

MENTELLE NOTES

The newsletter of Cape Mentelle, Margaret River, Australia



The Margaret River phoenix (aka Wedgetail eagle) soars over the Cape Mentelle Chapman Brook Vineyard.

Phoenix Rising

'In Greek mythology, a phoenix is a long-lived bird that is cyclically regenerated or reborn...' WIKIPEDIA

Long-standing *Cape Mentelle* customers will recall *Mentelle Notes*, a publication fondly regarded for its irreverence, wit and sometimes lateral views – on life, wine and vines. Well dear readers, hold onto your shiraz glass – we are back!

For the benefit of new readers, we need to look back into the annals (and Cape Mentelle files). *Mentelle Notes* was first published in 1983. With hindsight, a rather naïve effort at publishing, but an idea with merit, and a memorable name. It was just four pages, emblazoned with label repros of Jimmy Watson winners. It did the trick. And grew to eight pages, four times a year. Occasionally it had photos, even one of the accountant.

In July 1988 a new editor was installed by then proprietor, David Hohnen. She didn't audition, but she got the job. Back then the paper stock was dung brown. But the photos were improving and by 1989 captured Jancis Robinson MW at the 1988 Cabernet Tasting.

By 1991 it was on semi-matt paper with duo-tones, a classy transition. Three editions were published – for Australian, Kiwi and other international readers. The combined print run rose to 50,000 copies – more than some global wine magazines. Boxes were shipped worldwide, landing in Fifth Avenue, New York, downtown Tokyo and Fiji.

Heady days for a humble winery newsletter. Contributors included novelists Peter Mayle,

Tim Winton, Robert Drewe, Douglas Kennedy – even climate scientist Tim Flannery, and Michael Palin, who likes chardonnay. Wine Communicators Australia gave it a runner-up gong to the esteemed Mr Halliday, twice. (But hey, how could eight pages compete with his 500-page weighty tome!)

Mentelle Notes was a popular read. Until 2008, when the editor was asked to hang up her cap after 20 years devout service. But she kept the back issues.

And just as well, because the Mentelle Phoenix has risen. And the editor has put back on her cap.

We hope that erstwhile readers (and new fans) will be thrilled to be back on the mailing list. Certainly, columnist Morris Gleitzman is pleased to be in the Mentelle camp, as is cartoonist Neil Matterson. Great to have some of the old gang back! Watch out for more déjà vu...

as we go back to the future.

May our Phoenix star shine brightly.

Cheers, The Editor.

New Releases



Every issue of *Mentelle Notes* will feature the latest releases and wines available to members of the *Cape Mentelle Wine Club* – and at the Cellar Door. If you have any queries about the wines, please contact the helpful Cape Mentelle staff. T: 08 9757 0888 or E: info@capementelle.com.au

CAPE MENTELLE SAUVIGNON BLANC SEMILLON 2016

The winemaking team takes a caring yet minimalist approach to this classic Margaret River blend. Their aim, to preserve as much fruit intensity and regional character as possible, while creating a full flavoured distinctive white wine.

‘Pale straw with green hues. Complex sauvignon blanc led aromas of cassis, juniper, and grapefruit amplified by lychee and hints of jasmine. The palate is juicy and fruity, with added citrus, ginger and minerality, balanced by a creamy, lingering exceptionally long palate. Perfect summer sipping.’

CAPE MENTELLE CHARDONNAY 2015

‘A true classic, resonating the best of Burgundy. Draws inspiration from tradition with contemporary twists, displaying expressive aromatic complexity and a fine, full, textured palate. Think dried melon and ripe peaches, the prelude to just-picked stone fruit, frangipani blossoms and brioche with a hint of preserved lemon. Finely honed and compelling with a prolonged rich finish.’

CAPE MENTELLE SHIRAZ 2014

‘Evokes the Rhône...Deep ruby hue, black plums, cardamom. The palate resonates both fresh and dried plums, and crushed pepper supported by ample flavour and smoky tannins; a youthful full-fruited wine with excellent ageing potential.’

CAPE MENTELLE CABERNET SAUVIGNON 2014

The flagship Cape Mentelle red. Displaying opulence and powerful regional character, this complex, intense new release continues the Cape Mentelle Cabernet lineage.

