



Curly Flat

March 2006

No. 09

VINE *To* WINE

Releasing the 2003 Pinot Noir

The hot, dry summer of 2003 helped Curly Flat to produce a cracker of a vintage. This is evidenced already, with the 2003 Curly Flat Chardonnay (released last November) being selected by Philip Rich for inclusion in The Australian Financial Review's Top 20 Wines for 2005. The initial responses to the 2003 Pinot Noir have been very favourable.

The Romsey/Lancefield region is one of, if not the, coolest wine growing regions in Australia. So even though the 2003 growing season was very hot and dry, we still had a wonderful vintage. This was not the case in some of the warmer regions where it was too hot for some varieties resulting in several leading producers having to declassify various wines.

You may have already noticed the 2003 Pinot Noir on the lists of our Select Restaurants clients. It was necessary to pre-release to the trade as the 2002 Pinot sold out and we do like to ensure continuity for our Select Restaurants. Our restaurants were very happy to move on to the 2003 vintage and it has received very strong support from the sommeliers.

We are very proud of our 2003 Pinot Noir - the second vintage to be made in our new winery. It benefits from the impact of another year of vine age and another year of experience in what works best in our vineyard and trials carried out in our winery.

What people are saying about the 2003 Pinot Noir

In Winewise 2005 Small Vignerons Awards the 2003 Curly Flat Pinot Noir was awarded Gold - "The intensity and structure of this wine are particularly impressive. It's packed with rich dark cherry flavour supported by complex notes and very well handled oak."

James Halliday, in his Australian Wine Companion 2006 "A powerful wine, with good intensity, line and length. Will develop further. Rating 93"

2003 Curly Flat Pinot won the Peoples' Choice Award for Best Pinot Noir - 2005 Macedon Ranges Wine Exhibition

Some Recent Highlights

Curly Flat 2003 Chardonnay was included in Philip Rich's Top 20 Wines for 2005 in The Australian Financial Review.

Curly Flat wines (both Pinot Noir and Chardonnay) are being served on Qantas International flights in First and Business classes and we are receiving great feedback from our clients and gaining some new clients.

During the Macedon Ranges' Budburst Festival, we had an awesome dinner in Vintage Hall for 28 guests, all seated at the 8 metre long Samuel Pepys refectory table. This table was created by Australia's leading table maker, Nicholas Dattner. The design is the quintessential refectory table commonly used in London in the 17th century. The top is made of two 8 metre planks of Eucalyptus obliqua (Messmate) cut from the same tree.



Curly Flat Chardonnay defies ABC

The Anything But Chardonnay effect was absent when we released the 2003 Chardonnay last November. It sold out very quickly, and again we apologise for the necessity of tight allocations due to the low production caused by drought and bird loss.

The 2004 Curly Flat Chardonnay will be officially released in September when it has had around 18 months bottle age, in line with our preferred release program. However, with the 2003 Chardonnay selling out, our Select Restaurants

have requested to move on to the 2004 vintage which is drinking very well now. Again, like the Pinot, we like to ensure continuity for our Select Restaurants who have played a leading role in establishing the Curly Flat name.

You are welcome to purchase the 2004 vintage Chardonnay now ahead of its official release.

Vintage 2005

Vintage 2005 was a great vintage – quality and yields right on target. The Chardonnay is possibly the best we have done, the Pinot Noir is up there too, but it will be hard to beat the 2004 – and the Pinot Gris, our second vintage for this interesting variety, was also a standout. To Robert and his Vineyard Team, many thanks for a great effort. To Mother Nature, thank you for the surprisingly calm warm autumn with perfect ripening conditions. The 2005 Chardonnay will be bottled next month. We are delighted to be bottling a small quantity of 2005 “Lacuna” (unwooded) Chardonnay; you may recall our only other unwooded chardonnay, being from the 2000 vintage. The 2005 Pinot Noir is a big structured wine that will need another twelve months in oak to harness the multi-layered elements.

