

“LIFE IS BETTER
WITH A GLASS
OF GOOD WINE
IN YOUR HAND
AND A FEW
MORE IN THE
CELLAR.”

CAPE MENTELLE

MARGARET RIVER

NEWSLETTER MAY 2009

NOTE FROM THE WINEMAKER



Times are tough. I think everyone must be acutely aware of what he or she is spending money on and what they consider essential. For the wine consumer the choice of wines available has never been greater, so for a winery to excel they must focus on quality and value while providing a distinctly different and memorable experience every time one of their wines is consumed. Here at Cape Mentelle we pride ourselves in doing just that.

We wondered what the 2009 vintage would bring late last year amongst the thick winter swells, strong winds and persistent rains of the South West. We had a very dry October and a very wet November, somewhat in contrast to much of South Eastern Australia, which experienced a very dry winter and spring. Our vintage looked promising and with the considerable investment made in our vineyards over the last five years beginning to show, I could not help but feel an extreme sense of optimism about our vintage, a pleasant reprieve from the economic gloom that filled the papers.

We began harvesting a week later than usual in the third week of February with the first of our hand picked chardonnay. The following four weeks saw the steady ripening and harvesting of all of our whites in perfect conditions. The grapes looked stunning and showed the best natural acidity I've seen in 14 years of winemaking.

Two weeks of mild and overcast weather followed in late March delaying the beginning of the red harvest. As usual we began with our small quantity of zinfandel and have followed with shiraz, merlot and finally cabernet sauvignon, with the occasional sangiovese and petit verdot thrown in to keep things interesting.

As I write this it is still early days and crops on reds, although a touch late to ripen and a smaller than average yield, look to have great potential. Cabernet, I think, will be the star of the 2009 vintage and one to look out for. I know the team in the winery were keen to see us harvest the old vine material at the front of the winery and we all look forward to care-taking the wine over the next three years until we release it. By then we will have seen all the other 2009 wines released from Cape Mentelle and Margaret River and, upon reflection on the vintage to date, I think it will be highly regarded across the board.

I will drink to that.

Cheers, Rob

“I COULD NOT HELP BUT FEEL AN EXTREME SENSE OF OPTIMISM ABOUT OUR VINTAGE, A PLEASANT REPRIEVE FROM THE ECONOMIC GLOOM THAT FILLED THE PAPERS.”

ROB MANN

UPCOMING EVENTS



30 June 2009

Bécasse Cape Mentelle Dinner,
hosted by Robert Mann at Bécasse, Sydney

2009 Sydney Morning Herald Chef of the Year, Justin North will create a sumptuous, four course menu to showcase wines from Cape Mentelle, including the award winning Chardonnay and Cabernet Sauvignon. Commencing at 7pm, tickets \$120 per person.

For reservations please call (02) 9283 3440

www.becasse.com.au

25 August 2009

Meet the Winemaker Dinner at Glass Brasserie,
hosted by Cape Mentelle Chief Winemaker, Robert Mann

A five course degustation menu designed by Luke Mangan, matched to Cape Mentelle wines. Commencing at 6.30pm, tickets \$160 per person.

Glass Brasserie, Hilton Hotel, Sydney NSW

For reservations please contact Glass Brasserie Events Manager, Sara Lincolne on (02) 9265 6068 or sara.lincolne@hilton.com.

www.glassbrasserie.com.au/specialevents.html

SEEN AT CELLAR DOOR

What's your name?
Jean and Marshall

Where are you from?
Goulburn, NSW

*What made you visit
Cape Mentelle?*

We've always loved the wine. Still have a few at home – cooking slowly!

*What's your favourite thing
about Margaret River?*

Apart from the wine? Well... it must be the beaches and the restaurants, both are fantastic.

*If you could only drink one
thing for the rest of your life
what would it be?*

It would be a wine. He says Henschke, and for me...any really good cabernet – Cape Mentelle is right up there.

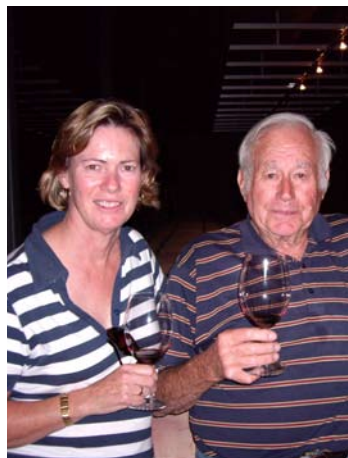
*What was your best ever
wine experience?*

The day we met Don Ditter at a Penfolds Wine Clinic and Tasting in Canberra. Also the many occasions we have lost Sunday afternoons with our friends sampling all our favourite drops.

