

Bruce Thiele Red Wine Club

Editor: Ian Cooper

Photos: Ian Cooper & Peter Frick

Unusual Wines with Ian

Coming up

- February: White Gate Wines
- March: Is Grange good?
- April: Thorn Clarke Wines
- May: Schwarz Wines
- June: AGM Ben Murray Wines
- July: with Cimicky (Monday)
- August: TBA
- Sept: Dimchurch Wines
- October: Founders dinner TBA
- November: Mystery wines
- December Christmas : Gomersal Wines

This month saw us at the Tanunda Club—where we had not been since 2011 when Ben Barnes was running the wine club (before the committee had been formed).

We began in the bar with the welcome wine and nibbles and were asked to indicate our preference for the three main courses on offer, before heading to the President's Room



Graeme Worsley, our Emcee welcomed everyone to the venue and in particular welcomed Sven and Kathrine Kahl, guests of Paul and Dagmar Keady.

Ian Cooper was the presenter for the evening and he explained that he has selected some wines that members may not have tried before. He began by mentioning the welcome wine which was **Thorn Clark 2012 Malbec** from our cellar. Ian noted that

with a rating of 93 points from James Halliday it may prove to be the 'wine of the night'.

The first two wines to try were developed by the CSIRO in the 1960s and 70s. The first one we tried was a **Brown Brothers 2024 Ceinna**—a sweetish red wine best served chilled. "Notorious for tasting like summer berries in a glass, Cienna is packed with juicy bright flavours of blueberry, raspberry, and vanilla. One member commented it tasted like sparkling red without the sparkle. It is relatively low in alcohol at 8.5% and quite inexpensive—\$13.95 at Dan Murphy.



GUEST INVITATION

You are invited to join a group of like minded people at a Bruce Thiele Red Wine Club dinner meeting to taste, talk about, learn and enjoy wine. Take advantage of the \$30 discount for first time guests at home events. Inquiries at btredwineclub@gmail.com.

Unusual wines continued

Wine number two was also from Brown Brothers—[Brown Brothers 2023 Tarrango](#). Tarrango was well ahead of its time when Brown Brothers first pioneered the light-bodied red in 1965. A cross between a Sultana and the Portuguese grape Touriga, Tarrango was the direct result of trial and experimentation – driven by our desire to create a unique wine varietal better suited to thrive in the hot, arid climate of Australia. Ian noted that Halliday rated this wine at 88 points and that it was \$18.99 at Dan Murphy. Steve Blee said he had visited Brown Brothers in Victoria and recommended it as a good caravan stop—you can free camp across the road from the cellar door and restaurant.



Wine number three was more local. It was a [Spinifex 2020 Aglianico](#). This red wine variety which is now at home in Southern Italy, is believed to be derived from Ellenico, the Italian word for Greek. This gives us a clue that the wine may have been introduced by the Greeks who settled in Southern Italy a couple of millennia ago. It is another late maturing variety, best suited to warmer regions.

Our fourth wine came from the Barossa Valley—a [Small Fry Wines 2023 Starry Starry Night Cinsault](#). According to the tasting notes its colour is bright pink/red/crimson, Aroma, cranberries, raspberries with a bit of plum at the back and the palate, starts juicy then finishes dry, puckering. Halliday tasters gave this



one 91 points. This wine was followed by a [Small Fry Wines 2023 Pipernel Trousseau](#). Ian said this variety has 44 alternative names one of which is Bastardo! Trousseau originated in eastern France where it was once widely cultivated, and DNA profiling has indicated that the variety has a parent-offspring relationship with [Savagnin](#), and that it is a sibling to Chenin Blanc and Sauvignon Blanc. DNA profiling has likewise shown that Trousseau has been cultivated on the Iberian Peninsula for at least 200 years.

