

MOUNT MAJURA VINEYARD

CANBERRA DISTRICT

SPRING NEWSLETTER

2003

NEW GROWTH

IN THIS ISSUE

New releases dominate this newsletter. Not only are there several new wines, but we bring you a completely new range called “Woolshed Creek”, plus our first releases under screwcap instead of cork.

We hope to see you at the vineyard for the “Days of Wine and Roses” Festival in early November, and we are giving you a couple of new ways to make your voice heard. We always love to hear from you, so read on and join in!

BROUGHT TO YOU BY:

Richard Berry
Andrew Cameron
Doug Dean
Len Dockrill
Chris Griffin
Kenyon Family
Nicola Seaton
Reg Wallin



mountmajura.com.au

DAYS OF WINE AND ROSES

Saturday and Sunday November 8-9.

Mount Majura Vineyard is opening to the public for the first time ever!

Every spring, Canberra District wineries celebrate the season and their new releases with the “Days of Wine and Roses” Festival. As you know, we don’t yet have a cellar door facility and are not generally open, but we’re taking the opportunity to make it a special weekend, with tastings and lots more happening.

We’ll set up a marquee and invite you to come along (10 am—5 pm), have a picnic, and taste all the award winners and new releases featured in this newsletter. There will be a sausage sizzle, and the chance to buy



your favourite Mount Majura Vineyard wines on the day. We’re offering a **10% discount** on case purchases at the Vineyard during the Festival!

Pick up a brochure about the Festival when you visit, get one from the Canberra Visitor Centre, find out more on our website, or save the lift-out guide from the *Canberra Times* on Wednesday November 5. The Vineyard is on Majura Road, 2 km from the Federal Highway — look out for the big white sign.



WOOLSHED CREEK

Welcome to a new range: the Mount Majura “Woolshed Creek” wines. They’re only available direct from the winery, so you won’t see them in bottle shops and restaurants, and they’re great value! Perfect quaffers for any occasion, and the barbecue season is here! At this stage there is a white blend, and a red, though there is only likely to be a red from occasional vintages.

Woolshed Creek is the stream across the road, running down the Majura Valley and running through quite a long period of time. The first Australian fossils from the Silurian period (about 420 million years ago) were discovered in Woolshed Creek near its confluence with the Molonglo River. These fossil shells were growing in the same sea that contributed the limestone underlying Mount Majura Vineyard. The Ngunnawal people arrived some time later, and artefacts from the long history of their settlement have been found at heritage sites throughout the valley. Quite a bit later again, whites came, includ-

ing Robert Campbell, who had been offered land and sheep in the area as compensation for the loss of one of his ships, commandeered by the Government to bring supplies from India. It seems that the name of the district and our vineyard thus derives from Majura in South India.

The Campbell family brought settlers out from Scotland in the 1830s to take up forty acre blocks in the Majura valley. Our neighbours have a woolshed (shearing shed) near the top of the creek, but apparently the name of the creek is more likely to derive from the old practice of washing the sheep in the creek before shearing. Near the woolshed are still some remains of a schoolhouse, and there used to be an early settler’s house, now long gone, near the vineyard. In one of our paddocks some irises may still be found that date from a settlers cottage. And we can thank those Silurian sea shells for the limestone underneath the vineyard, and some of the special character of our wines.

NEW RELEASES

2003 WOOLSHED CREEK WHITE

Paris has the Seine, London the Thames, and Canberra has ... Woolshed Creek. Well actually, Woolshed Creek in the Majura valley is only a tributary to the Molonglo River, yet it typifies the rural beauty of Canberra, also known as the 'Bush Capital'.

Whether for a picnic in the bush or lunch with friends, Woolshed Creek White is a delightfully refreshing white wine. Made from a blend of varieties, it is suited to almost any occasion.

What more is there to say, other than "great value"! Screwcap sealed.

2001 WOOLSHED CREEK RED

The 2001 Woolshed Creek Red is a soft and smooth lighter style of red wine made from Pinot Noir and well suited to almost any occasion.

The astute will notice that we're not releasing a 2001 Pinot Noir. Hmm, less than half the price of the Pinot too... So soft that it will take a chill for summer drinking. Enjoy!

2003 RIESLING

Riesling is grown on the coolest, most southerly aspect of our site, and this inaugural vintage shows promising floral and citrus characters. Scents of apple blossom lead to powerful grapefruit flavour and a long acid finish.