WINE TIP #001

Letting wine 'breathe'

Letting a wine breathe means deliberately exposing a wine to air - this helps to start the exchange of wine and air molecules and in doing so impacts on the wine's flavour and heightens its aromas. The best way to get a wine breathing is to decant it from the bottle. Wine decanters are specially designed to expose large amounts of wine to the air. Decanting provides the greatest benefit to red wines, helping the older reds 'awaken' from their cellar-bound slumber or encouraging younger reds to settle down and show their softer side. Opinions vary on how far in advance of drinking you should decant and generally depend on the wine's age and variety. As a general rule an hour should be plenty.



THAT FATEFUL WINE

BY CAMPBELL MATTINSON



“I LEARNED SOMETHING THAT NIGHT AND I’LL NEVER SHAKE IT: WINE, WHEN IT’S REALLY GOOD, ISN’T LIKE OTHER DRINKS. THIS WAS MY FRESH-OYSTER-PLUCKED-AND-SHUCKED-IN-A-FRENCH-BAY MOMENT.”

It hit me. A wine. At a restaurant at the casino in Melbourne. It was a night when the alcohol flowed like stupidity at a football club and something in me changed, forever, at the sip and the taste and the sensation of one particular wine. I drank it, and as I did so it was like I was being bitten by Dracula or a werewolf or a malaria-carrying mosquito.

That wine – it made something go funny in me. Like falling in love. I suddenly wanted to be on intimate, personal, intense terms with all the most beautiful wines that I could afford – or could wangle to drink. Looking at what that journey has cost me – I wish I was a lawyer. The person who poured me that wine has cost me a fortune. I should sue the bugger.

But – that fateful wine.

I drank it. I drank some more.

It was dark in the restaurant and the wine was dark too, and I’d only been drinking casually until this wine was served – nonchalant raise of the glass, hardly even look at it, sip, stop, drink more – and BOOM!

I held the glass (suddenly, it would’ve taken a crow bar to wrench it from my grip) and looked out the big glass windows, out towards the Yarra River. The casino’s fire-balls roared.

All about me money floated like confidence and booze, really good booze came and came like the bar was a wave-machine of wine. Swig. Swallow.

Another kaboom. Fire and fine wine.

I’d been a journalist, that night, for ten years, and a wine, wine cooler or scotch-and-Coke drinker for the bulk of them. I had enjoyed these drinks, and the effect they had – but none of them had said anything special to me; they were about the moment and that was that.

But I learned something that night and I’ll never shake it: wine, when it’s really good, isn’t like other drinks. This was my fresh-oyster-plucked-and-shucked-in-a-French-bay moment. My white-truffles-in-a-Florence-trattoria revelation. Wine might be grape juice flavoured with oak – but it can be more than that.

This wine at the casino was proof. It was different to other wines, in a way that didn’t make sense. It was strong and dark, and yet the bulk of it felt smooth and light, like a really big guy who can run really fast. It was chewy, too – yes, chewy – because it was mouth-puckering and dry, and when you swallowed it the flavours and even the feel of the wine seemed to be still there in your mouth; I could still chew on them. A drink that you could chew? It hardly made sense.

And more: this wine had a juiciness and a straightforward deliciousness, like a lot of wines, and yet it made me want to slow down and think on it – rather than to consume it at a rate of knots. This was a different experience. A wine can’t talk – I wasn’t that far gone – but this wine seemed to have something to say. And despite all the noise and fire and smells of the restaurant – it made me want to listen.

A decade on. My life is thoroughly swamped in wine, and has been for years – I’m often asked whether I ever get tired of the stuff. It would be easy to answer, yes. And I am tired of wines that don’t have anything to say. But I think back on that wine and so many of those that have followed, and try to answer – except that there are all these wines muttering about their season and variety and where they were grown, and it’s hard to get a word in edge-wise.

Campbell Mattinson is the author of ‘The Big Red Wine Book’ (Hardie Grant \$24.95) and co-author of winefront.com.au

A CLOSE SHAVE FOR A GOOD CAUSE

The impact of the Victorian bush fires resonated far beyond the hundreds they displaced and devastated. While at times feeling a world away here in WA, Cape Mentelle has strong ties with Victoria. Domaine Chandon in the Yarra Valley is where our viticulturist Jim White had a previous life as vineyard operations manager. Now based in Margaret River, Jim felt remote from his family and friends directly affected by the bush fires and was determined to help.

