander seeds, cinnamon, cloves, cumin seeds, cardamom pods, nutmeg and paprika), Sumac and Za'artar (ground dried thyme, oregano, marjoram, mixed with toasted sesame seeds, and salt). She also produces the olive oil that we tasted with George Akkerman's bread.

The meal included Hutton Vale Lamb Shoulder with middle Eastern flavours - including pomegranate Molasses

Hutton Vale Lamb

Sausage "Kofta" It was nearly 3 kg in weight and was cooked with onions and tomatoes and topped with currants and Zartar. The salads were Beetroot and Labna (house made cheese) 3 different beets were used Red Striped and Orange, Pickled and Roasted with some pickled carrot and onion, Fennel and Orange salad, Lettuce salad and Giant Couscous Salad. For Dessert there was Chocolate and Port melting moment Raspberry melting moment (which went well with the club port).



Reds Vertical Tasting Wines

Wolf Blass 2017 Eaglehawk Shiraz

A smooth, approachable shiraz with bright, fruity aromas of blackcurrant and dark cherry complemented by a touch of vanillin oak. The palate is medium bodied, and fruit driven with upfront red berry flavours and a soft, generous finish.

Wolf Blass Wines, established in 1966, has grown from a humble tin shed to become one of the world's most successful and awarded wineries. Today, Wolf Blass wines are exported to more than 50 countries and are recognised internationally as icons of modern winemaking. The essence of Wolf Blass wines is exemplified through the passion of its custodians, past and present as they continue to create wines of quality, character and consistency.

When Wolf Blass first bought the site for his winery he was delighted to discover that its name 'Bilyara' was the Australian aboriginal word for Eaglehawk. The image of this proud bird has become synonymous with the winery and its global success. Wolf Blass quality and flavour are evident throughout the Eaglehawk range of fresh and approachable wines for everyday drinking.



COLOUR: Medium to deep red.

NOSE: A fruit-driven nose with pronounced aromas of blackcurrants and dark cherries enhanced with subtle hints of oak.

PALATE: A medium-bodied palate with upfront red berry fruit supported by flavoursome vanillin oak that follows through to a soft, generous finish.

VINTAGE CONDITIONS: A wet winter was followed by a windy, cooler and wetter than average spring. Along with cool nights in early summer, this markedly slowed ripening and delayed harvest by about 4 weeks. Hot weather in mid February and early March progressed ripening, after which nights were cool through to end of harvest. Overall wine quality was good, with bright fruit freshness.

MATURATION: Matured for four months with American and French oak.

WINE ANALYSIS: Alc/Vol: 13.5% Acidity: 7.0 g/L pH: 3.58 Residual sugar: 6.1 g/L

PEAK DRINKING: Best enjoyed while young and fresh.

Wolf Blass 2004 Grey Label Shiraz

The 2004 Wolf Blass Grey Label McLaren Vale Shiraz is rich dark red in colour. Aromas of rich, ripe berries with hints of pepper, spice and dark chocolate are present on the nose. The intense yet soft full fruit palate shows well integrated oak, soft tannins and a long seamless finish.

VITICULTURE: The fruit for this wine was sourced from premium Shiraz vineyards in the McLaren Vale region of South Australia. Good winter rainfalls and favourable conditions during spring and summer delivered a vintage of good to outstanding quality. One of the longest vintages in recent times, the dry, warm and stable conditions resulted in good yields of fruit with excellent colour, flavour and acid balance.

WINEMAKING: Following crushing, the wine fermented on the skins for seven days, allowing optimum release of colour and flavour without extracting excessive tannin. Individual parcels completed fermentation in seasoned and new American and French oak. After racking, the wine was returned to the original American and French oak barrels for 18 months maturation. After maturation our winemaking team carefully assessed each parcel before blending and bottling.

CELLARING: This wine displays rich fruit flavours in its youth and has been carefully blended



Reds Vertical Tasting Wines

to ensure soft tannins and drinkability. It will develop more aged characters over the next 6-10 years.

TECHNICAL ANALYSIS: Harvest Date: March 2004 pH: 3.47 Acidity: 7.31g/L Alcohol: 14.5% Residual Sugar: 1.06g/L Bottling Date: November 2005

Wine Companion Tasting Note: James Halliday - Published on 21 Jul 2011

Deep, dense colour; archetypal McLaren Vale, bursting with blackberry and bitter chocolate fruit, but with lower alcohol and classy oak handling giving a great result for a great vintage.

