



R Y M I L L
COONAWARRA

RYMILL REVIEW



The Winemakers

John Innes and **Sandrine Gimon**, the Rymill Coonawarra winemakers, are clearly delighted with the quality of a recent Cabernet Sauvignon barrel sample. This versatile variety spends different periods of time maturing and softening in French oak barriques, depending upon the particular wine style in the Rymill Coonawarra Cabernet portfolio for which it is destined.

John, a graduate of Charles Sturt University, NSW, and now a seasoned veteran of twenty Coonawarra vintages, still finds every harvest an exciting new challenge. Sandrine, who trained at the University of Reims, brings a fresh, French accent to our winemaking. Together, they combine the best of the Old and New Worlds in the wines of Rymill Coonawarra.



FROM THE EDITOR



Welcome to the 2007 Rymill Review.

On a personal note, it's my turn to present a wedding photo, as Michael Gruetzner and I married this year, and had a wonderful day with family and friends.

For this edition, we have our two winemakers, John Innes and Sandrine Gimon, on the front cover. Luckily for me as editor, they are both not only outstanding at making wine, but they are also happy to share and express their thoughts on the matter. John has written another excellent article, and so too has Sandrine with her beautiful French accent!

Happy reading to you all and I do hope you continue to enjoy our Rymill Coonawarra wines.

Lisa

Lisa Rymill

COMPETITION



LAST YEAR'S WINNER

Our cellar door supervisor, Naomi Barnes, recently received an urgent phone call from the local ABC radio manager, Alan Richardson, with the information that two slightly merry politicians would soon be arriving to taste wine. They both knew whether or not the forthcoming budget estimates included funding for a new, high speed Penola-Coonawarra highway bypass. However, Alan had it on good authority that one invariably told the truth, while the other invariably lied, but he didn't know which was which. Would Naomi please try to elicit the correct answer from them, in time for the evening news.



When they arrived, Naomi was able to ask one question which immediately ascertained if funding had been provided for a bypass. What was the question she asked?

Email your answer to winery@rymill.com.au by 30 June 2008 to be placed in a draw to win a magnum of Rymill Coonawarra wine.



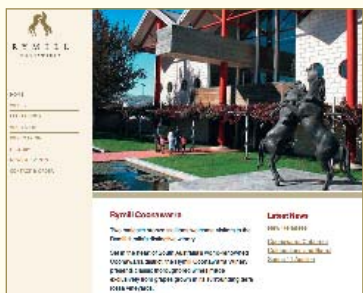
Robbie Mason congratulates Rosie Legoe from Lucindale, South Australia, for winning last year's competition. Rosie received a magnum of Rymill Coonawarra Cabernet Sauvignon for her outstanding perspicacity and acumen.

Other correct answers included in the final draw were received from Mark Coleman (Adelaide, SA), Edward Hickson (Buenos Aires, Argentina), Barb Oldmeadow (Heidelberg, Vic) and Chris Robinson (Peregian Beach, Qld), all of whom decided to change their choice to the other unopened magnum box.

Those who decided to stay with their original box may be interested in referring to Mark Haddon's book *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* (page 78) for both mathematical and diagrammatic solutions to a similar conundrum.

Thank you to everyone who entered, especially those who provided comments, as we love to hear from you.

OUR NEW WEBSITE



www.rymill.com.au



Having recently re-designed our website, www.rymill.com.au, we encourage you to visit it and, if you are not already a member of our mailing list, please do join up through the *Mailing List* page. You will then receive a copy of our annual Rymill Review, and will be contacted with any special offers and promotions.

If you delve into the website, you will find all sorts of surprises, such as environmental and historical information on Coonawarra, including the story of the Riddoch and Rymill families, as illustrated below.



John Riddoch, Mary (née Riddoch) Rymill, John Rymill, Peter Rymill, Lisa (née Rymill) Gruetzner

CABERNET REIGNS

'Coonawarra is the most preferred region in Australia for red wine', according to market research, and Cabernet Sauvignon is undoubtedly the monarch of the district's varieties. Consequently, **John Innes** and **Sandrine Gimon** have decided to expand Rymill Coonawarra's Cabernet range, with three singular wines, each reflecting different facets of this magnificent variety.



