



Curly Flat

March 2013

No. 31

VINE TO WINE

Time to release the ...

2010 Curly Flat 'The Curly' Pinot Noir

The Curly—Why and What?

First up, “The Curly” is NOT a reserve; it is simply one of our trial ferments that we considered different enough to hold out and bottle separately.

We believe it will take decades, perhaps centuries, to understand the full potential of our vineyard. Thus, every year sees continual trial work in both the vineyard and the winery; both involve complex algorithms. Every vintage we take many different approaches to fermentation and maturation; for Pinot, usually in the order of 35-40 separate lots.

Some of our trial work comes from cultural exchanges between Curly Flat and Burgundy; us working in Burgundy and people from Burgundy working with us.

We have been a strong believer in whole bunch inclusion in Pinot Noir ferments, and have long admired the Pinots of Domaine Dujac. Their wines feature a high percentage of whole bunch matched with a high percentage of new oak. So in 2010, we decided to see how this approach would work with Curly Flat fruit.

In our annual barrel classification, where every barrel is assessed, totally masked, the ten barrels from Lot 35 – 100% whole bunch/100% new oak - all achieved high scores, but with comments that they were different to the usual Curly Flat ‘style’.



We decided that this was a good juncture to release a trial wine, with the intention to carry that idea forward in some future vintages. “The Curly” will be a particular ferment that we identify because of its difference to the main blend. It will not necessarily be of the same “style” each year. Because of the limited production of the wine

and the increased costs associated with smaller lot production and additional oak costs, “The Curly” will usually carry a price premium, but will still deliver good drinking value, as well as its scarcity value.

Speaking of scarcity, “The Curly” will only be available to our existing customers, but not through on-line ordering; orders can be by mail, email, fax or phone. Allocation of “The Curly” will be a maximum of 3 bottles per customer.

While “The Curly” drinks well now, we project that it will peak around 2020 or later.

Here is how James Halliday assessed the 2010 The Curly:

“A 3-tonne vineyard selection producing 244 dozen that was matured in 100% new French oak for 22 months. It has another dimension of intensity and length, its aromas and flavours linked to black cherry and foresty notes from 100% whole bunch fermentation.”

97 Points— James Halliday drink to 2024

Praise Continues for Curly Flat 2010 Pinot Noir

“Healthy, clear red-purple; offers a mix of spicy/savoury and French oak nuances running through the plum and red cherry fruit of the bouquet; the palate is perfectly balanced, and the 22 months in 30% new French oak barrels were judged to perfection.”

95 Points - James Halliday

“Curly Flat is now a mature estate heading into its prime. This is a delicate pinot noir. Restrained. Earthen. Savoury. All good things. Flavours of cherries and mint, brown bread and crushed dry spice. Fine, firm tannin gives it a discipline. Minerally, steely tannin. Water-based rather than alcohol-based, as pinot noir should be.

Gorgeous, flavoursome, sappy length. Oak adds texture and polish. Excellent.” 94+ Points - Campbell Mattinson

“Perfumed and pretty, it is packed with cherry, plum, raspberry, toasty oak and spice flavours. Part of this was fermented with whole bunches – stalks and all – which has imparted a perfumed lift and a stalky vegetal character that adds an extra layer of complexity. There’s fabulous energy and tension to this – hallmarks of a great wine – along with silky-smooth texture, bright acidity and a finish that fans out and builds intensity as it flows along the tongue.”

5 out of 5 Ben Thomas—The Weekly Review



Curly Flat Pinot Noir Celebration Lunch

We welcome the return of Union Dining to Curly Flat. Chef Nicky Riemer, with her flare for provincial European cuisine, and her team will provide a culinary backdrop to highlight the complexity & longevity of Curly Flat wines. Along with Gris and Chardonnay, we'll be showing 5 vintages of our Pinot Noir to show how our wines evolve over time. Vintages will include our current release 2010 Pinot Noir and will go back as far as our **1998 vintage**, our first release, which has recently been affirmed via our 15 year vertical (see below), to be alive and well.