Jim proposed to shave off his beard, lovingly cultivated for 12 years, to raise money for the Bush Fire Appeal. While admiring his philanthropic efforts Nikki, his wife of ten years, had some trepidation about seeing her husband clean-shaven for the first time. His colleagues at Cape Mentelle along with those at Domaine Chandon and Cloudy Bay however were very keen to see what Jim was hiding under that hair and arranged a video conference to view the shave live. Even a visiting trade group from Hong Kong, Malaysia and Singapore embraced the event, attended the shave and donated to Jim's cause.

Winemaker Simon Burnell 'upped the anti' pitching in an extra \$200 if Jim also shaved his head! The incentive worked and Jim's locks also came under the clippers – though pity was taken with the impending cold months and a number 3 clipper grade was used, rendering him closely shorn if not completely bald.

Aside from the laugh they were all guaranteed, the winery staff took Jim's cause seriously and supported him to the tune of \$2000. Overall contributions to the Appeal from staff at the three wineries totalled \$11,762. Both Estates & Wines in Australia and LVMH in Paris pledged to match any staff donations, catapulting the total raised by the three wineries to \$35,286.

And while opinions may have varied regarding Jim being bearded or clean shaven for the long term, there was no question for the man himself who, in accordance with a long-standing superstition held by the winery team about shaving during vintage (no hair removal until the last grapes are in), let nature take its course without interference and is bearded once more. Wife Nikki is pleased. While enjoying a full unveiling of her husband's face, the scratchy growing-back stage was too much to bear and certainly not suitable for cuddles with their first baby due in June.

CAPE CAPTION COMPETITION



Sign up for Cape Mentelle e-news

Keep up to date with what's going on at the winery by subscribing to our e-newsletter. Vintage information, latest releases, tips and special winery only offers will be sent through from time to time. Email us at marketing@capementelle.com.au to register your interest in receiving emails from us and why not have a go at writing a caption for the picture above while you are at it? There is a mixed case of Cape Mentelle wines for the winner!

See back page for terms and conditions.

Cloudy Bay

Loyal readers of Mentelle Notes will be aware that previous newsletters covered the latest news, releases and reviews from both Cape Mentelle and Cloudy Bay wineries. This edition is the first to exclusively cover news from Cape Mentelle. If you would like to receive the latest news from Cloudy Bay please visit www.cloudybay.co.nz and subscribe to 'Friends of Cloudy Bay'.

BEFORE



AFTER



COOK'S CAPRICORNIAN CREATION

Life in the country is a constant source of surprises, most of them pleasant. One such moment was the day a goat turned up on my doorstep. Well, more precisely, half a goat. Let me explain.

Neighbours of mine, a charming Swiss couple - Andreas and Sonia - migrated to Margaret River a few years ago with a view to starting up a marron farm, they eventually abandoned the project and decided to farm goats instead – a damn fine alternative, given it didn't require the building of a dam.

And that's how, some time later on a fine autumn morning, half a goat was delivered, already butchered, wrapped and with all the parts neatly labelled, (the Swiss are known for their precision).

"Vee thought you would like to try our new product", said the enthusiastic Andreas. Indeed I would!

And so it was that over a period of a couple of weeks, this equally enthusiastic individual went about finding, and inventing, recipes for the animal, which incidentally is one of the world's most consumed red meats.

Slow-cooked roast was made with the leg, chops were barbecued, the shoulder was curried. With what remained, some neck and a few more chops, I made a deliciously rich casserole.

It was a full-flavoured, rich, meaty dish, that was perfect served with broad pappardelle pasta, that had been cooked al dente and tossed with a little extra virgin olive oil (from other tree-change neighbours), and finely grated lemon rind and parsley – both from the garden.

As to wine, while a full-bodied chardonnay was used in the cooking, I accompanied the goat casserole with a Margaret River cabernet sauvignon.

With its full-bodied nature, the 2005 Cape Mentelle Cabernet Sauvignon makes an ideal partner to the goat casserole as well as to game meats, rich mushroom dishes, and mature cheeses – and will continue to do so as it ages gracefully over the next ten or so years.

One thing's for certain: it's a wine for drinking, not cooking.

Here's my Capricornian creation...

Ian Parmenter



IAN PARMENTER'S GOAT CASSEROLE

Though I created this dish using goat, it could also be made with lamb or mutton. If the meat used is overly fatty, most can be removed from the surface of the cooked dish with paper towel.