The latest addition to our Cabernet stable is **The Yearling**, a dashing one year-old. Competitive in both price and quality, it revels in any company. Especially made to capture the variety's lively, fruity aromas through cool maceration and a short fermentation, its soft, subtle structure is enhanced by early, gentle pressing. This vibrant wine is absolutely perfect to enjoy now.



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The stable stalwart is our traditional and well-performed **Cabernet Sauvignon**. This is a rich and powerful wine that hails from the excellent 2004 vintage. Aged in French oak barriques and displaying true regional characteristics, it is an expressive and fully flavoured wine that can be appreciated now, or cellared with confidence.



The champion in the field is Rymill Coonawarra's new flagship, the 2002 **Maturation Release**. This is a five-year-old Cabernet that has been carefully cellared under ideal conditions to ensure the evolution of its full spectrum of secondary fruit flavours. A rich and elegant wine from the heralded 2002 vintage, it is now perfect to enjoy at its mature best.

As Sandrine explains, *'It's a logical progression that we develop a Cabernet Sauvignon portfolio, with three Cabernets of different ages on the market at the same time. These Cabernets have all been made from vines with an average age of seventeen years and, as a winemaker, I know I can trust their grapes.'*

And you too can trust that, whichever wine you pick from this Cabernet trifecta, you will be betting on a winner!

FAREWELL JO AND ROHAN

Whilst we're reluctant to call them formal farewells, we have been forced to bid adieu to two of our invaluable team members this year.

As many of you would know, **Jo Aarons** was our bubbly, cheerful and dedicated sales and marketing manager. She has been a wonderful friend of Rymill Coonawarra during her seven years here and although we are saddened to see her moving on, we wish her and Daniel, and their new little daughter Lucille, all the best in Dunkeld, Victoria.

We have also been fortunate to have **Rohan Bardwell** as our export brand manager for the past three and a half



years. Luckily for us, however, Rohan has returned to work for our national distributors, **Negotiants Australia**, and as their Victorian sales manager, we are looking forward to maintaining frequent contact with him.

Thank you Jo and Rohan for your enormous contribution to Rymill over the years.

JUDITH RYMILL (1938-2007)



Judy Rymill, co-founder of Rymill Coonawarra, died in June. She grew up on Blackwood, her parents' property, near Penshurst, Victoria, and it was there that she married Peter Rymill in 1964. They were to have four children who were absolutely conjunctive to her heart, life and soul. As they came of age, and Peter became more involved in establishing the family's vineyards, she assumed the management of the sheep and cattle operations on Old Penola Estate.

Another of her life-long interests was horses. She was an early member of the Western District Pony Club, from which she graduated to play polocrosse with the nearby Roycroft family. This was followed by three day eventing, in which she competed at the international level in England, and ultimately show jumping, the highlight of which was representing Australia in a team that toured New Zealand in 1966. As her family grew, she relaxed by playing country polo, and finally derived great enjoyment from sharing her skill, experience and wisdom with the enthusiastic members of the Penola Pony Club.



Judy Rymill and her outstanding mare Youillia winning the Champion Jumper Sweepstakes at the 1965 Sydney Royal Easter Show.

BOOTS AND ALL



It was one hundred and fifty years ago that the 24 year-old Catholic horseback priest, **Julian Edmund Tenison Woods**, rode into Penola, booted and spurred, to establish his 22,000 square mile mission parish. Born in London and trained for the priesthood by the Jesuits at Sevenhill, near Clare (in another well-known South Australian winemaking region) Woods had sailed from Adelaide in the *Boomerang*, and ridden the 70 miles overland from Robe, to arrive here on 19 March 1857.

