



Curly Flat

November 2012

No. 30

VINE TO WINE

Time to release the ...

2010 Curly Flat Pinot Noir & 2012 Curly Flat Pinot Gris

Why our Pinot Noir continues to evolve...

To say we're excited about the release of our 2010 Curly Flat Pinot Noir would be an understatement. It is not just because we captured one of the best growing seasons we've seen in bottle, it runs far deeper than that. This release is the culmination of experiences gleaned from the prior twelve vintages. Furthermore, with our oldest vines dating back to 1992 (20 years old now!), perhaps the French adage that vines need 20 years to start producing their best fruit is beginning to have an impact. The signs are there but only time will tell ...



The long process of continually 'listening' to our site is reflected in this benchmark release, within which you can hear echoes of past vintages; chiefly the powerfully vibrant 2006, but also layered with the ethereal grace of the 2008. With the beguiling tension that lies between the power and the prettiness, our 2010 release lets us know we are walking in the right direction.

Chris Shannahan said about the 2010 Pinot *"I place it in the very top ranks of Australian pinot noir – and all the more appealing because it moves well away from the strawberry-like fruit flavours we see in so many. Fruit sweetness remains crucial, but top pinot should also be earthy, savoury and richly, smoothly textured with a quite firm but fine tannin backbone. This pretty well describes the outstanding Curly Flat."* www.chrisshannahan.com

2010 — The 'Goldilocks' of growing seasons

2009 was the end cycle of a 5 year drought, as gentle winter rains slowly returned to us. This, to a point, addressed the cumulative deficit wrought by the drought and gently rejuvenated our rich volcanic soils, providing a great start for our vines. This turned out to be the theme of the 2010 growing season; there wasn't too much of anything, but there was right amount of everything. From September to February (Budburst to Veraison), days were mostly warm as were the nights cool which only served the verdant canopy for the better. We had average rainfall from there on until early March were we received almost 100mm over four days. This freshened up our lively canopy as it headed for harvest two weeks later. In essence you couldn't have asked for a better season; not too hot, not too cold. In fact, it was just right!

2012 Curly Flat Pinot Gris

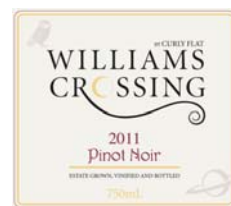
As we come to release our ninth vintage of Gris/Grigio, this release further explores the character that can be coaxed out of this variety when the time and care is taken, both in the vineyard and winery. We have labelled the 2012 vintage as Pinot Gris (rather than a Grigio) due to its richer density and the entwining savoury complexity; a result of being partially fermented in neutral oak. Here it picks up non-fruit characters such as cashew and gun smoke. And that is just half the story! From there, ripe grapefruit acidity brightens the palate and races to the finish, to linger whilst the tropical fruits return in waves. Whilst drinking well now, there is enough character, acidity and textural frame for several years of development.



With the 2010 Pinot Gris we ourselves fell victim to how quickly this wine sells out. We always keep museum stocks of our wines to track their development, but this is the one that got away! If anyone still has more than one bottle, and is willing to part with them, please call us on (03) 5429 1956. We'll arrange a swap of three bottles of the current release 2012 for two of the 2010.

2011 Williams Crossing Pinot Noir available too

From a challenging vintage comes a most rewarding wine. A cool, wet growing season for us has only served to reveal a more elegant portrait of what our site can achieve.



Ethereal, fine boned, backlit, whatever way you describe the 2011 Williams Crossing Pinot Noir, it's a damn fine wine! In the glass you'll find a bowl of fresh summer berries smattered with sour cherry fruit. Earth, fresh herbs, violets and autumnal leaves also appear, weaving together to provide an altogether alluring perfume. There's more of the same on the palate but with the addition of savoury tannins which provide a fine, yet focused frame for the mouthwatering acidity to chime throughout.