The last two wines came from Mt Bera in the Adelaide Hills they were firstly a [Mt Bera 2024 Amphitheatre Blaufrankisch](#). Rich black fruit is contrasted by peppery flavours and boisterous acidity in this food friendly Australian red. Blaufrankisch, also called Limberger in Germany, is celebrated for its versatility and ability to pair with a wide range of dishes (Mt Bera tasting sheet) Halliday rates this one at 89 points.

The final tasting of the night was a [Mt Bera 2024 Vineyards Adelaide Hills WILD & FREE Mencia](#). “It’s the perfect business card for the variety – the wine to pour for someone who has never tried Mencia before. They’ll absolutely fall in love”. Its concentrated core of black cherry and blackberry compote, framed by a subtle meaty edge and an earthy, ashy graphite lift. Savoury and muscular yet vibrant and approachable, this wine delivered a bold, clear statement of purpose. (Young Guns of Wine – Best of Mencia. Mt Bera tasting sheet)

As we tasted the final wine our meals were served accompanied by leftover tasting and welcome wine.

Our meal over, John Ellis took the floor, amused us with a couple of his ‘dad’ jokes and presented Ian with a certificate of appreciation.



Unusual wines continued

It was then time for the door prizes. Ian did the honours selecting the tickets and the winners were Peter Boehm, Jenny Ruby, Paul Keady Ian Cooper and Laurie Rundle.



Graeme closed the evening reminding us we would be back in the CWA rooms in February for a tasting with White Gate Wines. He also announced that Peter Frick will be sending out a quick survey regarding the 'home' location for this year—The Clubhouse, CWA rooms or a mix of both.

Photos.



Photos continued



Wines

Welcome: **Thorn Clarke 2012 Malbec**

WINEMAKERS NOTE: Dark red with red hues. The wine has aromas of violets, satsuma plum and spices. The wine has an underlying earthiness which shows on both nose and palate. This combined with satsuma plum and enticing spice gives this wine interest on the palate. The wine is much softer in the mouth than expected when smelling the wine.

VINTAGE NOTES: A warmer spring and cooler summer saw the Barossa begin vintage 2012 with some exceptionally healthy vines and expectations for early maturation. Maximum mean temperatures in the Barossa in spring (September to November) were slightly above average, which led to good vegetative growth, healthy vines and potentially early maturation, while summer mean maximum temperatures were cooler than average

WINEMAKING: Fermentation in 6T open fermenters, soaked on skins for 7 days post fermentation. Malolactic fermentation in barrel. Oak maturation for 24 months in 2 year and older 50% American and 50% French oak barrels. The wine was then held in stainless steel until bottling. Minimal filtration was used prior to bottling.

Vineyard: St Kitts, Alcohol 14.5 %, Price \$30.00 (Cellar)

Halliday: "Allows the Barossa Valley to put a foot between the Clare Valley (Wendouree) and Langhorne Creek (most of its best producers), for this is a very well made malbec that has cruised along building both texture and flavour as it has done so." 93 Points. Published 21 March 2022

1. Brown Brothers 2024 Cienna

Notorious for tasting like summer berries in a glass, Cienna is packed with juicy bright flavours of blueberry, raspberry, and vanilla. Wildly versatile to pair with everything from spicy Chinese hot pots to a mouth-watering meringue, Cienna is a vibrant and easy-drinking red wine that shines in hot Aussie summers and actually benefits from being kept cool in the fridge.

Cienna is a delicious and unique wine that is gaining popularity among wine enthusiasts. Developed in Australia in the late 1970s, Cienna is a hybrid grape variety that is a cross between the Spanish grape Sumoll and the red wine grape Cabernet Sauvignon. It produces a fruity and sweet red wine that is best served chilled, making it a perfect summer wine. One of the reasons Cienna is best served chilled is because it has a relatively high sugar content. When served chilled, the wine's sweetness is balanced by its acidity and freshness, making it a refreshing and easy-to-drink wine. Chilling the wine also helps to enhance its fruity flavours and floral notes, giving it a crisp finish that is perfect for hot summer days. A versatile food wine, it's the sweetness of Cienna that makes it an ideal match for spicy dishes, as it can help to offset the heat. It also pairs well with succulent grilled meats, cheese, chocolate and desserts.