‘Opens with enticing red fruit, blonde caramel and licorice notes over dried herbs. The focused intense palate displays dried cherry and mocha notes with framing tannins that carry through to the long finish. A classic that will reward 20-plus years cellaring.’

CAPE MENTELLE ZINFANDEL 2014

The original Zin...just keeps giving...as the fan club grows. Planted in 1974 and still one of Australia’s few expressions of this Balkan via California origin variety.

‘Deep garnet with a spicy start. Think Mediterranean herbs, panforte and lush jammy fruit. The ample palate seduces with savoury charm over light vanillin oak. Rich, generous and rather moreish...’

Old Ferments

Academics at the University of Adelaide are researching fermentation. Bubble, bubble... but with a difference. Their focus is firmly fixed on traditional Aboriginal beverages made from cider gum sap, banksia nectar, quondong roots and other native blossoms. Apparently there are historical accounts of these ancient brews, long forgotten but soon to be revived in the laboratory.

Professor Jiranek who oversees the ARC Centre for Innovative Wine Production believes the study will improve understanding of native plants, and their role, maybe even in botanical beverages.



Wine Club Welcome

This relaunch issue of *Mentelle Notes* will tickle some memories for loyal Mentelle fans. It also brings readers a preview of the new *Cape Mentelle Wine Club* that will launch in a few weeks. *Mentelle Notes* readers have an early-bird opportunity to review the benefits and details of the Club’s very appealing limited membership. Only 100 memberships are available for the initial wine club offer of two six-packs per year featuring rare collectable museum stock.

Twice yearly, members receive a **Winemaker’s Selection Six-Pack** with accompanying Tasting Notes, sent freight free to a nominated Australian address. In addition, all members receive two complimentary tickets to a Cape Mentelle Food & Wine Pairing Experience (Value \$170), exclusive event invitations and priority bookings to headland events like the International Cabernet Tasting. Additional generous 15% savings when purchasing other Cape Mentelle wines (6 or more bottles), Movies at Cape Mentelle tickets or merchandise. You will also have exclusive access to limited museum stock via the members-only wine sales website.

The annual joining fee is \$800 (inc GST) For more details: www.capementelle.com.au/Wine-Club or call T: 08 9757 0888

‘One of Australia’s most consistently fine wineries.’

OZ CLARKE, DECANTER

Mentelle as Anything

Columnist Morris Gleitzman has been lured from his world of award-winning children's fiction back to wine writing...



Ah, *Mentelle Notes*, how I've missed you.

It's been a miserable eight years. Partly, I admit, because the 43 cases of the bargain flood-damaged red I picked up in 2007 weren't that easy to drink. If only I'd looked more closely at the water-smudged labels and realised it wasn't Cape Mentelle, it was

discount, but the manager always said 'please' when he told his assistant to throw me out.

I also used to love, as one of your inner circle, being invited to christenings to wet the baby's head with a drop of fine red – which I always agreed to do as long as they named the child, Trinders.

'The most triumphant return of a national living treasure...'

Cleethorpes Merlot, one of the less successful new vinous experiments in Britain's East Midlands. (I should have twigged when I saw the eight trophies from the Humberside Wine Show.)

But mostly this almost decade of misery has been due to your absence, dear *Mentelle Notes*. I've missed your information and insights; I've missed your wit and verve. A bit. What I've missed heaps more is the status and respect that came with being your correspondent.

I used to love dropping your name at my local bottle shop. It never got me an actual

And I loved the warm reception I received whenever I turned up at an international psychiatry congress with an issue under my arm. The delegates were always so impressed to discover you were peer-reviewed.

I explained you got Leeuwin Estate to do your proofreading because they'd had so much experience checking their own name was spelt right. And later around the bar, the delegates were always agog when I demonstrated how in Australia we cure sleep disorders with shiraz.

Heady days and I missed them deeply. So when the editor called and said 'we're

back' and I realised she wasn't one of the neighbours whose cellar I offered to dust while they were away, I was delighted. (And relieved. Cleethorpes wine throws heavy sediment and I was having a bit of trouble unclogging their vacuum cleaner.)

'Wonderful news,' I said. 'If you were to ask me to write a piece for the new issue, I'd almost certainly describe it as the most significant wine industry rebirth since German vintners started listening to their wine critics and dentists shifted to dry riesling.'

'I suppose you could put it that way,' said the editor.