He is perhaps best known for co-founding the teaching order of the Sisters of Saint Joseph at Penola in 1866 with Mary MacKillop, whom we hope will soon become Australia's first saint.

Woods was also a brilliant natural scientist, and wine lovers can acknowledge him as being the first to describe scientifically Coonawarra's famous terra rossa ridge. His Penola presbytery was located upon it,



The Native Honeysuckle (*Banksia marginata*), 'with flowers like a large bottle-brush', that gave Coonawarra its name.

and he wrote: *'Nothing, however, could be more picturesque than the appearance of these limestone ridges in spring...the soil is of a light red colour, and is evidently directly derived from the decomposition of the outcropping limestone.'*

He also observed that it was *'honeysuckle country. Though singular in appearance...being studded over in flowers like a large bottle-brush... when young they are yellow and almost pretty...[and] produce a good deal of honey in spring, whence the colonial name.'* It was these shrubs (*Banksia marginata*) that gave Coonawarra its Aboriginal name, meaning honeysuckle ridge.

In riding over his vast parish Woods had ample opportunity to study its extensive limestone formations, writing that *'it may be concluded they were deposited in a deep tranquil sea'* from which *'a great portion of the country appears to have been recently raised'*. He was correct, and this entire area is now known as the Limestone Coast.

These were startling concepts for 1862, when he published his book *The Geology of South Australia*, but he went even further in his studies of limestone fossils to propose that *'a gradation in creation may be traced...which ended in Man'*, and by 1880 had accepted that *'I can well believe that there is much truth in evolution.'* Had the Pope heard of this brilliant bush priest, the charge of heresy might well have crossed his mind. It would take the Catholic Church over 100 years to concur with Woods' conclusions.

Visitors to Coonawarra who would like to know more about the life of this remarkable man will find a fascinating display, including an extensive fossil collection, in the Mary MacKillop Penola Centre.



The Woods Exhibition in the Mary MacKillop Penola Centre focuses on his pioneering scientific work.

MECHANICAL MATTERS



We recently caught up with **Michael 'Webby' Wimshurst** to find out what he does in the workshop, and what challenges come his way as our indispensable maintenance mechanic.

How did you come to be at Rymill?

I actually came to do some pruning work, but when things got really busy in the workshop, I gave them a hand. I've been here ever since!

What are you responsible for?

I look after all the maintenance work. It ranges from servicing and repairing the vehicles and machinery, through to winery and building maintenance, and general engineering work.

What is your background?

I originally trained as a motor mechanic, but things have changed since then. I find I am doing much more welding, fabrication and engineering work now.

What do you look forward to each day?

Well, I look forward to being presented with a problem because I enjoy finding a solution and fixing it. For example, we were able to develop a machine that pruned both sides and the top of the vine row at once, rather than just one side, which made the process much more efficient.

I also love morning smoko because I catch up with the rest of the team!

Do you have a favourite time of year in your role?

Vintage is probably the best time of year for me. Although there can be a lot of pressure to make sure all of the machinery and equipment is working, everyone pitches in. There is a real buzz around the place and when something breaks down, such as the harvester, and they call me, I know there is going to be plenty of support if I need it.

Does any other role appeal to you?

No, I'm happy where I am and can't imagine anywhere else I'd rather be.

SPRING FROSTS

In the spring of 2006, much of southern Australia was devastated by a series of severe spring frosts. Coonawarra normally expects about five, but last year we had fifteen, with one as low as -5°C . The vines' tender new growth was destroyed, and as a consequence many vineyards failed to produce a crop, with the region's grape production plummeting by over 60%.



Fortunately, our Winery Vineyards are well protected by overhead sprinklers. However, they only worked effectively thanks to the dedicated attention of the members of our vineyard crew, who not only had to be on duty all night to start the pumps when the temperature fell dangerously low, but also had to ensure that the systems operated efficiently. It is no fun becoming soaked on a dark and freezing night whilst unblocking uncooperative sprinklers.

The protective principle involved is that water, in changing state from a liquid to a solid, releases sufficient heat to keep the frost at bay.