Alc: 8.5%, Price \$20.00 (Cellar Door) \$13.95 (Dan Murphy)



2. Brown Brothers 2023 Tarrango



The very essence of a summer drink, Tarrango wine embodies all the thirst-quenching qualities of a cocktail, craft beer, or Rosé – super fruity, juicy, refreshing, dry – emerging at a time when our warming climate demands more of our wine be chilled in the fridge.

Enjoy with a full table of friends and plenty of food, from peppery cheese and sorbet to BBQ meats, or Indian curries loaded with spice and heat.

There's no denying the environment plays a huge role in winemaking; with climate, terroir, and vineyard cultivation all influencing how a bottle of wine is both made and ultimately enjoyed. Enter Tarrango.

Developed in partnership with the CSIRO, Tarrango was well ahead of its time when Brown Brothers first pioneered the light-bodied red in 1965. A cross between a Sultana and the Portuguese grape Touriga, Tarrango was the direct result of trial and experimentation – driven by our desire to create a unique wine varietal better suited to thrive in the hot, arid

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climate of Australia.

It's juicy, light, and inherently drinkable; ripe with delicious fruit flavour and natural acidity.

A Brief History of Tarrango:

Tarrango was the brainchild of the late Dr. Alan Antcliff of the CSIRO, who had found that the classic European grape varieties didn't really produce the fruity, fleshy flavours suited to Aussie conditions. Named after the tiny township of 'Tarrango' in the Mallee district of northwest Victoria, Antcliff sought to develop a new grape varietal that would thrive in the warming Australian climate as well as the palates of consumers, and the idea to breed a light-bodied red was born.

1960s – 1990s

Tarrango came to Brown Brothers in a small bundle of cuttings from the Department of Agriculture. By the late 1960s, Brown Brothers had built a strong reputation for being experimental, and the Department of Agriculture was keen for us to trial this exciting new varietal. It took some time to get these cuttings established and bearing fruit, and the next decade was dedicated to demanding viticultural work and extensive wine trialling before we could finally bring a commercial product to life.

"We sold a lot of Tarrango during the '80s and early '90s," says Emma Brown, Marketing Manager & 4th generation family member. "But then it began to drop off from the mid-90s. We think that's because other, sweeter wines like our Moscato and off-dry red Cienna became more popular in Australia. So, the Tarrango – which was a dry wine – became pretty much an export-only product, sold to places like the UK, where people still loved it."

Next Generation Tarrango

Left to the fate of our 4th generation sisters, Tarrango is about to be reborn. The very essence of a summer drink, this wine embodies all the thirst-quenching qualities of a cocktail, craft beer, or Rosé; re-emerging at a time when changing consumer palates and our warming climate demands more of our wine be chilled in the fridge.

"It fits the lighter, early-drinking style of red wine that's recently become popular with Grenache, Gamay and so on," says Emma. "Made by the Australian climate for the Australian climate, it's a great opportunity for people to enjoy wine on even more occasions."

Made with grapes grown at our Mystic Park vineyard in northwest Victoria, the 2022 vintage is similar in style to the Tarrango from the 1980s – super fruity, juicy, refreshing, dry – but with new winemaking techniques and a contemporary new look. For this wine, a small amount of fruit has been fermented by carbonic maceration, where berries are allowed to ferment whole and uncrushed. This technique adds complexity, enhancing the bright berry flavours and resulting in a delicate and refreshing red wine bursting with flavours of redcurrant, wild cranberry, and spice.