Riesling has made itself right at home in our "Pines" block, ripening its first crop at a gallop, so that delicate aromas have combined with good weight and wonderful natural acidity. Great drinking for the summer months but also expected to cellar well. Screwcap sealed.

Bronze medal, 2003 Canberra Regional Wine Show.

2003 PINOT GRIS

A white wine from pink grapes of a 'grey' variety, the message is clear: 'Gris is the new black! Varietal characters of pear, peach, hay and nougat make this soft, rounded wine tremendously appealing.

Pinot gris is a very interesting "new" variety that many will see as an alternative to Chardonnay. It has a lovely fullness to the palate even without any time in oak, and flavours that are in a different spectrum from the citrusy aromatics of varieties like Riesling. Made in a crisp and fresh style, but with evident varietal character and weight. Screwcap sealed.

2002 PINOT NOIR

A marvellous vintage has given this Pinot plenty of plummy, black cherry fruit with hints of sweet spice, jasmine and forest floor sappiness. Characteristically fine, even tannins support a long and supple palate.

The 2002 Vintage saw the first harvest of Pinot from our "North" block, planted to clones MV6 and 114. We thinned the crop quite heavily, yet didn't expect it to be this good. In the final analysis, the young vines earned their place in a blend with wine from the original "Dinny's" block. A lovely wine that has a good future in a cool cellar, and a worthy successor to the popular 2000, that sold out very quickly.

Silver medal, 2003 Canberra Regional Wine Show.

MIXED DOZEN

Order the mixed dozen or half-dozen of your choice, or use the easy Mixed Dozen option on the order form: two bottles each of the 2003 Riesling, 2003 Pinot Gris and 2002 Chardonnay, and three bottles each of the 2000 Cabernet Franc Merlot and 2002 Pinot Noir.

SCREWCAPS (AND THAT SATISFYING "CRACK")

There is a big change afoot in the wine industry, and now we're bringing it to you! Three of the new whites released in this newsletter are sealed with screwcaps. All across the world, but particularly in the more progressive winemaking countries like Australia and New Zealand, winemakers are giving up on tired old corks and using screwcaps to seal their wines instead. If you follow any of the wine press, you can't possibly have avoided reading about it. And if you have a taste for Riesling (as we do) you will have noticed that cork-sealed bottles are now the exception, not the rule.

So why is such a traditional industry changing to screwcaps so fast? And why are screwcaps being used for the best wines from the most quality conscious producers when they seemed to be a "cheap" closure for ordinary wines? The answer lies in the frustration winemakers have felt for a long time with cork taint. Quite simply, a small percentage of corks contain a smelly substance called TCA (trichloroanisole) and this taints the wine. When it's bad, the wine smells musty, and the more you learn to recognise that smell, the more often you notice that a bottle has been spoiled by the cork it was sealed with.

We spend a long time pruning and caring for our vines, picking ripe grapes at the right moment, crushing them and fermenting them with great care, using the best barrels and so on, and for the wine to be spoiled by the cork drives us absolutely nuts. But what is almost worse, is when there is only a very small amount of TCA in the cork, and the wine doesn't smell obviously "corked". At very low levels, TCA simply flattens and dulls the character of the wine, so you have no way of knowing that the cork is the reason you're not enjoying the wine,



SCREWCAPS (CONT)

and you might just think that it wasn't very well made. Now imagine how that makes us feel?

Obviously, we wouldn't make a significant change without evaluating it carefully, and there is a lot of information now that gives us confidence the screwcap is the best closure for wine. The more you read about it, the more you'll discover that sealing a wine bottle is a complicated business! Will the wine still age properly? Will there be other, new problems raising their heads? Should screwcaps be used for reds or only for whites? The short answers are yes, no, and both, but only if it is done carefully and with forethought.

We love the daily ritual of selecting a wine for dinner, carefully cutting the top off the capsule, pulling the cork with our favourite corkscrew, and then hearing that satisfying "pop". With a screwcap you just get a little "crack", but it is even more satisfying because you can be confident that the wine is pristine!

SCREWCAPS TO THE VOTE

Using screwcaps is not just about how the winemaker feels – we want to know what you think! Are you a screwcap convert, or do you still want corks? Would you be comfortable buying reds under screwcaps or only whites? Email us, or write on the back of your order form, and you may well influence our next bottling!



Cabernet franc vines are most readily distinguished from Merlot vines by the bronze colour of the young leaves.

