

June 2008

In line with our quality not quantity wine philosophy, our new release letter format contains less words but some key messages. You can read greater detail on our website, www.yarrayarravineyard.com.au

We wrote in our last letter in November 2006 that the 2007 vintage had been devastated by a late spring frost which destroyed 90% of the crop. It was actually 96%. The emotional pain took many months to subside and was reinforced when there was only one short picking day instead of the usual ten. The good news is that the 2008 vintage which was the earliest ever, has been most successful with volumes better than average and the quality outstanding. All of the wines, despite the heat, have true varietal characteristics, which says something about our varieties and the Yarra Yarra terroir. Maybe the varieties are suited to our site and plants are more resilient than people!

This logically leads us to say something about global warming and one of Ian's hobby horses of planting the right varieties in the right areas, meaning varieties which ripen towards the end of the season rather than much earlier. Warming will become more pronounced in the next thirty years, so it is even more important to have later ripening varieties planted at Yarra Yarra. Ian has always said Yarra Yarra is too hot to grow great Pinot Noir or Chardonnay grapes, which are the earliest ripening of the classic varieties. To put our varieties into context, Sauvignon Blanc ripens about two weeks later than Pinot, followed by Semillon then Merlot and Cabernet Franc, with Cabernet Sauvignon and Syrah the last to be picked about four weeks later. Thus our later ripening varieties should continue to grow great grapes, even with global warming.

The wines being released, with the exception of the 2006 Syrah Viognier, are from the outstanding 2005 vintage, which produced some of the best grapes we have grown. All the wines have been bottled with Diam corks, which are cork taint free.

The *2005 Sauvignon Blanc Sémillon* (65%/35%) as usual, was fermented and aged in French Oak of which 30% was new. It has flavours of citrus and pear with wonderful mouth feel and length.

The *2006 Syrah* with 5% Viognier is spicy and plummy with a balanced, elegant palate and moderate 13.5% alcohol. It is an excellent follow up to the 2005 Syrah which was selected in The Top 20 Wines of the Year in the December 2007 Australian Financial Review magazine.

2005 Cabernets is 88% Cabernet Sauvignon, 2% Cabernet Franc and 10% Merlot of which 33% was aged in new fine grain French Oak. It is highly perfumed, with violets and red fruits, more forward than the Yarra Yarra with a little less intensity. This wine should not be underestimated.

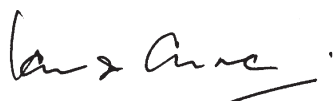
The *2005 The Yarra Yarra* is 100% Cabernet Sauvignon, aged in 55% of the tightest grain, new French Oak. It is intense and balanced with brilliant red berry and violet aromas and flavours plus amazing length and complexity.

2005 Reserve Merlot has chocolate and mulberry aromas and flavours with its characteristic seductiveness. This is an outstanding Merlot with length and complexity.

We look forward to seeing you at our *tasting weekends* on the 14th and 15th and 21st and 22nd of June. Our interstate and overseas wine friends are always welcome to visit whenever they are in Melbourne.

In conclusion, every year we remind ourselves that we are *producers of fruit* and without great grapes there would never be great wines.

Enjoy our wines,



Ian and Anne Maclean