Even though ice forms, as long as sufficient water is applied to keep it wet (about 4mm/hour) the temperature will not fall below 0°C , and as the vine tissue does not freeze until about -1°C , no harm is done. It is a dramatic sight to see the great turbine pumps fire up. Each can deliver sufficient water from our reliable underground aquifer to protect 12 hectares (30 acres) of vineyard.



One may well ask why we grow grapes in a cool and frosty climate, and the answer is that the flavours are so much better than those grown in a hot, albeit frost-free climate. And the good news is, that thanks to the exertions of our vineyard crew, our protected vineyards managed to produce an average yield for the 2007 vintage, and the quality is looking excellent.

Those who would like to know more about the technicalities of frost protection and such matters are invited to visit our new website: www.rymill.com.au > Vineyards > Coonawarra Climate > Coonawarra Aquifer.

HANDY HINTS

Doffing the Cap

Have you ever been defeated by a screw-cap that refuses to budge? Please don't resort to the bread knife, or any other instrument of violence, to break the seal. Instead, firmly grasp the whole cap in the palm of your hand (not just the corrugated bit at the top), then gently rotate the bottle with your other hand. The top will pop off with ridiculous ease.

Heart-warming Idea

Wine connoisseurs are aware that red wine should be opened well in advance, and allowed to *chamber* gently to room temperature (20°C) prior to the meal. Nevertheless, on the rare winter occasions when these preparations have inadvertently been neglected, do not despair! Hasten to retrieve the cold bottle from the cellar, woodshed, or wherever it has been languishing, and just pop it into the microwave (unopened). One minute usually does the trick, but you are advised to calibrate your equipment and first of all experiment with shorter treatments. A guest slain by a cork expelled at lethal trajectory can cast a pall over an otherwise enjoyable party.

Dining Alone

When dining alone, you can face the dilemma of being reluctant to open a whole bottle of wine, even a Rymill Cabernet. The solution is simple. Merely decant half into a clean, empty June Traminer bottle and reapply the screw-cap. This will preserve the wine in pristine condition for your enjoyment the following evening.

SWAN LAKE

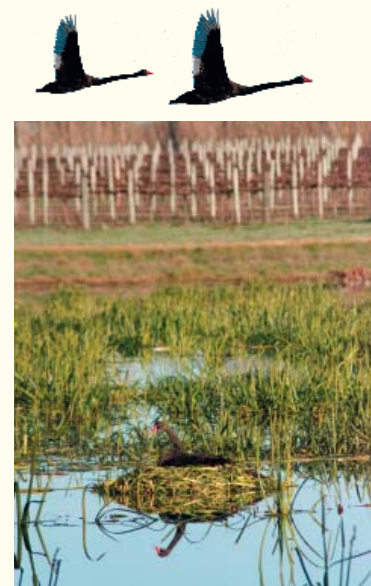


This year fifteen pairs of **Black Swans** (*Cygnus atratus*) have built their massive reed nests on Sheepwash Swamp, which is surrounded by our vineyards. We are wondering if it should be re-named Swan Lake.

These magnificent birds, with their two-metre wingspan and evocative trumpeting call, occur throughout Australia. They are monogamous and mate for life, with a divorce rate of only six percent. Their clutch averages six eggs, and the cygnets will hatch after about five weeks.

Prior to their discovery in 1697 by Captain Willem de Vlaming of the Dutch East India Company on the Swan River in Western Australia, the term 'black swan' was a metaphor for 'something that could not exist'. English swans were, of course, white, and preserved under the jurisdiction of the Royal Swanherd, whose responsibility it was to identify them by applying the proprietary regal brand, or *cygninota*, to their bills during the annual ritual of Swan Upping.

The Australian cob is slightly larger than the pen, and has a more erect neck carriage, but both sexes share incubation duties. In fact, pairs of homosexual cobs sometimes build nests, entice a pen to lay a clutch of eggs for them, then discard her. Being bigger and stronger than a heterosexual couple, they can claim a larger territory and provide their cygnets with an up to ten-fold survival advantage.