DRINKING WELL

2000 CHARDONNAY

The 2000 Chardonnay is rich and round, all about texture. It envelops the senses in folds of cream and silk, flavours of melon and pear and caramel coming increasingly to the fore. Sourced entirely from the original block, stocks are limited.

Gold medal, 2001 Cowra Wine Show, **plus two bronzes**.

2001 CHARDONNAY

Very much in the same vein as the 2000, the 2001 Chardonnay has the silky richness and concentration that comes with low yields from mature vines. You still have a chance to try a few bottles of each of three vintages, and see how the site expresses itself through the changing seasons. Taste is a very personal thing, and some people prefer the 2001 over the 2000 and 2002, perhaps for the extra nutty dimension that comes from 100% malolactic fermentation.

Never entered in shows, since production fell below the volume requirements of most.

2002 CHARDONNAY

2002 was simply a brilliant vintage, and this is our best Chardonnay yet. Fresh and vibrant fruit flavours are to the fore, like new growth in spring. If you pause, there are all sorts of nuances to discover on the round, creamy palate, but it is always the fruit that keeps popping up again. Natural acid has been retained by restricting malolactic fermentation, giving the wine a mineral purity and great length. A more pure, fruit-driven style than the preceding vintages.

Fergus McGhie (*Canberra Times* 17/9/03) reporting on the Canberra

Regional Wine Show, wrote:

Mount Majura Wines' 2002 Chardonnay and the Kamberra Meeting Place 2002 Chardonnay claimed gold, with the Kamberra wine just out-pointing the Mount Majura for the trophy for best chardonnay. Both wines were lovely, sophisticated expressions of the variety without the fat, rich, cooked fruit and heavy oak flavours of some of the warmer climate styles.

Chris Shanahan was the Chief Judge and described the Mount Majura Vineyard 2002 as "superb" (*Canberra Times*, 28/9/03).

Gold medal, 2003 Canberra Regional Wine Show
Bronze medal, 2003 Rutherglen Wine Show
Bronze medal, 2003 Royal Adelaide Wine Show

2000 CABERNET FRANC MERLOT

It turns out that in the original 'Merlot' planting the majority of vines are actually Cabernet franc, and so this wine has now been renamed. In fact we are so impressed with the succulence and fragrance that Cabernet franc brings to the blend that we have included some of this variety in our newer plantings. Actual composition of this wine is Cabernet franc 55%, Merlot 31% and Cabernet sauvignon 14%. The Cabernet franc makes it quite different in style to Cabernet sauvignon predominant wines, being medium in weight and with a very supple and round mid-palate. This wine has benefited from a couple of years in bottle and is showing some developed chocolaty tobacco-like characters. Lovely drinking.

Frank van de Loo
Viticulturist & Winemaker



Mount Majura Vineyard's hand-crafted wines benefit from the unique combination of red volcanic limestone-containing soils, an easterly aspect and a cool climate. These features are consistently expressed in intense, elegant and complex wines. Grapes are sourced only from the Mount Majura Vineyard.



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VINEYARD NEWS

Winter was quite mild, but Spring has started cool, so while budburst has been marginally early, growth has been sluggish. Nevertheless the vines are starting to look green and it is always a thrill to see the cycle start again and know there's another vintage on the way.

We have had a few cold nights, but so far we have escaped the frosts that are always a danger in Spring. It is to avoid frost that the vineyard is planted on the slope, as cold air at night drains down the hill and pools on the flats. We assist the cold air drainage by keeping the grass between the rows mown short.

SPONSORING THE ARTS

Winemaking is truly a combination of Art and Science, which goes a long way to explaining why it's such a rewarding pursuit. At Mount Majura Vineyard, we're proud of some partnerships we've formed in the Arts community.

For three years now, Mount Majura Vineyard has been the wine sponsor to the Contemporary Collection Benefactors (CCB) at the Art Gallery of NSW. The CCB is a small but enthusiastic group of collectors and supporters of contemporary art in Sydney. The CCB raises funds to assist with the acquisition of contemporary art for the Art Gallery collection through a variety of functions including curator-led tours, dinners in collectors' homes and the Annual Dinner and Auction. This year the Dinner was held on 25th August in the grand Entrance Hall at the Art Gallery. Two hundred and fifty guests sat at two tables running the entire length of the Gallery. Mount Majura Vineyard 2000 Chardonnay was served on arrival, and the 2002 Chardonnay, 2000 Pinot Noir and 2000 Cabernet Franc Merlot were served to accompany the 3 course meal.