Ingredients *Casserole*

1 kg goat meat (chops, neck, or shoulder cut into pieces)
2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
1 large onion, finely chopped
1 large leek, finely chopped
2 medium carrots, finely chopped
3 or 4 large cloves of garlic, finely chopped
300 ml full-bodied wine, white or red
600 ml chicken, veal, goat or lamb stock
1 cup rich tomato sauce or 1 tbsp tomato paste
2 or 3 sprigs of fresh thyme
2 or 3 bay leaves
½ tsp white pepper

Pasta

500g pappardelle
1 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
2 tsp finely-grated lemon rind
2 tbsp finely chopped parsley

Method

Over high heat, in a large pan, brown goat pieces in olive oil. Remove, leaving oil. Add onion, leek, and carrot and brown for 5 or 6 minutes. Add wine, stock, tomato sauce (or paste), garlic, thyme, bay leaves and pepper. Allow to reduce to thick syrupy consistency.

Check flavour and add salt if necessary. Put meat into the sauce, cover tightly and simmer very gently for about 3 hours. Alternatively, put into casserole dish, cover tightly, and cook in oven at 150C for a couple of hours. Skim fat if necessary before serving.

Cook pasta in lots of lightly salted, boiling water. Drain and toss with other ingredients.

Serves 4



MENTELLE AMBASSADORS

FROM THE CELLAR DOOR



Most wines, upon coming into the possession of a wine lover, etch out a lonely existence in a darkened cellar while life passes on by above the floorboards. Some, if lucky enough, are kept table-side in wine racks – these may show their age sooner but will have enjoyed ringside seats to convivial entertaining and dining, at least until their own cap is unscrewed.

Never before has a bottle of wine been taken on a journey quite like the one experienced by Mark Wellard's 1999 Cape Mentelle Zinfandel. In his [successful] effort to be named 'Mentelle Ambassador' Mark took his Zinfandel 70m under the sea while diving on the wreck of the USS President Coolidge in Vanuatu. Don't believe us? Check out the photo! Mark assures us that the wine survived the trip, even if the label did not.

Anyone can be part of Cape Mentelle's diplomatic efforts. Next time you are in a remote or exciting location just take a photo (high resolution please) of you or someone you love with a bottle of Cape Mentelle wine. It could be Zinfandel in Zaire, Shiraz in La Paz or Cabernet in Mandalay. Then send the photo to our Editor. Email entries to: marketing@capementelle.com.au.

Cape Mentelle will publish the best and most intriguing photo and the winning Mentelle Ambassador will receive a FREE mixed case of Cape Mentelle Wine.

Another stunning Margaret River summer kept the cellar door team busy and ensured that the new petanque pitch saw plenty of action with many visitors taking time out to enjoy a leisurely game of boules and a glass or two of Sauvignon Blanc Semillon.

Summer 2009 also marked the inaugural season of Cape Mentelle Twilight Movies, held in the winery gardens on two balmy summer nights. Screenings of Australian movie 'Unfinished Sky' and Baz Luhrmann classic 'Romeo + Juliet' were enjoyed by an appreciative audience as they sampled gourmet delights from Margaret River's own Blue Ginger and oyster king Jerry Fraser. Even a thunderstorm during the screening of Romeo + Juliet on Valentine's Day couldn't dampen spirits; in fact it created a suitably dramatic atmosphere and an awesome light show! Be sure to put the Cape Mentelle Twilight Movies in your calendar now for next summer.

Our 'behind the scenes' and degustation tours have proved very popular with visitors grasping the opportunity to learn more about our wines, how they are made, and how best to match them with great food. Tours commence at 11.30am on Monday, Wednesday and Saturdays and you can book a tour by calling 08 9757 0812 or emailing cellardoor@capementelle.com.au

Next time you're lucky enough to be in Margaret River come and visit us, we'd love to see you.

REVIEWS

New Releases

Well I'm pleased to say that the long anticipated 2005 Cabernet Sauvignon has now been released and has been well worth the wait.

Displaying the classic depth and richness of a Cape Mentelle 'Cab Sav', the 2005 is full-bodied and bursting with flavours of ripe blackcurrants and mulberry fruit. I recommend stocking the cellar before this one runs out.

Also recently released at cellar door are the 2007 Cabernet Merlot 'Trinders' and the 2007 Zinfandel, both will be commercially available later in the year.

Under limited release to cellar door and mail order is the 2008 Viognier, and exclusively for mail order customers is the 2008 Botrytis Viognier, a rich and textural dessert style wine.

Mail order customers will also have the opportunity to snap up more of the 2007 Chardonnay that in February was awarded 'Best Chardonnay' in the Royal Sydney Wine Show.