We always find it fascinating to watch the activities of these intriguing birds, and are delighted to share their elegant company during our day-to-day vineyard work.

NEGOCIANTS AUSTRALIA

I recently enjoyed attending the Spring Tasting series conducted by our national distributors, Negotiants Australia. In Coonawarra, we can sell wine from our winery, but if you find Rymill Coonawarra in your next-door retail shop or in your favourite restaurant, this is Negotiants' work. They are like a super extension of our cellar door and, like us, are also a family owned company.

As a winemaker, I can support them too, by delivering tasting notes and descriptive points about each wine and each vintage, and every now and then I can spend a day in the trade with one of Negotiants' account managers, spreading the Rymill philosophy.

In return, they can explain to me what's important when selling wine.



It is a two-way partnership, and we all truly feel like we are part of one of the best portfolios in Australia. And it is priceless to work with this kind of team of people!

Sandrine

Sandrine Gimon

Diplôme National d'Enologie – Reims



The Negotiants Australia state sales managers: **Dean Mitchell (WA)**, **Margot Muir (SA)**, **Nick Waterman (General Manager)**, **Rohan Bardwell (VIC)**, **Michael Price (NSW)**, **Kylie Farquhar (Retail NSW)** and **Adam O'Neill (QLD)**.

CHINESE GROWTH

John Innes recently met with Rymill Coonawarra's new Chinese importers, **Peter Poon** and **Ben Hu** of Integroup, whom we are pleased to announce are now representing us in this vast, emerging market.



As the most populous nation in the world, with 1.3 billion citizens who outnumber Australians by 62 to 1, China holds exciting potential. Its bottled wine imports from Australia increased by 174% last financial year, due in part to a cultural shift in which grape wine is becoming preferred to the country's traditional rice wine. And as host of the XXIX Olympiad in 2008, we anticipate these sales will only continue to grow.



OUT FOR A DUCK

A great favourite of our resident chef, **Melissa Innes**, is Chinese roast duck. Whenever she has the opportunity to score one, she simply can't resist the temptation, and so here is a delicious risotto recipe she has conjured up for us to team with the Rymill Coonawarra mc².

Chinese Roast Duck & Shitake Mushroom Risotto

In a large saute pan melt the butter, add the shallots, rice, fennel and a good grinding of black pepper, and fry for about two minutes over medium heat. Add a ladleful of hot stock and stir continuously until it is absorbed. Continue to add the stock, a ladleful at a time, also adding the reserved mushroom liquid, stirring frequently to ensure that the stock is absorbed before each addition. It should take approximately 20 minutes for the rice to cook. About half way through this process, while you are still adding the stock, add both types of mushrooms and the duck. You may not need all the stock depending upon the desired level of moisture.

When the rice is cooked, add the cherry tomatoes and the parmesan, heat through and then add the baby spinach and adjust the seasoning. Serve and enjoy.

*Pick the meat from the roast duck, shred and reserve. Put the skin and bones in a saucepan and cover with water. Add a couple of whole star anise and spring onions, peppercorns, and some slices of ginger. Simmer for about two hours, strain and refrigerate. When cold, skim the layer of fat from the surface and discard.



Ingredients

1 to 2 tablespoons butter

1½ cups arborio rice

3 or 4 golden shallots diced, or 1 small Spanish onion diced

¼ cup fennel bulb, finely sliced or diced (optional)

1 to 1½ litres duck stock (this needs to be simmering when used)*

3 tablespoons dried shitake mushrooms (re-hydrated then chopped up & reserve the water used from the de-hydrating)

⅓ cup mushrooms, thinly sliced

*½ Chinese roast duck***

½ cup cherry tomatoes (can be halved)

3 handfuls of baby spinach leaves

1 small handful of grated parmesan

Salt & pepper

**Available from good Chinese supermarkets or take away shops

NEW RELEASES

In the Australian wine industry, we are fortunate to have a number of discerning wine critics and, in turn, we are pleased to present a selection of their reviews.