Vintage 2006 forecast

Vintage 2006 is shaping up to be very promising. Like most of south eastern Australia, we will be early, perhaps two weeks. Usually with early years, with reduced hang time, flavour development lags the sugars and there can be a risk of high sugars, hence high alcohol levels. So we are surprised at the early flavour development, which augers well for harvesting the fruit at moderate sugar levels (hence moderate alcohol level). Lak Quach (one of Australia’s celebrity young sommeliers, formerly at Langtons Restaurant) is returning to Curly Flat. After doing vintage with us in 2005 Lak worked in vineyards and wineries in Europe including Gunderloch in Germany. Others joining us for vintage include young French winemaker, Amélie, Jayden from Melbourne Wine Room and Natalie from Melbourne Supper Club. A number of local chefs will join us for a day or two, and prepare some great food for the vintage team.

We hold several lunches and dinners during vintage to encourage you to visit Curly Flat. You can see the wine being made and experience the magnificent Autumn weather and the glorious golden hues in the vineyard. See our website for details.

Lancefield Has a New Chardonnay Champion

Matt Harrop (winemaker at Shadowfax) and his wife Tamara have recently purchased a property near Curly Flat. Matt is planning a small Chardonnay vineyard with the objective of producing ‘top shelf’ Chardonnay. Welcome to the Harrops and we look forward to working together to further elevate the name of Macedon Ranges Chardonnay.

2003 Vintage Conditions

Very hot and dry year – rainfall for the twelve months to March 2003 was down 51%, with no individual month reaching the long term average. Spring was unseasonably warm and December particularly hot with little reprieve in the balance of summer and autumn. The vines set a below average crop that ripened surprisingly quickly. Harvest was March 31 – two to three weeks early – with flavour ripeness coming at moderate sugars of 13 Bé. The natural acidity achieved in the vineyard is again a feature of this Pinot – and enables traditional, minimal intrusion winemaking.

Supporting a Very Worthy Cause

Curly Flat has again donated a 15 litre bottle of Pinot to the Deafblind Association (supporting persons with multiple disabilities). This Nebuchadnezzar will be auctioned on 29 April at the Great Australian Wine Auction to be held at the Plaza Ballroom of the Regent Theatre in Melbourne. The 15 litre bottle we donated last year raised \$3,000 at auction.

Details at www.dba.asn.au

We are putting together a Curly Flat table for the function, so if you would like to be part of this very worthy cause then join us. Tickets for this night of great food, wine and entertainment are \$135.

History Packs and Large Bottles

A reminder that History Packs are available, for both Pinot Noir and for Chardonnay – History Packs contain three bottles; the current release plus a bottle from each of the two prior vintages. It is a very good option for those just discovering Curly Flat.

Magnums (1.5L) of Pinot and Chardonnay and a small number of Imperials (6L) of Pinot are available in limited quantities. See our website for large format bottle vintages and prices.

Williams Crossing 2004 Pinot Noir Release

Williams Crossing is our ‘junior label’ and these wines are made exclusively from fruit grown at Curly Flat and wines are aged in the same French oak barrels. Curly Flat has 4 clones of Chardonnay and 5 clones of Pinot Noir. We trial different yeasts, different percentages of whole bunching and many other approaches, both in the vineyard and the winery. We choose the barrels that we want to make up the Curly Flat blend and remaining barrels go into Williams Crossing. Williams Crossing wines are great quality in a lower price bracket representing exceptional value.

2004 Williams Crossing Pinot Noir achieved a silver medal at the 2005 Macedon Ranges Wine Exhibition. 2004 was a magnificent vintage and this Pinot while drinking beautifully now will be even better with some bottle age.

2003 Curly Flat Pinot Noir Tasting Note

Strong vibrant colour of dark ruby, looking very youthful. The bouquet is unmistakably Pinot; intense with a complex spectrum of earth, forest floor, dark plum and dark berries. There are hints of beetroot, violets, black pepper, aniseed and spice with tones of cedar and dusty oak.

The palate maps to the complex bouquet, with rich fruit and lots of secondary characters. Intense and persistent, with a long finish, the wine is very textured. While drinking well now, there is a lot in this wine that suggests it will evolve over many years.

Coming Events - Autumn 2006



Curly Flat & Redesdale Estate Dinner at Tabou French Restaurant Sydney

Tuesday, 4th April 2006 - \$120 for a four course dinner with Curly Flat and Redesdale wines including some older vintages. Redesdale Estate produces Shiraz and Cabernet in the Heathcote region. For bookings phone Tabou on 02 9319 5682. Tabou is at 527 Crown Street, Surry Hills.