Rating: 95 points, Drink By: 2019, Date Tasted: 11 Mar 2006

Wolf Blass 2008 Grey Label Shiraz

Historically, Wolf Blass Grey Label Shiraz was a blend from several regions, mostly McLaren Vale, Barossa Valley and Langhorne Creek. In 2002, the winemaking and viticultural teams decided the fruit available from McLaren Vale was best suited for this wine style and since then it has been a 100% McLaren Vale wine. Following crushing the wine was fermented on skins for up to seven days, allowing optimum release of colour and flavour without extracting excessive tannin. Individual parcels completed fermentation in seasoned and new French and American oak. After racking, the wine was barrel matured for 18 months, before the winemaking team carefully assessed each parcel to see if it was suitable for the final blend.

VINTAGE CONDITIONS : A moderate, dry spring encouraged steady early season growth and set the season up well. Cool and dry conditions during berry ripening over most of the summer were conducive to excellent flavour, colour and phenolic development. A record 15 day heatwave starting on the 3rd March, interrupting perfect vintage conditions and ensuring a very condensed harvest period. Much of the premium Shiraz was off the vine prior to this with high natural acidity, parcels picked after had some berry shrivel and high baume levels.

MATURATION: This wine was matured for 18 months in a mixture of new (32% French, 26% American) oak barrels with the remainder in seasoned French (12%) and seasoned American (30%) oak barrels.

COLOUR: Vibrant deep purple.

NOSE : A harmonious blend of blood plum, blackberry, Swiss chocolate and spicy oak nuances. PALATE Rich boysenberry and blackberry fruit has tremendous intensity and concentration, while remaining lively with good acidity. Subtle spicy oak flavours are evident on the opulent fruit focussed palate, balanced by fleshy long tannins.

"With cooling afternoon sea breezes and Ranges, McLaren Vale Shiraz fared well during the 2008 vintage and the Grey Label certainly lives up to expectations"

WINE ANALYSIS: Alc/Vol: 15.0%, Acidity: 6.9g/L, pH: 3.51

PEAK DRINKING: With rich fruit flavours in its youth, this wine will continue to develop over the next 8-10 years if carefully cellared.

Wine Companion Tasting Note: James Halliday - Published on 03 Aug 2010

Deep purple-crimson; right in the heartland of Blass red wine style; lush black fruits, chocolate, mocha and vanilla flavours, oak threaded through the wine from start to finish, the tannins ripe and smooth. What you see is what you get.

Rating: 95 Drink By: 2023 Price: \$41.00 Date Tasted: 06 Mar 2010



Wolf Blass 2010 Grey Label Shiraz

Wolf Blass Grey Label Shiraz is an evolution of the iconic Wolf Blass Brown Label Classic Shiraz, first made from the 1975 vintage.

Historically, the wine was a blend of fruit from several regions, most often McLaren Vale, Barossa Valley and Langhorne Creek. As we more and more consistently found that McLaren Vale Shiraz was providing the quality and style we were seeking for Grey Label, from the 2003 vintage the wine has been sourced exclusively from McLaren Vale. Grey Label Shiraz is the perfect illustration of why McLaren Vale is so highly regarded for its exceptional Shiraz. Wines from the region are full, rich and highly expressive of the variety with plush, vibrant fruit and fine, structural tannins. McLaren Vale lies close to the coast and this proximity, combined with its undulating topography provides a multitude of sub-regional terroirs, the amalgamation of which contributes to the depth and complexity of the final wine. The climate is Mediterranean with warm sunny days to perfectly ripen the berries and concentrate flavours, and fresh sea breezes to temper the heat. Meanwhile, the nearby Mount Lofty ranges channel cool winds down from the hills in the evenings, chilling the grapes and helping retain good crisp acidity and fine, graceful structure.

The result: a classic example of power and elegance. Perhaps the definitive interpretation of this unparalleled Australian wine region, the 2010 Grey Label Shiraz is a deeply flavoured, generous, yet elegantly structured wine which expresses all the hallmarks of the distinctive Wolf Blass style.

Vintage Conditions Above average rainfall in Winter and Spring set the vines up with healthy canopies and allowed the soil to accumulate water for access later during the dry ripening season. Summer weather came early but the vines were refreshed with brief December rains establishing them well for favourable ripening. The rest of the season stayed dry with cool nights and moderate temperatures allowing steady, even ripening and optimum flavour, colour and tannin development.

