

MAY 2016

Bruce Thiele Red Wine Club

Massive Mataro Master Class

The 33 members and guests who attended our May event were greeted with an astonishing sixteen carefully masked bottles awaiting tasting. Rick helped by Kym (and Michael Sawyer) had an astounding line-up of Mataro Wines.

We started with two 'welcome' tastings with our usual nibbles (thanks Graham) while we completed the formalities of our AGM (see Peter's Minutes).

Rick explained we would be tasting the wines in brackets of two revealing and discussing the wines after each bracket. Mataró is also known as Mourvèdre or Monastrell and Rick explained it has over 60 other 'names'. It is not a very 'trendy' wine and is only grown locally by 'devotees'.

The first wine ('**Local, with a bit of Grenache and a little bottle age**') was one of Rick's own a Burge Family Winemakers 2010 Olive Hill Mouvédre/Grenache. A blend of 72 percent Mouvédre with 28 percent Grenache—the Mouvédre's tannins moderated by the Grenache's floral character. This was paired with a '**Classic**' - 2013 Teusner 'The Dog Strangler' Mataro—a classic Barossa Mataro.

We then sat at the tables with a second class so we could taste the wines as pairs.

Two younger styles

Wine number 3 was a 2014 Tscharke 'Stonewell vineyard' Mataro from Marananga. This was paired with (number 4) a 2014 Hewitson 'Baby Bush' Mourvèdre (also Barossa Valley). Hewitson has reputedly some of the oldest Mourvèdre vines in the world.

Diverse regions—uncanny resemblance!

The next two wines (5 & 6) were a 2011 Domaines Ott Château Romassan (from Bandol, Provence, France) and a 2011 Torbreck Kylee Mataro (Barossa Valley of course). These wines were older, fuller and more complex. Michael Sawyer noted that despite its reputation 2011 was not a bad year for Mataro. The Kylee gets its name from the growth habit of Mataro—it grows quickly and straggly much like a highland cow (Kylee).

If you are not liking Mataro by this stage you've probably made a mistake tonight.

Wines 7 & 8 were a 2014 Tim Smith Mataro and a 2014 Turkey Flat Mataro. Both were appreciated by the members— "the best yet".

Two bloody serious Mataros

The next two (9 & 10) were a 2013 Caillard Mataro and 2012 Hewitson 'Old Garden' Mourvèdre.



We welcomed two guests—Rud Nicholson and Tom Stone and wished Michael Sanderson a very happy birthday!

Massive Mataro Master Class Continued

The Caillard was rounded with distinct fruit. The 'Old Garden' came from some of the oldest Mataro vines planted in 1853.

Pushing the envelope!

Wines 11 & 12 were a 2015 Tim Smith Reserve Mataro and a 2015 Teusner 'The Righteous' Mataro. The Tim Smith had strong fruit and the Teusner was a barrel sample and needed some ageing.

Things are now getting serious

Next on the long list were (13) a 2013 Torbreck 'The Pict' (magnum) and (14) a 2010 Tempier 'Cabassaou'. The Torbreck came from a single vineyard in a quarry where it was hotter it was compared to another single vineyard wine from Bandol, Provence, France.

Food at last!

While we enjoyed Toms Catering's Roast lamb & pork, Hasselback potatoes, stuffed tomato and stir fry vegetables we sampled wines 15 & 16 a 2005 Primitivo Quiles 'Raspay' from Alicante n Spain and a 1997 Jenke Barossa Mouvedre. Members saw how this variety ages.



Massive Mataro Master Class: The wines



1. Burge Family Winemakers 2010 Olive Hill Mourvèdre/Grenache.

A blend of 72 percent Mourvèdre with 28 percent Grenache—the Mourvèdre's tannins moderated by the Grenache's floral character. This wine is only made when Rick Burge deems the Mourvèdre from this single vineyard to be of outstanding quality.

Alcohol : 15.3% Price : \$25

2. 2013 Teusner 'The Dog Strangler' Mataro

In the wide and wonderful world of wine you'll find around 60 or more synonyms for one of our favourite varieties – Mataro. There's the well-known ones such as Mourvèdre and Monastrell and lesser known ones such as Balzac and Experte. Now we love the mutts at Teusner (where dogs can sometimes out number humans!)...so it's somewhat ironic that we chose this particular name for Mataro...*EstrangleChienin* France...The Dog Strangler in the Barossa! Select parcels of old vine Mataro have been sourced from all over the Barossa...from Vine Vale, Greenock, Moppa and Ebenezer...all vinified separately to produce a wine that is complex and a pleasure to drink. 2013 was dry. How dry? The driest growing and harvest period on record in the Barossa. But those conditions didn't trouble the old vineyards with their roots deep down in the sandy soils, and we made some cracking wines. There's plenty of dark plum, mulberry fruits and five spice character on this Dog's nose. Rich, savoury and spicy on the palate...all the stuff that makes us love this variety in abundance.