RYMILL COONAWARRA 2004 CABERNET SAUVIGNON

"A very aromatic medium-bodied wine. Its lifted floral notes are underpinned by spicy black plums and blackcurrants that follow through on the palate, with more juicy fruit and firm but ripe tannins. Allow this wine to breathe and it'll open up beautifully."

Jane Faulkner, The Age, May 2007

"Bright, ripe berry fruits are elegantly framed in cabernet's other signature characters, mint and herbs here and there; oak is gently nestled alongside fruit and offers an attractive savoury spicy edge. The palate is similarly uplifting, elegant fine tannins, some crisp acidity, even and ready to drink. Right in the zone with cassis fruit flavour and sweeter, darker berries on the finish, this is an easygoing cabernet that will reward medium term cellaring."

Nick Stock, The Adelaide Review, May 2007

"Absolute cabernet. Medium-bodied, curranty, swishily aromatic and then dry and tannic through the finish, a range of herbs, spices and fruits offered up along the way. A wine of great appeal. Dried herbs, tobacco, blackcurrant, cedar, perhaps even a touch of vanillin – this has all the goods."

Campbell Mattinson, The Red Album, Best Reds Under \$30, August 2007



RYMILL COONAWARRA 2002 MATURATION RELEASE

"Five years might seem like a short time in the cellar but this wine is at its absolute peak. It has the esoteric secondary aromas that come with age while still retaining its youthful appeal. The winning point though is the deliciously textured tannins. They give class and distinction to this yummy red."

Greg Duncan-Powell, Sydney Morning Herald, April 2007

"Rymill has delivered in spades with this new flagship red released in tandem with its second and third-tier cabernets, the 2004 Rymill and 2005 Yearling. It's an absolute corker. Crafted by the team of John Innes and Sandrine Gimon it's a perfect example of classic Coonawarra cabernet; seamless, supple and delicious with lashings of black berry fruit, minty nuances, balanced oak and silky tannins. Drink it with roast lamb and mint sauce."

Kerry Skinner, Illawarra Mercury, April 2007



RYMILL COONAWARRA 2004 mc²

The Weekend Australian DETECTIVE loves: *"The newly released 2004 Rymill Coonawarra mc²; a plummy, berry-rich blend of cabernet sauvignon, merlot and a touch of cabernet franc. This fine South Australian maker says 2004, with its long, cool summer, was a great year in the Coonawarra: the ready-to-drink evidence is here at a reasonable \$17."*

Judith Elen, The Weekend Australian, August 2007

And it's nice to know we can play a small part in lubricating Australia's international trade deals: *"The corporate heavyweights from across the Asia-Pacific attending the APEC Business Summit dinner had reason to be cheerful... and it wasn't just the...silky Rymill merlot cabernet [mc²] from the Coonawarra..."*

Steve Burrell, Sydney Morning Herald, September 2007



SPECIAL EVENTS



Our cellar door team, including **Jane Ellis**, **Sandrine Gimon** (winemaker), **Megan McGuinness**, **Naomi Barnes**, **Robbie Mason** (events manager) and **Andrew Rymill** celebrated an enchanting night in the winery as part of Coonawarra's After Dark festivities. Guests enjoyed a Friday the Thirteenth theme, with oodles of magical wine and bewitching food.

This is just one of the many terrific events held throughout the year in Coonawarra. Here is a snapshot of some of the other festivities on offer:

10 January 2008

Coonawarra Vignerons' Cup

The 27th annual Coonawarra Vignerons' Race Day kicks off at 9.30am at the picturesque Penola Racecourse. Celebrations include live music, fabulous food, wonderful wine, fashions on the field, a Calcutta and an Imperial Auction.

11 April 2008

Coonawarra After Dark

Experience all of the thrills, excitement and the lights of vintage as Coonawarra wineries open their doors to visitors at the peak of the harvest.

