



Curly Flat

July 2011

No. 24

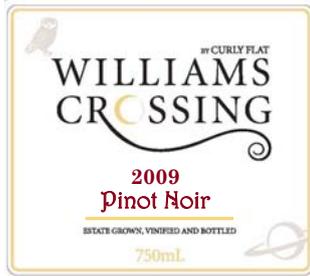
## VINE To WINE

*Time to release ...*

### 2009 Williams Crossing Pinot Noir

#### 2009 Williams Crossing Pinot Noir

*Second label, but not second rate.* 2009 produced one of our best Williams Crossing pinots. Problem is, as for all our 2009 wines, there isn't much of it. All our wines are from grapes grown at our vineyard and we strive to give it all the same care with the desire that every barrel hits the Curly Flat benchmark. Williams Crossing wines are from those barrels that don't make it into the Curly Flat blend. In assessing 2009 wine, we might have been a bit harsh as this Williams Crossing pinot is closer in quality to Curly Flat but, as always, is around half its price.



#### 2009 Vintage, too little of a good thing...

As every year in viticulture has its challenges, 2009 was certainly no exception. Whilst the vineyard has delivered exceptional quality, we received only 37 tonnes which equated to a 58% decrease in production.

Why was this? Firstly a brutal hailstorm in December '07 damaged existing shoots, impacting forward pruning options for the '09 vintage. Then a dry spring led to hard frosts at budburst '08. Lastly a downpour of 77mm occurred over the 13<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup> of December '08 fracturing many of the delicate flowers that should have become grape berries, but finished as shattered petals on the vineyard floor. But still we had a crop...

From there on, all of Victoria entered the realm of drought and rising mercury. This may have affected grape producers who were close to harvest but in the viticulturally cooler climate of the Macedon Ranges, our grapes were still only green berries and had a healthy canopy protecting the fruiting zone from potential sunburn and other heat stress. From that point on it was a matter of vigilant and targeted irrigation to maintain that canopy until harvest. Whilst the 2009 vintage delivered wines of magnificent structure and concentration there's just not much of it!

#### 2008 Curly Flat Pinot in the Gold Book Top 100

We are delighted that 2008 Curly Flat Pinot Noir has made the Top 100 Wines in the Australian Wine Vintages 2012, more commonly known 'the Gold Book'. Over 3000 wines are tasted to select Australia's top 100 wines so it makes us feel we may be on the right path...



#### Press on Curly Flat 2008 Pinot Noir

"Concentrated red and black cherry with a great line in acidity and fresh pinot varietal character"

*Australian Wine Vintages 2012 - Robert Geddes MW*

"It's a light garnet colour, yet it has fragrant raspberry fruit and no lack of structure. Very perfumed, with exotic spices and savoury notes. Lovely vibrant palate - quite tight, with good acidity, line and fine tannins. It's a bit of a pup. The palate is supple and has good flesh. It's a typically stylish Curly Flat..."

*Gourmet Traveller Wine April/May 2011 - Deb Pearce*

"A fairly light-coloured pinot with shy but beautiful perfumes that are subtly complex. There is whole bunch character. Restrained and refined, but with a core of richness and good concentration. Good structure and length as well. Now to 2020."

*Good Living SMH July 2011 - Huon Hooke*

"Silken texture. Ripe, ropery tannin. Excellent cherry-plum perfume and musk-cherries-plums and spice flavours. Stalks show themselves but in an integrated fashion. Lots of mouth-watering acidity but it's attractive and lively; it doesn't jar."

*The Winefront May 2011 - Campbell Mattinson*

A small quantity of 375ml (half bottles) of 2008 Curly Flat Pinot Noir is available with this release.

#### Our 2010 Pinot Gris continues to impress...

The quality in the bottle is just so good. More-ish, chalky, green melony, piercing but fleshy. Spicy/gingery aftertaste. It's fun to drink but it's got some class to it too. Don't think you can ask much more.

*The Winefront May 2011 - Campbell Mattinson*



## Phillip is Burgundy bound!

Come August Phillip will be in France to work vintage 2011 with renowned Burgundy producer Domaine de Montille. While Phillip has worked vintages with other wineries in Victoria, New York & Oregon, working with Etienne & Alix de Montille seems a perfect fit as their high standards of vineyard expression and wine purity parallel our own. Phillip holds the wines of Burgundy as his undoubted compass, so this first hand experience is exciting us all, but most of all, Phillip!



*Etienne & Alix de Montille*

## What about Chardonnay?

It feels like an age since we sold out of 2008 Williams Crossing Chardonnay last year; unfortunately there isn't any 2009 Williams Crossing Chardonnay. This is because the Curly Flat 2009 Chardonnay (to be released in September) is exceptional. We feel it may be our closest yet to a modern Burgundy...time will tell!

2010 Williams Crossing Chardonnay will be released towards the end of the year. So be en garde! In the meantime, enjoy the exceptional 2009 WX Pinot Noir...

Chardonnay History Packs are history for now! Prior to 2010 vintage, frost limited our chardonnay production and there is too little in older vintages to be able to supply Chardonnay History Packs. We plan to supply them again from September 2012.

## New website on the way

We are currently working on the construction of a totally new website featuring a new visual interface, full online purchasing, downloadable tasting notes, vineyard & winery blogs, with an active real time link to our on-site computerised weather station! This is way overdue!

## 2011 Vintage - It rained, it spored, we conquered!

At the time of the last newsletter, we were 9 weeks from harvesting our 2011 vintage. With our soils fully activated by the rain, coupled with essentially sub-tropical humidity, the vines responded with unprecedented growth. Calm, warm weather lasted for the duration of flowering and fruit set, enabling a high conversion of flowers pollinating to fruit. But a trinity of a large canopy, continuing rain and humidity also created perfect conditions for mildews...

With a diligent crew and strategy of 'daily vigilance' we declared war against the mildews. Our lyre trellis gives the advantage of dividing a single thick canopy into two less condensed ones, dramatically increasing airflow and reducing the footholds for disease. But no one strategy was enough in a year like this; thinning green shoots, effective spray programs and hand separating the triffid-like canopy until the very end of harvest. We were finally rewarded with classic autumnal ripening weather and again our dual canopy utilizing all available sunlight, culminated in our best and biggest harvest to date. A testament to our powerhouse vineyard team!



*'triffid' vines after the January rains*



*the same rows after a 'short back and sides'*

## Our tasting note on 2009 Williams Crossing Pinot Noir

**Bouquet:** Opulent primary nose of Damson plums, charcuterie meats & red cherries with scents of lavender and violets. Spices appear in the form of cinnamon & anise framed by brooding background of earth, chocolate, leather, tobacco and cedar wood.

**Cellar Potential:** Already drinking well & will continue to develop over the next 5 years.

**Palate:** Medium bodied, with an initially rich savoury palate of meat stock supported by red fruit acid. Moderate line and length comprising soft yet focused mocha chocolate tannins with cedar lingering in the back palate.

**Impression:** A concentrated yet elegant release under the Williams Crossing label. A wine with balance that leaves us excited in anticipation for our 2009 Curly Flat releases.