Alcohol: 14.5% Price: \$35

3. 2014 Tschanke 'Stonewell vineyard' Mataro



VINTAGE REPORT The wines produced from the vintage of 2014 are excellent. The weather conditions during spring and early summer were dry and above average heat degree-days regulated shoot growth and berry development. By mid February and well into veraison, soil moisture levels were extremely low but a record-breaking rain event replenished the soils. The weather conditions that followed were ideal. 'Balanced' probably best describes most wines from our harvest this year.

VINEYARD This Mataro vineyard was planted on our Stonewell property in 2001. Trained onto a single cordon wire, the vertical growth habit produces canopies that help shelter the fruit from the intense sun allowing enough dappled light to assist colour and flavour accumulation. The North Westerly facing aspect has moderately deep brown clay soils with underlying calcareous chalk. The late ripening vineyard is well suited to these soils retaining fresh canopies by harvest echoed by the balanced acid and fresh flavours under warm growing conditions. **WINEMAKING** The hand-harvested fruit is completely destemmed and crushed to an open top fermenter. The must is inoculated and allowed to ferment between 22-25°C until dry. The cap is managed by pumping over twice daily without splashing.

The Wines

Once primary fermentation has been completed the ferment is bag pressed and racked to 2 year old Demi Muid French oak. The wine was bottled 17 months after harvest.

TASTING NOTES Red in colour, the aromatics are intense, red liquorice, coconut, raspberry, malt and sage. The well balanced palate is filled with bright cherries, sage and spice finishing with a subtle hint of spearmint. This wine shows great structure, harmony and restraint. It will drink best from 2017 to 2021.

Alcohol 14.5% / vol. Price \$35

4. 2014 Hewitson 'Baby Bush' Mourvèdre

Full-bodied, tannic, blackcurrant notes, strawberry jam notes, eucalyptus notes, spicy.

Alcohol 14.0% / vol. Price \$28



5. 2011 Domaines Ott Château Romassan



Château Romassan is located in the Bandol appellation where the land is comprised of limestone, sandstone and marl of the late Cretaceous marine period. These poor soils are offset by the large amount of stone in the soils throughout this appellation. The Bandol appellation is known for its terraced landscapes built from the hard stone with vines, which are planted into vast terraces with varying exposures. Cultivation methods are traditional and the soil is mechanically tilled and young shoots are trained with the greatest care to the plant. Winemaking The soil is poor, composed of limestone, sandstone, and marine Upper Cretaceous marls. The sea air from the Bay of Bandol compensates for the terroirs acidity and low rainfall. Tasting Notes This wine as a deep ruby robe. The nose is elegant and powerful, characteristics of the Château Romassan Bandolais terroir. Delightful notes of Morello cherry, followed by more spicy and fresh notes of clove, fused with aromas of leather, making it a very complex red wine. The mouth is opulent and concentrated with notes of Morello cherry and blackcurrant. The powerful frame with silky tannins makes this a very balanced wine. Price \$75

6. 2011 Torbreck Kyo Mataro

Mataro wines are known for their substantial tannin profile, *Kylo* means high-land steer, a wild and hardy beast. Torbreck take the pick of crop from the finest blocks in Barossa Valley, each one picked to a different schedule determined by individual ripeness, ensuring complete flavour development, essential to retaining upfront fruit characters in the finished wine. An extended term of age in well seasoned barrels, tames the masculine tannins without infusing conspicuous oak, for an old world style of Mataro offering an intensity of pure varietal eloquence. A compilation of Mataro from splendid sites in the ancient Barossa winegrowing districts of Marananga and Ebenezer, Seppeltsfield and Moppa, Greenock and Gomersal. All parcels are picked at different times during vintage to achieve harvests of perfectly ripened fruit. Bunches are destemmed into a mix



The Wines (Cont.)

of large oaken vats and traditional open top concrete fermenters, juice are gently pumped over the cap and skins twice daily throughout a week and more of vinification. Upon completion, batches are basket pressed and naturally settled before racking into a selection of older, prior use French oak hogsheads, for two years maturation and assemblage without fining or filtration.