For full tasting notes and cellaring potential on all our new and current release wines please visit our website at



www.curlyflat.com

Budburst Weekend At Curly Flat

To herald budburst and the Vintage ahead, Macedon Ranges vignerons celebrate with the Budburst Festival, held on the weekend of 17th & 18th of November. Many Macedon Ranges producers rarely open their cellar doors, so this is an opportunity to find some hidden gems.

All our current wines will be on tasting, including the new releases. Emma Chapple of Star Anise in Kyneton will be serving bistro meals in Vintage Hall on both days. Emma is also serving an exquisite dinner on the evening of Saturday 17th November. Menus and other details for the Budburst lunches and dinner are shown on our website and blog.

Here We Go Again!

With budburst now well underway, our journey towards Vintage 2013 has had a most promising start. Right now we are hard pressed to remember the vineyard looking so healthy and in balance, but the adage that nothing good comes easy is certainly applicable here.



Budburst! The first buds burst on the 19th September

Whilst we have free draining volcanic soils, rich in organic matter, and are in a remarkable cool climate setting, these elements whilst vital, are not enough. For the fruit to reach the desired caliber of expression, each vine needs to be hand tended several times a year. With every pass we fine tune the vines towards the direction we think the season is headed.

So far this season has been kind, with above average rainfall over winter, where we received 280mm over that three months against the long term average of 236mm (for the same period). This kept the moisture content in the soil profile, which served the vines well because September turned out to be 30mm drier than normal. Of course we prefer natural rainfall, but we can irrigate if need be.

Budburst itself started on the 19th September, and so far there is very little disease pressure, but with around five months remaining for Vintage 2013 to show its meteorological hand, for better or for worse, anything is possible. But this in itself describes the dynamic nature of wine, as every berry that goes into its making is in itself an utterly faithful journal, etching every nuance of the season into its being, ensuring we never have the exact same vintage or wine. We'll keep you posted on how Vintage 2013 is travelling on the Curly Flat blog!



'Serious' Summer Solutions!

As the weather warms up, wines may tend to chill down. These wines intrigue the palate equally as they refresh them. Here's what some of the critics had to say recently about some of our serious summer wines:

2011 Curly Flat Lacuna Chardonnay

"unoaked but lees contact for nine months; part wild, part inoculated fermentation, malolactic fermentation (mlf) occurring naturally. Bright straw-green; throwing all the focus on the fruit has worked very well, for the palate is full of flavour spanning nectarine, white peach and grapefruit, with a slightly creamy note ex mlf and lees contact." **94 Points - James Halliday Wine Companion 2013**

2011 Curly Flat (Pinot Noir) Rosé

Phillip Moraghan pulled one of the most exciting rosés of the season out of his bag. Made in tiny quantities by hand and foot (yes, foot stomped), this is an unusually pale and gorgeously fragrant rosé with restrained wisps of pink pepper, pomegranate and rose petals. The palate is all about texture, consummately refined and elegant, with perfectly handled phenolics, stalks and lees texture uniting to create a silky mouthfeel." **95 Points - Tyson Stelzer**
www.tysonstelzer.com

2010 Williams Crossing Chardonnay

It's a full, flavoursome, slightly oaky/nutty/buttery style but it's all lime/nectarine-like fruit on the finish, and the way a wine finishes is always the ultimate arbiter. This is good drinking. Chardonnay to its back teeth and generous from go to whoa. **90 Points - Campbell Mattinson (The Wine Front)**

Watch out for the WAK!

With the release of the 2009 Curly Flat Pinot Noir you probably noticed a change with the closure. Whilst this new closure has the aesthetic qualities of a cork capsule it's most certainly a screw cap. **Please be aware of this before you reach for your corkscrew!** Our move to this closure was based on its functional aspects, as the below image illustrates. You cannot see the thread on the WAK because the robust internal thread is covered with thickened aluminium, dramatically increasing protection against undue impact. This can be a weakness with the standard screw cap. If the exposed external thread is damaged, the wine can be exposed to oxidation. We made the move to this closure, on Curly Flat Pinot Noir and Chardonnay, to offer the best protection for its expected long life. This move is proactive rather than reactive, as we like to be ahead of the curve where we can!