'The most prayed-for comeback,' I added, 'since the medical profession finally admitted that butter, lard and duck fat aren't so bad after all, as long as you get plenty of exercise, and fairly regular liposuction.'

At the editor's end things went strangely silent, apart from the sound of her on the other phone trying to find somebody else to help the *Mentelle* Phoenix rise.

Luckily all the other prospects were busy blogging. Or helping James Halliday uncork a couple of 1893 chardonnays. Or being interviewed by overseas brain researchers about sleep patterns.

So I got the gig. For which I'm tearful with gratitude.

Welcome back, dear *Mentelle Notes*. Thank you for once again bringing meaning and purpose to my life, and for giving a huge re-boost to my international reputation.

Next month I'll be appearing as King Of The Vines at the Hull Grape Expo, an honour earned by drinking more East Midlands wine than any other living person. When word gets out about your return, I know exactly what'll happen. There I'll be, on my decommissioned herring trawler float, atop the throne I'm having built from a centrifugal crusher, sipping the 2012 Grimsby Late Picked Riesling (it was picked very late, in 2015, when the sun finally came out). And from all around I'll hear the admiring whispers I've missed so much.

'That bloke there, that Australian, he's Mentelle.'

Morris Gleitzman is a sane bestselling children's author and regular contributor to Gourmet Traveller Wine.

Testing Terroir

There is more to soil than meets the eye of an enquiring young viticulturist...



Pauline with the pick of her crop.

Ask most winemakers and they will tell you that wine is made in the vineyard. Further, that all vineyards have unique *terroir* – two maxims that constitute the alchemy of all wine.

Assistant Viticulturist Pauline Castagnie's curiosity about that alchemy has guided an 'Icon Cabernet Precision Viticulture' project, its purpose to assay over 20 different cabernet clones in the original 40-year-old Wallcliffe vineyard. With the assistance of soil maps, deep soil sampling and vine vigour assessments she identified certain 'intra-blocks' producing exceptional quality grapes.

During the 2016 growing season Pauline monitored and recorded berry quality parameters (including anthocyanins and phenolic content). Each intra-block was harvested separately creating over 20 individual batches that were further analysed.

'We identified reliable indicators for optimal harvest timing to ensure peak wine quality. The intra-blocks with the highest anthocyanin content were the first ready for picking and made the best wines,' explains Pauline.

On the back of her compelling results and consultation with the winemaking team, vineyard management has been adapted for each intra-block (pruning, compost input, leaf plucking) to maximise quality of the 2017 harvest, and ultimately to elevate the quality of Cape Mentelle's flagship Cabernet Sauvignon. *A bientôt.*

Going Great

Longevity can bring rich rewards. Cape Mentelle's stature as one of Australia's icon wineries was recognised in Hong Kong at the recent 2016 Great Wines of the World, handpicked and hosted by respected American wine figure, James Suckling.

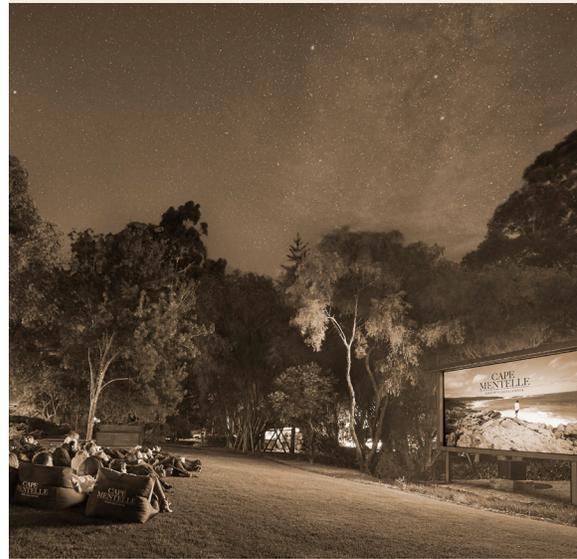
Over 150 internationally heralded wines (all rated 90 Points+ by Suckling) were showcased at a series of dinners and the Grand Tasting. The roll-call included such luminaries as Chateaux Pichon-Longueville, Mouton-Rothschild and Lafite, Domaines Serene and Ott, Opus One, Antinori and Frescobaldi – and three Aussies, including Cape Mentelle.