Halliday (2025 vintage) "Tarrango is a CSIRO-developed crossing of (white) sultana and (red) touriga nacional combining fruit sweetness with red fruits and especially vivid purple hues. It's all about easy drinking, with red berries, cranberry, pomegranate, spice and sweet boiled lolly confection that runs smooth, crisp and off-dry across the palate. A little chilling down opens up the drinking possibilities." 88 Points *Jeni Port*, Published 09 December 2025

Alc: 13%, Price \$20.00 (Cellar Door) \$18.99 (Dan Murphy)

Spinifex 2020 Adelaide Hills Aglianico

Artisans web site: Pete says, "Aglianico has shown a great affinity for this site with the fruit ripening very late, typically just before the break in the season, with deep flavours, fresh tannins and high natural acids."

Aglianico, [alli-YAN-nik-oh] the name of this red wine variety which is now at home in Southern Italy, is believed to be derived from *Ellenico*, the Italian word for Greek. This gives us a clue that the wine may have been introduced by the Greeks who settled in Southern Italy a couple of millennia ago. The variety hasn't moved far since, seemingly content to hibernate in obscurity in the southern Italian regions of Campania and Basilicata, but that is now



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changing.

In his latest book *Wine Terroir and Climate Change*, Gladstones includes Aglianico in Maturity Group 8, along with varieties such as Montepulciano, Mourvedre and Carignan. This means it is a late maturing variety, best suited to warmer wine regions.

In Italy this variety makes full-bodied elegant wines with firm tannins and high acidity. Aglianico is made into varietal wines or is often the dominant variety in blends. Australian wineries have been slow to adopt this variety compared to other recent imports but the number of producers is growing steadily. Aglianico's ability to make deeply coloured and aromatic wines in warm to hot regions indicates that it is a variety with considerable future in Australia.

Also Called: Gnanico, Agliatica, Ellenico, Ellanico, Uva Nera and Southern Barolo

Alc: 14% Price \$28.00 (Cellar Door)

Small Fry Wines 2023 Starry Starry Night Cinsault

As our Cinsault plantings bear fruit it is a pleasure to be exploring the potential of this variety to counter the effects of climate change. This is pure unadulterated Cinsault, it is important to me that light palate weight does not mean a simple wine

Colour: Bright pink/red/crimson

Aroma: Cranberries, raspberries with a bit of plum at the back.

Palate: Starts juicy then finishes dry, puckering.

Summary: A chance to try the variety by itself in pure form.

"From Wayne Ahrens' family vineyard and all biodynamic farmed. Juicy and bright expression, lively and pretty, lots of sweetish red fruits and powdery tannin, a crunch to acidity and strong pomegranate and cranberry red fruit vibes. Really refreshing, lighter red wine style with freshness and vitality in spades. Yum. 92 Points" Mike Bennie, *The Wine Front*, June 2022

Halliday: An earthy, light red wine designed to be chilled before serving. Blackberry, plum and dark forest fruits with hints of raspberry, hanging game, graphite, coal dust, dried herbs and undergrowth.

There's a fair bit of funk in the trunk with this one, meaty, andouille kind of vibes with a tug of tannin grip and a blast of sour cherry on the finish. 91 Points. Dave Brookes, Published 22 March 2024

Also called: Cinsault, Cinq Sao, Ottavianello

Alc: 11% Price \$36.00 Cellar Door

Small Fry Wines 2023 Pipernel Trousseau



"A further extension into the fresh young red space, Pipernel takes us where angels fear to tread. Suzi especially wanted to explore a whole bunch fermented reductive style and Trousseau is the perfect vehicle. Just a minimal SO2 add and bottled en casa this is natural wine in anyone's language. Previously we have used the old vine Trousseau/Bastardo in our Joven blend and I have seen it as dark fruits, Mulberry, Blackberry but in this wine it seems to me more red fruited and rhubarby, nice herbal from the whole bunch and fitting the brief of juicy, smashable, complex and interesting."

Colour: Cherry red and murky.

Aroma: Rhubarb, herbal, cranberry, earth.

