

OFF THE VINE

AUTUMN 2017



TWO RIVERS

HUNTER VALLEY WINES

2017 HARVEST REPORT



Hot, Hot, Hot!!!

What a vintage it has been! Mild temperatures coupled with regular soft rainfall got the vines off to a beautiful start in spring with abundant early growth and lush green canopies. These healthy canopies were a Godsend later in the season because, as all of NSW knows, it got hot.....very hot!!



L: Vintage 2017 begins as seen from the top of our harvester
R: Night harvest in full swing - all systems go!

Thankfully grapevines are very resilient plants and the early season growth ensured that the vines were protected from the heat and were able to ripen early while maintaining their optimal balance, resulting in some beautiful fruit this year.

The harvest itself was a pleasure and for the first time in our history we didn't have a single interruption or delay due to rainfall – a rare event to be savoured in the Hunter!

I am really looking forward to sharing our 2017 vintage with you. Early indications are that it is going to be a cracker!

Brett Keeping



L: Brett and Eamonn O'Neill (from Sowter's Transport) with our last load of grapes about to head to the winery



R: Annabel Holland and Liz Jackson check the ferment on our Chardonnay barrels

LIGHTNING STRIKE

The Upper Hunter is renowned for its erratic afternoon thunderstorms and we have paid tribute to this on a number of our labels including the Thunderbolt Shiraz and the Lightning Strike Chardonnay.



We originally named our Lightning Strike Chardonnay when a particularly powerful bolt of lightning took out an entire row of vines (see left), only a few years after they were first planted.

Although the storms were less frequent this year we did experience one in February where things got pretty wild. About 150m behind our house, adjacent to one of our best chardonnay blocks, is a weathered old red gum that is a bit of a landmark in our vineyard landscape. During this storm a savage lightning strike hit the tree, blowing a huge hole in its side and sending large shards of timber flying more than 50m up the road. Hopefully the tree will survive but it was a timely reminder of the incredible forces of nature and a not-so-subtle hint that it is time to feature this wine again!



The tree and 'scar' left after the lightning bolt hit the tree

The 2016 Lightning Strike is one of the flagships of our Vigneron's Selection range. It has been made in a leaner style with the subtle influence of French oak to complement the lifted aromas of stone fruit which is the signature feature of this variety. The chardonnay renaissance is happening and its wines like this that makes us remember what a delicious and versatile variety it can be. Enjoy with our featured recipe which is Pearl Cous Cous with Sweet Potato, Cranberries and Pine Nuts, a perfect food and wine match.



PEARL COUS COUS WITH SWEET POTATO, CRANBERRIES AND PINE NUTS

Ingredients

1 pkt Cous Cous
1 large onion, diced
2 cloves garlic, diced
2 cup chicken stock, warmed
1 large Sweet Potato, peeled and chopped into small pieces
100gms Pine Nuts
2 rashers Bacon, sliced
½ cup Cranberries
¼ cup Currants
Corriander & Mint – chopped

Dressing

¼ cup Oil
¼ cup Orange Juice
¼ cup Red wine vinegar
1 teaspoon Seedy Mustard
Place all ingredients into a jar and shake well

Method

Heat 1 tablespoon of butter and 1 tablespoon Olive Oil in a saucepan, then add onion and garlic and cook until translucent. Add Cous Cous and stir until slightly browned. Pour in the warmed stock and cook for 8 to 10 minutes. Transfer to a tray to cool.

On a oven tray toss sweet potato in oil and season with salt and pepper, bake in a hot oven till cooked and crispy then set aside to cool.

Dry fry the pine nuts (don't burn them folks), set aside and then cook bacon and drain on kitchen paper.

Assemble salad by placing cous cous in a mixing bowl, add pine nuts, bacon, sweet potato, cranberries, currants and lightly mix together. Transfer to salad bowl and toss with prepared dressing, sprinkle over coriander and mint and you may want to crumble some Feta over the top.

Serve with minted Lamb Chops

Hint – *If like me you love a left over, this is a perfect lazy Sunday night meal warmed up in a frypan for a few minutes*



A gorgeous dish to serve alongside either of our beautiful Chardonnays. Make the most of these lovely evenings as we slip into Autumn.

BLUE GOLD FOR RESERVE CHARDONNAY



Hot off the press is the news that our 2015 Reserve Chardonnay has taken out a prestigious Blue Gold award at the 2017 Sydney International Wine Show. This wine was also rated by the Judges to be in the Top 100 wines of the 2000 entries received at this prestigious wine show.

CELLAR DOOR TURNS 10

Ten years has certainly gone quickly, but when we look at tangible things such as how big the trees have grown around the Cellar Door and the huge improvements we have made to the outdoor entertaining area, it's certainly been a busy decade. We have hosted many functions and events at the Cellar Door over this time, but what gives us the most satisfaction is that on any given day we can see people enjoying the tranquillity and beauty that this property offers our guests as they relax and enjoy a lovely bottle of wine and soak up the view.

We have been fortunate to be blessed with a great bunch of staff who over the years have given so much to our business and our brand; they are loyal to the core and we can't thank them enough.

These past 10 years sure have been a wild ride, but well worth it.



Come on up! UPCOMING EVENTS

March 31 & April 1 - Upper Hunter Show –
Muswellbrook Show Ground

May 5 - Denman Bush Poets Evening

May 6 - Denman Wine and Food Affair

May 4 - 14 - Scone Horse Festival

May 12 - Scone Cup

July 1 - Aberdeen Highland Games

September 22 -23 - Blue Heeler Film Festival