Viticulture The McLaren Vale region is known for producing fleshy, concentrated Shiraz with ripe tannins and intense fruit flavours. The climate is predominantly Mediterranean, experiencing cool maritime influences from the nearby Gulf St Vincent, with much climatic variation through the region due to varying exposure to sea breezes. Altitude also varies, ranging from about 50m close to the coast to 200m where McLaren Vale merges with the Adelaide Hills. McLaren Vale mainly spans two triangular basins of ancient bedrock layered with sediments deposited by advances and retreats of the sea over the past 45 million years. Soil types vary from sands, yellow clays, red and black loams, through to ironstone, most of which are lacking in rich nutrients, resulting in low vine vigour and intense, concentrated flavours.

Winemaking Harvested at optimum maturity and flavour ripeness, individual vineyard parcels from across McLaren Vale were crushed and fermented in small open-top fermenters. A mix of plunging and gentle pumping over was utilised to optimise flavour, colour and tannin extraction, giving the wine rich concentration and depth of fruit while still keeping tannins plush, hallmarks of the Grey Label style. Some parcels completed primary fermentation in barrel, integrating oak characters and contributing to mid-palate texture and complexity. Other parcels were left on skins until dry to lengthen tannins on the finish.

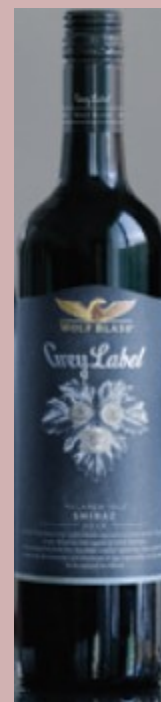
Maturation Individual components were matured in new and seasoned French (52%) and American (48%) oak for 18 months to add further layers of complexity. The wine was carefully assessed and blended just prior to bottling in February 2012.

Wine Analysis Alc/vol 15.0% - pH 3.49 - Acidity 6.9g/L

Peak Drinking This wine will develop with age, softening and mellowing to reward a decade or more of careful cellaring.

Colour Deep crimson with purple hues.

Nose Intense aromas of rich black and blue berry fruits, liquorice and subtle fragrant oak.



Wines Continued

Palate Opulent and complex layers of mulberry, blackberry and blueberry fruit with notes of liquorice, dark chocolate and warm spices. The rich plush palate is lengthened by fine acid and a velvety tannin structure, resulting in a wine of great power and elegance.

Wine Companion Tasting Note: James Halliday - Published on 17 Jul 2012

Deep, vivid crimson-purple; immediately fills every corner and crevice of the mouth when first tasted, and doesn't back off on subsequent sips; the flavours are bang slap in the middle of the mainstream for McLaren Vale (at its top end) with blackberry, liquorice, dark chocolate and oak intertwined with the aid of a cushion of soft, fine tannins.

Rating: 95 Drink By: 2025 Price: \$43.00 Date Tasted: 17 Mar 2012

Wolf Blass 2012 Grey Label Shiraz

A richly flavoured, generous and sophisticated McLaren Vale shiraz, which is perhaps the definitive expression of this classic regional and varietal pairing, carrying the distinctive Wolf Blass hallmarks of power and elegance. Grey Label Shiraz was sourced from vineyards ranging in altitudes from about 50m near the coast to 200m where McLaren Vale merges with the Adelaide Hills. The region mostly spans two basins of ancient bedrock layered with sediments laid down by advances and retreats of the sea over the past 45 million years. Soil types vary from sands, yellow clays, and red and black loams through to ironstone. Harvested at optimum flavour ripeness, fruit was crushed and fermented in small open-top fermenters. Plunging and gentle pumping over were utilised to optimise flavour, colour and tannin extraction, allowing for richness and fruit depth while keeping tannins plush. Some parcels completed fermentation in barrel, integrating oak characters and contributing to mid-palate texture and complexity, while others were left on skins until dry to lengthen the finish.



COLOUR: Deep crimson.

NOSE: A complex layered nose of fragrant blue and black berry fruits with hints of dark chocolate and subtle biscuity oak.

PALATE: Full-bodied with a generous flesh of dark berried fruit with notes of liquorice, dark chocolate and subtle oak. Plush and creamy, the palate is lengthened by fine acid and a velvety tannin structure.

VINTAGE CONDITIONS: Winter rainfall was close to the long-term average resulting in full soil moisture profiles prior to budburst. Spring temperatures fluctuated between warmer than average and very cool, starting to warm up towards November, which, combined with small crops, contributed to early ripening. Summer temperatures were ideal, with mild to warm days and frequent cool nights, culminating in near perfect ripening conditions producing fruit with intense flavour and great natural balance.

MATURATION: Matured in a combination of seasoned and new French (62%) and American (38%) oak for 18 months to add further layers of complexity.