Meanwhile at the Canberra Contemporary Art Space, we were glad to sponsor wine for the opening in June of a very special exhibition, "Civilian Casualty" by Heidi Lefebvre, who has also spent many hours working in the vineyard alongside husband Thomas, our Vineyard Manager. Russell Smith (*Muse*) described Heidi's work as "a powerfully imagined experience across a disparate range of media and techniques". Heidi had a great review in *Real Time* magazine as well, and we wish her continued success.

Also in Canberra, we made a small contribution of wine to a fundraising night for Musica

Viva, helping young musicians on to new opportunities. We look forward to developing this partnership in the future.

HAVE YOUR SAY

Enjoyed a bottle of Mount Majura Vineyard lately? We'd like you to tell us about it in your own words. Perhaps you've always wanted to write a wine review ("ethereal nuances of truffles on the perfumed bouquet...") or maybe you're sick of them and just want to tell it like it is! Send us an email and you may well find that you're on our website or in the next newsletter!

OUR WEBSITE

The current and past issues of this newsletter are always available on our website, www.mountmajura.com.au, as well as lots of other information about the wines and the winery. We have a "News" page that we update regularly, so it's worth going back for a look from time to time. You'll also find a new section listing restaurants and fine wine shops that stock Mount Majura Vineyard. Our wine is only in restaurants we like, so use the listings as a recommendation. We haven't sorted out online ordering yet, but we aim to soon. It's not a fancy website, which is good if you want information that doesn't take ages to download. Email us while you're there to tell us what you think.

A NOTE ON FREIGHT

In the last newsletter, we offered up to \$10 off freight for each case, when you ordered wine from us. This "introductory offer" seems such a good idea that we're keeping it up!

The best address to have your wine sent to is where somebody will be present during the day to receive it, so your workplace may be a good choice. If the delivery address is unattended, and we don't write any specific instructions on the carton (such as if you ask us to leave the wine on the back porch or with a neighbour) then a card will be left asking you to collect your wine from the post office. This is a good idea because it ensures that the wine won't be left where it can be stolen or cooked in the sun.

Generally your wine should arrive within two weeks of placing your order, often faster. During the warmer months, we prefer to despatch wine early in the week so that it spends the minimum amount of time in transit. Please call or email us if you haven't received your wine within two weeks of placing your order!

MOUNT MAJURA VINEYARD

MAILING LIST

We would like to send our quarterly newsletter to you, our friends and customers.

Please indicate if you would prefer to receive our Newsletter by:

Mail Email Not

Your details will never be passed on to any third party.

Name:

Email:

Daytime Phone:

Postal Address:

Delivery Address:

Any Special Delivery Instructions:

ORDER FORM

Please order in multiples of 6 or 12 bottles, straight or any mix.

Just phone us on (02) 6262 3070 (8:00 - 8:00 Eastern time), or complete the form and return to:

Mount Majura Vineyard,
RMB 314 Majura Road,
Majura, ACT 2609
Fax: (02) 6262 4288
Email: sales@mountmajura.com.au

SPECIAL OFFER: UP TO \$10 OFF FREIGHT!

TO:	each 6 bottle carton	each 12 bottle carton
ACT	free!	free!
NSW	free!	free!
VIC	free!	free!
Brisbane, Gold Coast	free!	free!
QLD Country	free!	\$5.00
Adelaide	free!	free!
SA Country	free!	\$4.00
Perth	\$3.00	\$10.00
WA Country	\$5.00	\$15.00
NT	\$6.00	\$17.00
Tasmania	\$2.00	\$9.00

WINE	PRICE	NUMBER	TOTAL
2003 Woolshed Creek White	\$12.00		
2001 Woolshed Creek Red	\$12.00		
2003 Riesling	\$16.00		
2003 Pinot Gris	\$16.00		
2000 Chardonnay	\$20.00		
2001 Chardonnay	\$20.00		
2002 Chardonnay	\$20.00		
2000 Cabernet Franc Merlot	\$17.00		
2002 Pinot Noir	\$25.00		
Mixed Dozen	\$230.00		
Tax Invoice		WINE TOTAL	
Prices include GST		FREIGHT	
ABN 42 973 992 490		TOTAL	
Minimum order is six bottles.			

Please find enclosed my cheque/money order payable to **Mount Majura Wines (ACT) Pty Ltd**

Please debit my Bankcard Visa Mastercard.

Expiry date

Name on card

Card number

Signature:

OfficeUse Trans.

Despatch

Label No.