Palate: Light and bright, some nice stalky tannin.

Summary: Banging right now, why waste any time?

Also called: Abrunhal, Bastardinha, Bastardinho, **Bastardo**, Bastardo Do Castello, Bastardo Dos Frados, Bolonio, Capbreton Rouge, Carnaz, Chauche Noir, Cruchenton Rouge, Donzelino De Castille, Estaladiña, Graciosa, Gris De Salces, Gros Cabernet, Maria, Maria Adona, Maria Adorna, Maria Ardonna, Maria Ordonna, Maturana Tinta, Maturana Tinto, Maturano, Merenzano, Merenzao, Pardino, Pecho, Pinot Gris De Rio Negro, Roibal, Sémillon Rouge, Tresseau, Triffault, Trousse, Trousseau, Trousseau Gris, Troussot, Trusiaux, Trusseau, Trussiau, Tintilla and Verdejo Tinto

Trousseau originated in eastern France where it was once widely cultivated, and DNA profiling has indi-



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cated that the variety has a parent-offspring relationship with Savagnin, and that it is a sibling to Chenin blanc and Sauvignon blanc. DNA profiling has likewise shown that Trousseau has been cultivated on the Iberian Peninsula for at least 200 years under several different names, including Bastardo, but it is unknown how it came to be introduced there. It needs hot, dry conditions to do well. The name Trousseau (from Old French trusse, meaning "a bundle") is possibly a reference to the shape of the bunch, it looks 'packed up'

Alc: 13%, Price \$40.00 Cellar Door

Mt Bera 2024 Amphitheatre Blaufrankisch

Rich black fruit is contrasted by peppery flavours and boisterous acidity in this food friendly Australian red. Blaufrankisch, also called Limberger in Germany, is celebrated for its versatility and ability to pair with a wide range of dishes (Mt Bera tasting sheet)

Halliday: A lighter-weight red that prosecutes its case well. Red cherry, smoky spice, game meat, bacon bones and dried herbs are the quarry. A little sourness through the finish is a quibble, but the general gist is a savoury-leaning, succulent red of interest and liveliness. A light chill could work well, too. 89 Points, Mike Bennie, Published 19 November 2024

Also called; modra frankinja, Lemberger, Blauer Limberger, Frankovka (Franconia), Kékfrankos, Gamé

Alc: 13.5%, Price \$45.00 (Cellar door)



Mt Bera 2024 Vineyards Adelaide Hills WILD & FREE Mencia



"It's the perfect business card for the variety – the wine to pour for someone who has never tried Mencia before. They'll absolutely fall in love". Its concentrated core of black cherry and blackberry compote, framed by a subtle meaty edge and an earthy, ashy graphite lift. Savoury and muscular yet vibrant and approachable, this wine delivered a bold, clear statement of purpose. (Young Guns of Wine – Best of Mencia. Mt Bera tasting sheet)

Halliday: "I have been thrilled to see Mencia taking off in the Adelaide Hills. Here you'll unveil some indigo tones of Blackberries, boysenberry and rosemary stem. Toasty notes of roasted caraway seed, fennel and rye. Graphite, coal dust and a briar burl wood note. The nose invites you in and the palate immediately wakes you up with elevated acidity, perky and poignant black cherry juice and a sandy granular tannin profile on the finish. It's worth seeking out for the unique and interesting shapes and forms that Mencia can showcase, here it is well integrated, punchy and suited to the cool climate of the Hills. It is in a lovely spot for drinking now or in 3-4 years. Serve with baby back ribs, with a smokey bbq sauce,

that is equally lip smacking as the wine." Shanteh Wale

Also called: Fernao Pires Tinta, Gao, Jaen, Loureiro Tinto, Mencin, Negra, Negro, Mencia Roble, Tinto Mencia and Tinto Mollar. It is known as Jaén colorado in León

Alc: 13.5%, Price \$45.00 (Cellar door)