Estate Director Cameron Murphy reports that *Cape Mentelle's Cabernet Sauvignon 2013*, rated 96 Points by Suckling, was a very popular pour with the enthusiastic wine savvy audience.



James Suckling.

Mentelle Movies



It's summer time and the living is easy... especially when the Big Screen pops up for **Movies at Cape Mentelle 2016**. The season kicks off on 16 December with *Bridget Jones Baby*. Thereafter expect a cavalcade of terrific recent release films including *Sully*, *The Founder*, *Hacksaw Ridge*, *The Accountant*, *Red Dog True Blue* and *Girl on a Train*. The season runs until 9 April, 2017.

What better way to enjoy a starry summer evening than easing back in a bean-bed while sipping (and picnicking) under the stars. Be sure to book early (or often if you are a local) to secure a spot on the winery lawn at these immensely popular screenings.

'Gift Vouchers for Two' include reserved bean-beds, a blanket and two glasses of *Cape Mentelle*. Cheese and charcuterie boards are also available. General admission \$19. Book via website for even better prices! www.capementelle.com.au/Movies/Program-and-Tickets

'Everything I learned I learned from the movies.'

AUDREY HEPBURN



Cabernet lovers swirl and sniff in Cape Mentelle's Barrel Hall, 2016.

River Runs Red

Tyson Stelzer attended the 34th Cape Mentelle International Cabernet Tasting. Here is his report card.

It's a bold and courageous thing to cast one's wine in a taste-off of the international benchmarks of the style, and all the more so when some of these sell for up to 20 times the price.

This is precisely the game of the **Cape Mentelle International Cabernet Tasting**. Now in its 34th year, this must be the longest standing international wine benchmarking of its kind in the country.

There is no harsher environment for a wine to perform than in a formal, silent, blind tasting against its peers, and while the philosophy expounded from the outset was not to attempt to identify the wines or to pick a winner, any such comparative tasting invariably becomes a competition.

With 20 wines from the 2013 vintage on the bench, 10 internationals (from Bordeaux, Napa, Bolgheri and Waiheke Island) and 10 Aussies (eight from Western Australia, seven of which were from Margaret River), the Western Australian wines predictably kicked way above their weight. And not by design. Some 70 wines were in the running for the Cabernet Tasting, and only those of sufficient merit made the cut by the rigorous Cape Mentelle winemaking team.

Of my six top wines of the tasting, five were Western Australian. I scored all five ahead of Margaux, Léoville-Las-Cases, Cos D'Estournel, La Mission Haut-Brion, Sassicaia and Ornellaia. Bang. That's a phenomenal result.

'Benchmark tastings like this set Margaret River cabernets in their rightful lofty position in the world of wine.'

Granted, 2013 was no rock-star season in Bordeaux, but herein lies the unique blessing of Western Australia, shared by no other wine region in the country and perhaps the world: a glorious straight, uninterrupted decade of idyllic vintages.

Benchmark tastings like this set Margaret River cabernets in their rightful lofty position in the world of wine. When I was recently asked for a future prediction on any one thing in the wine world by *Gourmet Traveller Wine*, I had this to say:

'The rise and rise of Margaret River cabernet sauvignon will see these wines rise

to global prominence and command prices commensurate with their standing in the great world of cabernet sauvignon.'

And I am not the only one with this opinion. In his concluding comments following the Tasting, President and CEO of Moët Hennessy Estates & Wines (owner of Cape Mentelle) Jean-Guillaume Prats made the shock prediction.

'I have no doubt that when we do this tasting in 20 years time, the Margaret River wines will be as expensive as the Bordeaux.'

This might seem predictable from one representing a Margaret River estate.

But don't forget, Moët Hennessy Estates & Wines is also the proud custodian of the uber Bordeaux estates of Château Cheval Blanc and Château d'Yquem, both of which sell for four digit sums.

If there's one lesson to emerge from this exercise, now is the time to stock up on Margaret River cabernet sauvignon.

Wine commentator Tyson Stelzer has won numerous awards for his writing, including International Wine & Spirit Commentator of the Year 2015. He's also got a soft spot for Champagne. www.tysonstelzer.com

Murphy's Lore

Meet Cameron Murphy, Cape Mentelle's Estate Director.



Cameron Murphy on a workday...

Every morning Cameron Murphy wakes up to the sound of the Indian Ocean riding onto West Australian shores. It's an alarm bell that defines a powerful sense of place and purpose.