WINE ANALYSIS: Alc/Vol: 14.5% Acidity: 6.9 g/L pH: 3.59

PEAK DRINKING: This wine will develop with age, softening and mellowing to reward a decade or more of careful cellaring.

Wine Companion Tasting Note: James Halliday - Published on 27 Jul 2015

Finished its fermentation in new and used French oak, and matured in that oak for 18 months. The distinctive handling of the oak is as powerful as the McLaren Vale veil of dark chocolate.

Rating: 95 Drink By: 2033 Price: \$45.00 Date Tasted: 28 Mar 2015

Wolf Blass 2014 Grey Label Shiraz

McLaren Vale shiraz is inherently suited to the grey label style, rich, plush and powerful yet with an approachability that provides sheer enjoyment throughout its evolution over time in bottle.

Grey Label Shiraz was sourced from vineyards ranging in altitudes from about 50m near the coast to 200m where McLaren Vale merges with the Adelaide Hills, bringing complexity and layers of interest to the final wine. The region mostly spans two basins of ancient bedrock layered with sediments laid down by advances and retreats of the sea over the past 45 million years. Soil types vary from sands, yellow clays, and red and black loams through to ironstone. Individual vineyard batches were fermented in small open-top fermenters for 5 to 10 days. Plunging and gentle irrigation were used to optimise flavour, colour and tannin extraction, giving the wine rich concentration and depth of fruit while keeping the tannins plush, hallmarks of the Grey Label style. Some parcels completed primary fermentation in barrel, contributing mid-palate texture, while others completed fermentation on skins, providing structural length and focus.

COLOUR: Deep crimson with purple hues.

NOSE: Dark blue and black fruits with notes of liquorice, warm spice and subtle mocha oak.

PALATE: Rich and opulent, layers of dense blue and black fruits fill the mouth with notes of dark chocolate and a creamy, plush quality to the tannins that frame the finish. A wine showcasing classic McLaren Vale character and the Wolf Blass expression of power and elegance.

VINTAGE CONDITIONS: Good winter rainfall set up the vines well for the growing season. A dry spring was followed by a very hot January. A much-needed 40mm rain event mid-February provided relief to the vines, cooling temperatures and slowing ripening, allowing for a gradual accumulation of flavours and development of tannins.

MATURATION: Matured as individual vineyard batches in a combination of 43% seasoned and 26% new French oak, and 16% seasoned and 15% new American oak for 18 months.

WINE ANALYSIS: Alc/Vol: 14.5% Acidity: 6.7 g/L pH: 3.57

PEAK DRINKING: Will develop with age, softening and mellowing to reward a decade or more of careful cellaring.

Wine Companion Tasting Note: Steven Creber - Published on 01 Oct 2016

In contrast to the 'old' Grey Label style - sweet-fruited, sweet-oaked and accessible - this wine feels like it needs time to unwind. All the elements are there; depth in the bouquet with blackberry, liquorice, and quality oak, and ample black-fruited flavour with warm-earth regionality. At present it's a little disjointed and awkward. Bottle age will undoubtedly sort it out.

Rating: 92, Drink By: 2026 Price: \$45.00 Date Tasted: 03 Jun 2016

Wolf Blass 2016 Grey Label Shiraz

McLaren Vale shiraz is inherently suited to the grey label style, rich, plush and powerful, yet with an approachability that provides sheer enjoyment throughout its evolution over time in bottle.

COLOUR: Deep crimson with purple hues.

NOSE: Aromatic blue fruits are complexed with notes of dark chocolate, warm spice and subtle nougat oak.



Reds Vertical Tasting Continued

PALATE: Medium to full bodied, the blue berried fruits are succulent and plush, filling the mouth without being heavy. The tannins are velvety and powdery, framing the palate and providing texture and length.

VINTAGE CONDITIONS: Vines were well balanced with good yields after establishing well from the light and regular winter rains and moderate spring conditions. Ripening was near perfect with good colour and flavour being achieved at moderate sugar levels and little disease pressure. Cool nights assisted in the retention of natural acidity in the fruit as it ripened.

MATURATION: Matured as individual vineyard batches in a combination of 60% seasoned and 12% new French oak, and 20% seasoned and 8% new American oak for 15 months.

WINE ANALYSIS: Alc/Vol: 14.5% Acidity: 6.6 g/L pH: 3.63

PEAK DRINKING: Will develop with age, softening and mellowing to reward a decade or more of careful cellaring

Photos



Reds Vertical Tasting Photos Continued



Reds Vertical Tasting Photos Continued



Reds Vertical Tasting Photos Continued