16 – 18 May 2008

Penola Coonawarra Arts Festival

Celebrate our region's rich history and artistic talents with working artists, performances, exhibitions, workshops, fabulous food and fine wine.

1 – 31 July 2008

Cellar Dwellers

Coonawarra wines are well known for their aging ability and Cellar Dwellers provides our region with an opportunity to showcase wines that are otherwise not available for tasting.

20 – 22 October 2008

Coonawarra Cabernet Celebrations

The region bustles with live music, master classes, special dinners and vineyard tours, and culminates in an auction of the finest barrels of Cabernet Sauvignon from the previous year's vintage.

For further information please visit www.rymill.com.au

CHOIR OF ANGELS

The first ever Australian tour by the Choir of Westminster Abbey culminated with an October performance in the Cerretti Chapel, Manly, NSW.

It was followed by a celebratory dinner which was attended by John and Melissa Innes, who presented Rymill Coonawarra wines especially for the occasion.

The choir, which was founded in the fourteenth century, has played a prominent role in countless coronations, royal weddings and funerals and other British state events with its glorious music. It was brought to Australia this year by Musica Viva, which is the world's



largest entrepreneur of fine ensemble music, and presents more than 2,500 concerts each year across the continent and around the world to the widest possible range of audiences.

Rymill Coonawarra is proud to announce that we have now become

Musica Viva's national wine sponsor. Our relationship began in 2003, when we first sponsored their Ménéage Concert Series, and we will now partner all their events where wine and food comprise part of the repertoire, such as gala dinners, concert lunches and pre-performance drinks.

Recognising Musica Viva's ethos as comprising 'Quality, Diversity, Challenge and Joy', this is a relationship which we anticipate with enthusiasm, especially when we have the opportunity of contributing fine wine to this eclectic mix. Further information regarding forthcoming performances and bookings can be found on: www.musicaviva.com.au



WILL IT CELLAR?

'Will it cellar?' or 'When is the best time to drink this wine?' are two of the questions most frequently asked when visitors taste wine at our cellar door. Although I know they are likely to drink the wine within the next twelve months, if not within the next few hours, it is still a reasonable question to ask.

The unequivocal answer for a Coonawarra red wine is: 'Yes, it will cellar.' As a rule of thumb, I suggest such wines will approach their optimum at around seven, and will continue to mature for a further seven years or so. This is because they have great *quality potential*, and it takes time for them to come of age and display their true personality.



I use the term *quality potential* to encapsulate all the components that are necessary for such a wine to improve with time. It is their ongoing reactions that allow the wine to evolve from its primary fresh fruit flavours into subtle, complex combinations which offer great intrigue and enjoyment.

Tannins, essential elements in all wine, influence its aroma, taste and mouth feel and are good examples of how a wine evolves. They are the essential backbone of the wine, providing its fundamental structure and firmness in youth, but they will become soft and supple with time, and allow the richness of the wine to be fully appreciated. They will contribute to the development of the secondary flavour bouquet, as the primary fruit flavours relinquish their dominance.

Many of the firm tannin molecules will polymerise with anthocyanins, the colour components of red wine, and slowly precipitate as a sediment. The colour of a wine is its *face*, easily identifying this ageing process, with the youthful deep red and purple colours becoming more translucent and brown with age.

Many people prefer wines that are youthful, with abundant primary fruit characters. Indeed they may never have tasted one that is seven years old. This is not surprising, for when you look at the vintages available in stores and on wine lists, the reality is that wine is sold and consumed young in Australia, and even younger in many overseas markets. People's palates are attuned to young and vibrant wines. They better understand these styles and prefer them to those that are bottle-aged.

So, in answer to the question about the optimum age for a Coonawarra red, I say:

'Enjoy wine, drink what you like, and be confident in your opinion.'

But when the opportunity arises, do explore a little and try an older wine; it can be a great discovery.

John

John Innes



R Y M I L L

C O O N A W A R R A

AN AUSTRALIAN THOROUGHBRED

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