As head of one of Margaret River's icon and founding wineries, Cameron understands the importance of this peninsula's coastline and what the ocean means to Cape Mentelle's wines and brand.

'Dr John Gladstones was the first to appreciate this region's exceptional potential for viticulture and wine. Then the Hohnen family had the vision, courage and spirit to establish the vineyards and winery – and won two coveted Jimmy Watsons. I'm excited to be able to play a part in the contemporary legacy of their pioneering efforts.'

Cameron grew up enjoying the beaches of NSW and QLD and is surprised by the power of the Margaret River waves. He is taking surfing lessons, strictly in the shore break for now, sessions squeezed between trips to represent Cape Mentelle in more than 30 export markets.

'I believe the region is under-represented in overseas markets and my main focus is to improve that balance. Australians account for 85% of the consumption of Margaret River's wine, a fact I seek to change. The rest of the world should know more about Cape

Mentelle, its 45-year history and our region. I am proud to contribute to telling that story.'

Cameron had been a regular visitor to Margaret River (spurred partly by his father who once had vineyard interests in NSW) but moved to Cape Mentelle full-time in 2014. Previously he was engaged in business management with Moët Hennessy Estates & Wines representing their portfolio – and Cape Mentelle – in the Asia Pacific region.

He's a keen grill cook (read BBQ zone only) and his favourite family meal is his wife's whole grilled salmon on a bed of Thai-flavoured noodles. He reckons it's a great match with *Cape Mentelle Chardonnay*.

It would be remiss if we hadn't asked Cameron why he gave the thumbs-up for *Mentelle Notes* near-miraculous revival.

And he replied, 'Even before joining the business 11 years ago I read *Mentelle Notes*. It was entertaining with a great sense of humour and tongue-in-cheek approach, with insights into happenings at the winery, vineyards and export markets. The early issues are still immensely readable and stand as a great record and archive of our short 45-year history.'

That's a tradition the editor trusts will continue for years to come...

Eat In with Anna Gare

Mentelle Notes welcomes local West Australian TV chef Anna Gare. Every issue will feature one of Anna's local produce focussed recipes matched to a current release Cape Mentelle wine.

Anna grew up in Fremantle and is a passionate advocate of all things edible, especially from WA. Her two cookbooks *Eat In* and *Delicious Every Day* (Murdoch Books) capture her belief that cooking should be enjoyable, healthy – and never too complicated. So get your chopping board out and pour a glass of *Cape Mentelle Sauvignon Blanc Semillon 2016*...



Pic: Rob Palmer.

RINGWOULD GOATS CHEESE BRULEE SALAD

Ingredients

- 2 baby beetroot, red and yellow
- 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tbsp sherry vinegar
- 1 tsp raspberry vinegar (sweet)
- 150 g round of goats cheese with soft rind
- 2 tsps caster sugar
- 1 large handful of watercress
- 1–2 tbsp walnuts, broken
- 1 small spring onion, white part only, julienned
- baby rocket (optional)

Method

Steam the beetroot over a pan of boiling water with the lid on for 20 mins, until just cooked through. Refresh under cold water and rub off skins. Cut beetroot into small wedges and dress with the olive oil, sherry and raspberry vinegar. Season. Preheat grill to high heat. Line a tray with baking paper, put the goats cheese on it.

Sprinkle the cheese evenly with sugar. Grill for 8–10 mins until golden and caramelised. Place the cheese in the centre of a plate, surrounded by beetroot (reserving dressing and juice). Arrange the watercress, walnuts, spring onion and baby rocket, and drizzle over the reserved dressing.

Ringwould Farmhouse Cheeses
T: 08 9845 3045

Egg Head



The egg-cellent new addition to the winery.

The oldest known winery dates back to 4100BC in an Armenian cave. Back then tanks were made of clay and known as amphoras, a vessel with origins in the neolithic period. They were porous allowing the wine ‘to breathe’, without the addition of any oak impact. Centuries passed and the handy amphora invariably became shards of clay, later found by archaeologists and displayed in glass cases in museums.

Roll forward countless centuries and enter biodynamic French winemaker Michel Chapoutier who believed egg-shaped concrete fermenters ‘concentrated the energy vortex’ of fermenting wine, producing higher quality – without the addition of oak. The wine eggs caught on in California and Italy, and eventually were ‘laid’ in Australia.