Curly Flat Harvest Festivities - Vintage is a great time to visit Curly Flat to experience the bustle of winery activity, enjoy the (usually) mild sunny days with glorious autumn leaves. This year we'll hold a range of events. Menus and details will be on our website. Bookings are essential and can be made on 03 5429 1956.

Harvest Dinner with Pinot Vertical Tasting - Saturday 22nd April

To celebrate the release of our 2004 Pinot Noir, a vertical tasting of 4 vintages of Curly Flat Pinot to match Darren Langdon's four course menu. Chardonnay, Macedon (sparkling) and Rosé will also be served. Darren received rave reviews from those who experienced his Budburst lunches or last year's Cantonese & Pinot dinner. Cost is \$95 per person inclusive of wines. Please let us know if you prefer a vegetarian meal or have other dietary requirements. For this dinner we will arrange a bus to collect and take people home (or to B&Bs) in the Lancefield area.

Two lunches will be held during vintage:

Harvest Lunch - Sunday 23rd April

Entrée and main (with 2 choices for each course), plunger coffee, tea and soft drinks for \$28 per person. Darren's menu will be posted on our website shortly. Cheese and desserts will also be available.

Mothers' Day Picnic Lunch - Sunday 14 May

Gourmet barbecue (including a range of food to appeal to younguns) dessert, cheese, plunger coffee, tea and soft drinks at a cost of \$15 per person. There will be a range of entertainment for children including face painting and story telling by Joelene the Fairy.

At both these lunches you will be able to purchase current and older vintages of Curly Flat and Williams Crossing wines and Holgates beer to enjoy with your meal. Each lunch will feature treading of the grapes which has been very popular with the young at heart at previous harvest picnics - we provide costumes so your clothes won't be soaked in red wine.

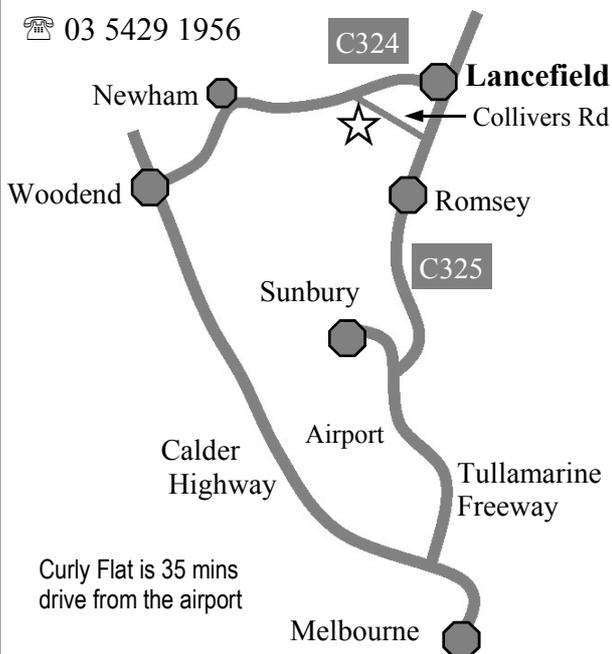
Lancefield has marvellous accommodation from luxury to more basic (but still with a big helping of country charm). See our website for links to accommodation in the Lancefield area.

Defying Anything But Chardonnay

Curly Flat together with a number of leading Chardonnay producers are planning an AABC (Anti Anything But Chardonnay) dinner as part of Melbourne Food and Wine Festival. More information when planning is further advanced.

263 Collivers Road Lancefield Victoria

☎ 03 5429 1956



How to get to Curly Flat Vineyard

From Melbourne—take the Tullamarine Freeway and proceed past the Airport.

Before Sunbury, turn right onto C325 to Romsey/Lancefield.

Proceed through Romsey and when entering Lancefield, turn left onto C324 towards Woodend.

Travel 4 km, and just before Glen Erin Vineyard Retreat turn left into Collivers Road.

Curly Flat Vineyard is 600 metres along on the right.

Tastings and functions are usually held in Vintage Hall, next to the winery.

Our cellar door is open for tastings and sales between 1pm and 5pm on Sundays and the 4th Saturday of the month (after the Lancefield Farmers Market). We are open at other times by appointment.