Price \$30

7. 2014 Tim Smith Mataro

A blend of 3 different vineyards, aged up to about 130 years of age. All are low yielding, and on 3 distinct soil types. The Kalimna block (130yrs old) is on grey sandy soil, almost like a beach. This provides great fragrance and perfume. The palate is quite light and has soft, fine tannin. The Penrice block (50yrs old) also has great perfume, but a more soulful palate. Soils here are classic Barossa Valley floor, ie rich dark loam. The third block, in Greenock, has great sub-regional mid palate focus, with a slightly less aromatic profile. Soils here are characterized by light yellow loam, with ironstone flecks. The sum of all three sites produce a wine with lifted perfume, and great mid palate drive. Old world winemaking methods, larger format French oak, unfinned/unfiltered. 130 cases made.



Price \$35

8. 2014 Turkey Flat Mataro

Encounters with unblended Australian Mataro (also known as Mourvèdre) are rare. The origins of Mataro are almost certainly Spanish where it is often called Monastrell. It is the principal black grape of the five appellations that cluster on Spain's South-eastern Mediterranean Coast.

A very late variety in both bud break and ripening season, the Barossa Valley is one of the few areas in Australia that can successfully ripen Mataro. One of the original grapes grown in the Barossa Valley, Mataro thrives in the hot and dry conditions of a Barossa summer.

The wine produced from Mataro's small, sweet, thick-skinned berries tend to be deeply coloured, rich in spice, high in alcohol and tannin, gamey when young and full of fruit.

Ripeness levels are critical to producing Mataro with this rich level of fruit & spice. Careful selection of French oak enhances the fruit characters and structure of this wine.

Alcohol 14.5% Price \$30

9. 2013 Caillard Mataro

Andrew Caillard, MW: "Deep colours, aromatic complexity, rich persistent flavours, inky concentration and fine supple tannins characterise our 2013 Caillard Mataro. Maturation in a combination of seasoned and new (10%) French oak barriques, and a further year of bottle age have allowed the wine to relax into itself. It is ready for drinking, or you can keep it for a while and let it evolve." The low yielding, dry and warm 2013 vintage produced fruit of beautiful deep colours, intensity of flavour and tannin quality. Our fruit is sourced from two exceptional mataro vineyards in the Barossa Valley. The transparency of Giorgiadis vineyard fruit



The Wines (Cont.)



against the opaqueness of “Schiller’s” brings an expressive tension and balance. After traditional vinification in open-fermenters the wine was matured in a combination of seasoned and new French oak barriques for an extended period of around 16 months to allow the fruit to develop richness, volume and complexity. Vineyard characters, wine-making nuances and maturation notes are all harmonised in the wine through intuitive feel and rigorous blending of barrels. The Rainbow Lorikeet label, based on principals of oriental art, symbolises the harmony of nature and nurture. The long bottle green “plume” is similar to the “peacocks tail”; a tasting term that indicates a wine with textural length. It was painted by Andrew Caillard in 2013.

Alcohol: 14.5% Price \$50

10. 2012 Hewitson ‘Old Garden’ Mourvèdre

The oak characters help soften tannins while complimenting the terroir-based flavour profile of black, glazed cherries, dark chocolate, mocha and even orange peel that manifests itself each year in this single vineyard wine. This demonstrates the remarkable nature of the vineyard and is why we are proud to produce a wine of such iconic distinctiveness. The 2012 Old Garden is already a classic and speaks of its rich tradition and inheritance. Planted in 1853, Dry-grown original planting is the oldest Mourvèdre vineyard in the world.

96 points, James Halliday, Australian Wine Companion “*the bold and the beautiful in one*”

Price \$88



11. 2015 Tim Smith Reserve Mataro

No tasting notes available

Price \$95



12. 2015 Teusner ‘The Righteous’ Mataro.



“The first release of our top level Mataro was in 2006 and again in the excellent 2009 vintage....this same vineyard has blown us away and made it into the 2011 Teusner Righteous Mataro. It’s a “fruit salad” vineyardan old-school, Barossan mixed planting....predominately Grenache but if you look closely, amongst those floppy Grenache vines you’ll see about every fourth vine has slightly different coloured leaves and stands up straighter....these are the Mataro vines that the Roennfeldt family pick separately for us. Planted in the Marananga sub-region in the 1930’s on red-brown loams over clay, the 0.3ha Roennfeldt Dirks Block vineyard lies in a fairly flat section with a North/South orientation. The fruit is hand-picked and goes through fermentation in open-vats before being aged for two years in oak – 30% new oak (50% French/50% American) and 70% old oak which is a blend, again, of French and American. It then makes its way to bottle without fining or filtration and with minimal sulphur.”