Lunch at Curly Flat
Sunday May 5th
\$150 per person
inclusive of wine



Coulubiach, yabby & pear salad, confit rabbit salad, saucisse de Morteaux, Hopkins River beef braised in pedro ximenez, onion & garlic soubise, ... Full details of the menu will be on our website and blog soon. Bookings via phone (03 5429 1956) or email mail@curlyflat.com.

During May and June we will hold dinners in Melbourne, Sydney & Brisbane. There will be a variety of events at Curly Flat during 2013. Stay tuned by visiting our website or call in to our cellar door - vintage is the best time to visit Curly Flat to see the activities in the winery.

Curly Flat 15 Year Vertical Tasting

We recently invited some of Australia's leading winewriters to two vertical tastings of every Curly Flat Pinot Noir and Chardonnay, right back to our first vintage, 1998. The first tasting was held at Curly Flat and gave the writers the opportunity to walk the vineyard and see our winery operation. Perhaps you saw the articles by James Halliday in The Australian and Jeni Port in the Age that reported on the tastings. It was very encouraging to see the longevity of the wines. While the more recent vintages show greater complexity, the older vintages show how the wines can age. The 1998 wines are still alive, in fact the 1998 Pinot looked quite youthful. No doubt vine age and our accumulated experience in the vineyard and winery are leading to more complex and balanced wines. The common thread across all the wines was the structure arising from the inherent acidity. The one thing that was



James Halliday ponders upon our Pinot Noir...

made clear was we planted our vines in the right place. After that fact, the main take out was the inherent longevity of our wines which were still standing after 15 years with a good pulse of acid. But as Phillip says; "Our best wines lay ahead of us. It will take more than a generation and an Excel spreadsheet to decode our vineyard." For more of our thoughts on the 15 year vertical, please visit our blog via our website.



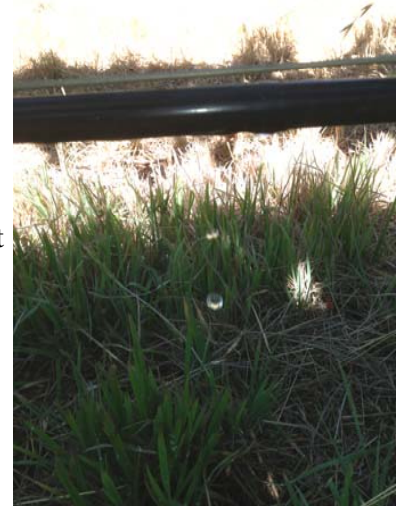
Vintage 2013 Update

As we've mentioned previously each season has its own unique passage of weather that ultimately comes to define that vintage. The 2013 vintage started like most others, outside of the fact that we have never seen budburst and its resulting canopy to be so uniform, which to us is a verification of great soil condition and vine health (& age) and precision management. The rhythm of uniformity carried on throughout flowering and led to healthy fruit set which is one of the critical periods of the vineyard cycle.



We can't recall such uniformity in the vineyard...

Good winter rainfall saw us in a relative surplus in comparison to the Long Term Average. But after August, any alignment with the term 'average rainfall' had ended. Due to the large high pressure systems that sat over central Australia, leading to record national temperatures, memory of rainfall soon narrowed to a distant memory. In terms of heat, while we had some warm days here at Curly Flat, our cooler climate saw us receive far more moderate temperatures. For us the lack of rainfall remains the standout weather feature for this particular growing season. Fortunately we have a good water source at Curly Flat, which proved crucial in providing targeted irrigation, sustaining the vines until rainfall returned. Which thankfully did return throughout February. We received 93.4mm for the month, more than double the February average, showing again the flexibility within "average". This heavenly moisture was delivered via nerve wracking thunderstorms, that thankfully didn't bring damaging hail along with it.



Every drop is precious!

From here, near perfect weather continues to ripen our bounty with Harvest seemingly destined to begin late March, but of course, we aren't there yet. Whilst we have used the word average several times here, it is the last word we would use to describe the subtleties and complexities of the vineyard or the wines that grow from it. We'll keep you updated on the progress of Vintage 2013 via our blog.