

SEPTEMBER 2016



Bruce Thiele Red Wine Club



A Return to Tscharke Wines

Our September meeting was held at Tscharke Wines, Marananga. This meeting was again proof that you can always learn and to expect the unexpected.

Upon arrival at the beautiful Chateau style tasting area we enjoyed a 2016 Tscharke "The Maser Montepulciano" while enjoying Canapes of rare roasted beef, crumbled cheddar and caramelised onion toasts.

In his welcoming comments Damien Tscharke mentioned Winemakers have 150 days to add the Barossa characteristics to a wine, i.e. the time the grapes are on the vine. The area that then affects the wine the most is during elevage. Elevage is a French term that refers to the wines maturation or the period between fermentation and bottling (thanks Dr Google). While the Barossa has wonderful conditions for growing grapes with warm dry weather, the ideal conditions for storing wine during elevage require cooler, humid conditions. In the Barossa this means insulated sheds along with expensive cooling plants. Damien believes a large percentage of faults are caused during this period. Damien then announced that we would continue our meeting at the newly constructed storage area.



Coming Up

- ◆ *October Away at Veritas with Rolf Binder*
- ◆ *November Bruce Thiele Commemoration Night at Home: Pinots with Rick Burge*
- ◆ *December Xmas at Jacob's Creek with wives and Partners*

Editor: Graham Jeffery

Photos: Rex Way

A Return to Tscharke Wines (Cont.)

We arrived in the bottling area which had an unusual large “mud” covered elongated dome at one end. This was the entrance to the storage area. Going down the steps we arrived at a viewing platform and one of the real “Wow” moments in Red Club history. Excavated to 5 metres in depth the area has a 1,000 barrel capacity. The water table is a further 5 metres below the floor level. Parts of the floor are concrete with other areas covered in gravel. A series of port holes in the wall allow moisture to either enter the area or be absorbed out of the area. Large fans at each end allow air to be drawn in or out of the storage. The aim is to maintain a constant temperature of around 13 degrees and a relative humidity of around 70%. Both of these objectives have so far been achieved. Barrels go into the storage area and remain there. Damien is hoping Barrel life will be extended from an average of 7 years to European standards where some barrels last up to 100 years. Processes such as cleaning and filling of barrels have had huge improvements in efficiency with the new system. Water is captured off the building and used within the building and then recycled for further use. Since moving to the new facility Damien has been able to sell 4 refrigeration units. Solar panels for power are also fitted. Enough said, if you missed this meeting make a point of seeing this amazing energy efficient facility. A credit to Damien and the Tscharke family’s vision.



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A Return to Tscharke Wines cont'd



Moving up stairs into the bottling area we enjoyed a main course of Honey and mustard glazed SchuAm pork lion, roasted apple, potato and fennel with cider jus. Organic green leaf salad with red wine vinegar dressing. While eating we enjoyed a further 5 tastings. During the tastings Damien further explained his wine making philosophies. With the climate warming Damien believes rather than looking for cooler growing areas there is a need to adapt to varieties better suited to warmer temperatures that also need less water to perform. These include Montepulciano, Graciano and renache. As a point of difference Damien is also making a European style Shiraz.

Damien also explained their policy of pricing wines on their cost rather than what they can get for them. A very generous discount was offered to members and plenty of sales followed.

A door prize raffle resulted in 3 bottles of Tscharkes' finest being taken home by members. Rex Way again was a winner, but kindly donated the prize to Jim Murray a guest for the night from WA.

Another amazing meeting. With the Tscharke family the future of the Barossa is in safe hands







The wines we sampled were;

2016 Tscharke The Master Montepulciano: layered and textural, dry savoury tannins & incredible structure. Rrp \$25, special \$15

2015 Tscharke Bed Hair Graciano: rich in bramble fruits, mint, dried herbs and sandalwood. Rrp \$25, special \$15

2015 BV Estate Tscharke Grenache Mataro: hints of rose petal and Turkish delight deliver a delicate package. Rrp \$25, special \$15

2015 The Project Montepulciano: a very extracted style, black fruits, cedar and cardamom spice. Rrp \$40, special \$40

2014 BV Estate Shiraz: (Old World Style) opulent, full bodied, concentrated fruit, persistent finish. Rrp \$25, special \$15

2014 The Distinction Shiraz: Traditional Barossa style, not yet released and has already pulled a gold medal, just delicious. Rrp \$90, special \$40