Price \$95

The Wines (Cont.)

13. 2013 Torbreck 'The Pict' (magnum)

Torbreck has always pronounced a strong influence from French wine styles and varieties in our approach to wine making, and The Pict fervently displays these influences.

The wild, rugged and earthen aromas typically associated with the Bandol region of France provide the basis for this powerful single vineyard Mataro. Fresh soil, tree bark, cassis and leather dominate the nose with hints of spice, chocolate and drying meats evolving with time in the glass. The expansive palate is rich and dense with a rustic core of earth, tar and black olive all tightly framed by the wine's mineral-strewn tannins. Although beautifully balanced in its youth, The Pict has the constitution and structure to continually evolve for many years to come. After hand harvesting on the 8th of April this small batch was destemmed into a single cement vat where it spent 8 days before being 'gravity-drained' and basket pressed. The juice was then racked into new French barriques where it completed a slow malo-lactic fermentation and was aged for two years. The best barrels were later assembled and the wine was bottled without filtration or fining on June the 13th 2012.

Alcohol: 15.7% Price \$90 (magnum)



14. 2010 Tempier 'Cabassaou'.

This small terroir located in the lower part of the La Tourtine vineyard benefits from specific winegrowing conditions: sheltered from the Mistral wind by the headland of Le Castellet, a gentle breeze always blows up its terraced slopes while the south-south-westerly exposition ensures maximum sunshine. These exceptional conditions allow the Mourvedre (95% of the terroir's production) to reach its ideal ripeness. The low yield makes the Cabassaou a rare cuvée. Robust and powerful with dense tannins, it often surprises those lucky enough to taste it: Cabassaou is an exemplary wine.

Tucked into the Castellet hillside, this parcel is protected from the worst of the Mistral winds that can be experienced in other parts of the La Tourtine vineyard. During the hottest part of summer an upward breeze provides welcome ventilation for the vines. Boasting vines that are around 50 years old, this parcel has extraordinary potential for producing high-quality wines. Like many of La Tourtine's vines, they were grafted in the vineyard by Lucien and François Peyraud.

Price \$325 (magnum)



15. 2005 Primitivo Quiles 'Raspay'

Balsamic and pepperminty, with savoury, cedary woodiness and fruity relief - gently earthy red fruits, red apple over bright red cherry. It's a fine and quiet wine, driven by woodiness - not just the old wood in which it's aged, but the wood of the old vines expressing itself through the fruit and carrying with it the memory of Mediterranean herbs - sage, black lavender, wild fennel ... and there's a touch of clove spice. There's lovely perfume in the mouth, all savoury and cedary with those dried herbs, and earth. It's subtle, gentle and fine. It's also very quirky, and for some will be way too much about oxidative old wood handling!

Was the wine dinner in honour of His Majesty King Juan Carlos I of Spain on his first



The Wines (Cont.)

official visit to the city of Alicante in 1976, hence the presentation feature that remains today. It is made in small batches and traditionally, raised then in old oak barrels and long bottle packaging. Variety: Monastrell Alcohol: 14% vol. Ageing: 24 months in American oak barrels semi viejas. Tasting: fine aroma intense, fruit jam, old wood; The palate is soft, round, ripe, touches of old wood and spices, ripe, tasty fruit. Gastronomy: it is an excellent complement to meat of lamb, stews, rice with meat or vegetables, meats or grilled meats.

Price \$65

16. 1997 Jenke Barossa Mouvedre

Mouvedre is the synonym for the Spanish varietal Mataro, however, Mataro has become less sexy, and so winemakers have reinvented the variety. Made from 107 year old bush vines, which makes it a rare drink to begin with. Opaque crimson mauve colour. The nose displays distinct aromas of leather, earth and spice - very Rhone like. The palate is full bodied with lots of ripe plum, spice and liquorice flavours being overshadowed by an earthy component, which is enhanced by a strong white pepper back palate. Excellent depth of flavour, fine grained tannins and long aftertaste. A wine of great character and individuality - perhaps the Barossa should consider planting more of this varietal

Priceless