The reviews so far have been favourable and the demand for the wines strong proving that, even in a global economic crisis, life is better with a glass of good wine in your hand and a few more bottles in the cellar.

Rob Mann

For more information on the new release Cape Mentelle wines open up the newsletter, there's more inside!

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Accolades



Cape Mentelle Wallcliffe Sauvignon Blanc Semillon 2006

Rating: 95 points/5 stars

Review: 'The big gun of Mentelle's trio of sav-sems...It's very powerful, concentrated and rich, with lovely balance in the mouth.'

Source: Huon Hooke, Australian Gourmet Traveller Wine, Feb/March 2009



Cape Mentelle Cabernet Sauvignon

Review: 'It was first made in 1977 and has been one of Margaret River's superstars ever since. This world-class Cabernet put the region on the map... It's a profound red: ultra-concentrated, opulent and powerful with gamey complexity.'

Source: Peter Forrester, The Sunday Times, March 15 2009



Cape Mentelle Cabernet Merlot 'Trinders' 2006

Review: 'We all have things that make us feel at home...One of mine is Trinders...Expect a sweet and dusty nose of blackcurrant, smoke and leather, while the palate is similarly concentrated with Merlot helping to soften, round, and fill in the blanks of an already sleek and stylish Cabernet framework.'

Source: Matt Skinner, The Juice 2009



Cape Mentelle Chardonnay 2007

Review: Awarded 'Best Chardonnay' at the Royal Sydney Wine Show 2009



Cape Mentelle Sauvignon Blanc Semillon 2008

Rating: 95 points

Review: 'Has excellent juicy vinosity on the mid-palate, flavours of lemon, gooseberry and grass all intermingling, the touch of barrel ferment barely visible; excellent balance and length for the short-term cellaring.'

Source: James Halliday, www.winecompanion.com.au December 2008



A small amount of the 2007 Chardonnay and 2008 Sauvignon Blanc Semillon has been held back for our mail order customers. See the order form enclosed for details.

Terms and Conditions

Information on how to enter forms part of the terms and conditions of entry.

1. To enter readers must email marketing@capementelle.com.au. Participants will be required to provide their details, including but not limited to their own name, address, postcode and telephone number and provide an image and accompanying description of when and where the image was captured. Incomplete, misdirected or illegible entries will be ineligible. Only one entry per person will be accepted. 2. Entry is open to all permanent residents of Australia and New Zealand aged 18 or over. Employees and their immediate families of Cape Mentelle and their associated agencies and companies associated with the promotion are also ineligible. This is a game of skill, and chance plays no part in determining the winners. 3. The competition commences on May 10th 2009 and concludes on August 1st 2009. 4. The Judges' decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. Prizes cannot be transferred. Prizes cannot be redeemed for cash. 5. The entries will be judged by the Promoter, and a winner will be chosen on August 1st 2009 at 331 Wallcliffe Road, Margaret River WA 6285, in its absolute discretion. Entries will be judged on image quality, location and creativity. 6. The Promoter reserves the right to request winners to provide proof of identity and proof of residency at the nominated prize delivery address. Identification considered suitable for verification is at the discretion of the promoter. 7. Prize winners are advised that tax implications may arise from their prize winnings and they should seek independent financial advice prior to acceptance of the prize. 8. The winners will be notified by mail. 9. Prize values are the recommended retail value as provided by the supplier and are correct at time of printing. All prize values are in Australian dollars and include GST. 10. The promoter shall not be liable for any loss or damage whatsoever which is suffered (including but not limited to direct or consequential loss) or for any personal injury suffered or sustained in connection with any prize/s except for any liability which cannot be excluded by law. 11. All winning entries become the property of the Promoter. All winning entries will be entered into a database and the promoter may use the entrants' names, addresses and telephone numbers and email addresses for future promotional, marketing and publicity purposes in any media worldwide without notice and without any fee being paid unless otherwise advised by the entrant. 12. Prizes and values are as follows: 12 bottles of assorted Cape Mentelle wines. Total value of prize pool is \$360 as at 4/05/09. 13. The winners release the promoter and other organisers, their related bodies corporate, affiliates, officers, agents and employees, from all liabilities, loss and damage of any kind arising at any time out of or in connection with the acceptance of, and participation in, the prize. Without limiting the foregoing, the released parties not be liable for any injury, sickness or death, property loss or damage or other direct or indirect loss or damage of any kind, howsoever sustained or incurred, in connection with or arising out of any other aspect of the prize. 14. The promoter is: Cape Mentelle Vineyards Ltd, ABN 79008815334.