Cape Mentelle has one 700-litre concrete egg fermenter, imported from France. It is made from a special mix of clay and cement chosen for its micro-porosity properties and weighs 1.3 tonnes. It is currently ‘hatching’ the *Wallcliffe Sauvignon Semillon 2016*.

Cape Mentelle’s Technical Director Frederique Perrin, who holds a Masters in Oenology from Montpellier University, is mightily impressed with the early trials.

‘This is the first vintage. The egg shape provides a natural stirring effect during fermentation; already this initial selection is showing great finesse and balance.’

‘It’s easy to get lyrical about this beautiful winemaking object and it certainly gives birth to a most surprising element of the Wallcliffe white blend: intense but sharply focused, ample palate but restrained, long and structured but untainted by oak.’

The trial is ongoing but the early indications suggest this egg will hatch.

Turning Japanese



Step into **Miki’s Open Kitchen**, inauspiciously tucked behind a shopping arcade in Margaret River’s main street, and you’ll be greeted by a barrage of ‘*Irasshaimase*’ the traditional Japanese diners’ greeting. Immediately you sit at the counter that surrounds the slightly sunken ‘open’ kitchen and look at the day’s local catch blackboard menu, you know you are in for a treat.

Chef Mikihiro Nagai (*right*), a keen surfer, was drawn to Margaret River and stayed, partly due to his love of the local ocean’s catch. If you want to taste WA seafood at its freshest, be sure to book a kitchen-side stool. Then choose ‘Miki’s Trust Menu’, a variation on traditional kaiseki that transports you straight to Tokyo.

Silky smooth kingfish sashimi, Panko-crumbed Esperance scallops, tempura’d Exmouth red emperor or Port Headland prawns, these myriad marine morsels are Miki’s mainstay and conjure contented smiles that widen with an accompanying bottle of *Cape Mentelle Sauvignon Blanc Semillon*. You’ll want to bow in awe as you leave. Miki’s is a true gem and well worth a visit when you are in the region.

Shop 2/3, 131 Bussell Highway, Margaret River
T: 08 9758 7673
www.facebook.com/mikisopenkitchen

The Other Day

...I was thinking I hadn’t been to Margaret River for a while. A thought triggered while reading about plans to land direct flights from the East Coast at Busselton airport. Yup, big jets right into the southwest.

So I jumped into the old bronze Jag and cruised down past the incinerated forests of that massive Yarloop fire. What a burn! The only upside I could see was a flush of grass trees (aka *xanthorrhoea*) that love a bushfire to breed.

Wanted to see what will greet those hordes from The East...straight from the wine bars of Chippendale and Fitzroy. Bet they’ve never heard of Dr John Gladstones who earmarked Margaret River for vinous history.

First impressions matter. That’s what Mum always told me. So I’ll share mine as I drove into town. And basically, not much has changed.

The locals’ utes might be bigger, but they aren’t shinier. And they still pinch all the parking spots, mostly outside the Sidekick Café as winemakers pull in for takeaway caffeine. Can’t imagine they go for the turmeric chai latte. No I’m not dreaming...

Other things don’t change either. Spotted the beret-topped recipe king Ian Parmenter nipping into the IGA on the morning of the farmers’ market. Guess he needed toothpaste.

Then headed to the market to meet the district’s hard-working farmers. Got chatting so no balanced meal buy for me. My basket was strangely full of kohlrabi and chorizo, and glorious Nannup Cambray sheep cheese. Stumped to know what wine to match with chorizo and kohlrabi mash. A Cab Franc maybe? Anyway, what exactly is kohlrabi? Note to self. Check Wikipedia.

Ah ha. It’s a German turnip, eaten cooked or raw. Known in Vietnam as *su hao* and said to be milder and sweeter than cabbage. Recommended if you’re drinking Grüner Veltliner, that Austrian immigrant.

Seems things may have changed just slightly since I was last down this way. Back then – no farmers’ market, no artisan smallgoods and no weird vegies. Kale was fed to dairy cows. So I suspect was the kohlrabi.

Cheers, Bruce Lees.

Ambassador Alert

Original MN readers may recall the **Mentelle Ambassador** program. No, not recruitment for Aussie Volunteers Abroad, rather a loyalty program focused on you the wine lover sending in photos of Cape Mentelle bottles spotted, or consumed, in far flung places.



Diving deep for perpetuity — winning Ambassadors Tony and Caroline Vincin, 1997.

Readers went to great lengths – and depths – to capture the moment. And dutifully mailed the winery their happy snaps.

Now of course technology has changed. It's all about the social media moment, captured and promptly shared. So in keeping with the rising phoenix theme, we are relaunching Mentelle Ambassadors – via Facebook, and later Instagram.

Take a pic of yourself, colleagues, family and friends enjoying Cape Mentelle wine in exotic or unusual places and when posting use hashtags **#capementelle** and / or **#mentelleambassador** or post straight to www.facebook.com/capementelle

These images will be reviewed by the winery and a winning image chosen each month, commencing 1 January 2017. The prize is a **Six-Pack Selection** of current releases, sent via Australia Post to a nominated Australian address.

This is your official Ambassador call-out! To inspire you – a winning photo submitted back in 1997 from Mauritius.

Please ensure your image quality is at least one megabyte. Email entries also accepted. Send to: info@capementelle.com.au
Happy Mentelle snapping over Summer!

Back Vintage

Every issue we propose to look back at some prophetic *Mentelle Notes* stories.

JULY 1997 – GOING UP...?

That bottle of Aussie red you've been keeping for a special occasion may be worth more than you think.

Forget government bonds, antiques, first editions, unit trusts and even blue chip shares – the real money is to be made in Australian wine. That's what the pundits are saying.

The past decade has seen a dramatic rise in the value of Australia's AAA-rated red wines, both within Australia and abroad. The undisputed leader is of course Penfolds Grange, but several other benchmark brands are not far behind.

A recent article in *Wine* charts the UK price movements of selected Australian premium reds between 1987 and 1997. The fastest filly of the field is Henschke Hill of Grace, showing 272% increase. Then comes Grange at 150%, Henschke Mount Edelstone 138% and Hardy Eileen Shiraz 111%. Cape Mentelle Cabernet Sauvignon ranks fifth with a 75% rise between 1990 and 1997.

A similar comparison based on Australian auction prices (1990 – 1996) appeared in the *Sun Herald*. Their statisticians must have been on the same good drop, because the list of top performers is similar. Top movers were Henschke, Grange, Cape Mentelle Cabernet and Lindemans St George.



Throw forward 20 years and refer to the Langton's List. A couple of those Australian red brands have bolted over the hill to stratospheric heights, while others have reliably stayed the course without commissioning elaborate bespoke crystal for launch dinners. Wine Ark has just cited *Cape Mentelle Cabernet Sauvignon* in its Top 50 Most Collected List for 2016.

Latest Drops

CAPE MENTELLE CHARDONNAY 2014

'Some wines are songs to their variety and vineyards and this is one such. Touched by toasty, spicy oak but the wellspring is the fruit, pure and shining. Gingerbread, white peach, pear and grapefruit... Beauty in a bottle.'

96 POINTS
HALLIDAY WINE COMPANION 2017

'Tremendously concentrated and powerful with great line and a penetrating palate following on with a very long-lasting finish. Grapefruit and lemon flavours linger on and on. A superb chardonnay, with a big future.'

96 POINTS, huonhooke.com

CAPE MENTELLE SHIRAZ 2013

'Another gorgeous example of Cape Mentelle shiraz... Beautifully seductive plum and spice on the nose with a dash of black pepper...'

96 POINTS, Ray Jordan
WEST AUSTRALIAN WINE GUIDE 2016

CAPE MENTELLE CABERNET SAUVIGNON 2013

'Very fresh, fragrant and lively style that makes for exciting tasting. Some very smooth, mellow and nicely ripe rich fruits on offer, custard spices and mocha oak, dark chocolate too; very complex and alluring. The palate has supple, soft and ripe mulberry, cherry and plum fruit flavours, blueberry pie, some pastry-like moments and a fluffy, approachable tannin texture... Brilliant!'

96 POINTS, jamessuckling.com

'The bouquet is very detailed and subtly complex, not super-ripe but fragrant and lovely, with hints of cedar, violets and dried flowers. The palate is deliciously drinkable, elegant and nuanced, soft and finely-textured. Great line and length, but not big or imposing. A really tasty cabernet...'

96 POINTS, huonhooke.com