

## A UNIQUE TASTING: VIVE LA DIFFERENCE!

Mount Horrocks' participation in this year's Clare Valley Gourmet Weekend (incredibly, the thirtieth!) saw a unique tasting hosted by Stephanie at Mount Horrocks Cellar Door.

With the dozen tasters comprising visitors from far and wide, including non-industry wine lovers, sommeliers and journos, the tasting was designed to be an opportunity to taste the differences in dessert wine styles and to see how Mount Horrocks Cordon Cut stands amongst the world's best.

Guests sampled 5 vintages of Cordon Cut alongside Chateau D'Yquem, Chateau Coutet and Kracher accompanied by Maggie Beer Pate, Adelaide Blue cheese and Steph's own lemon curd tart. Stephanie was delighted that the Cordon Cut showed very strongly in such esteemed company, especially the Chateau D'Yquem which runs at some ten times the price. The Cordon Cut tasted fresher, cleaner and lower in alcohol, the exercise highlighting the significance of botrytis to the imported wines. "I thought my wines were consistent, elegant and refined" says Stephanie.

Guests noted the calibre of Cordon Cut too. "It shone" said The Malaya Restaurant's sommelier Tri Le. "An outstanding tasting" exclaimed Paola Danieli, sommelier of Cafe Sydney "...in my eyes Mount Horrocks was the better wine."

Despite the favourable comments, Stephanie is at pains to insist that the tasting wasn't designed to be a competition: "I wanted to share similar style wines from my own cellar, and to show the commonalities and differences."

Despite firm favourites being found, the conclusion was indeed "vive la difference"!



*A luscious line-up was tasted at the Clare Valley Gourmet Weekend*



*Come visit Stephanie at the newly renovated Mount Horrocks Old Auburn Station Cellar Door*

## MOUNT HORROCKS WINES

SPRING-SUMMER 2014 NEWSLETTER

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# MOUNT HORROCKS



*Spring-Summer 2014 Newsletter*

## 'IT'S SPRING TIME'

This Spring-Summer newsletter heralds the release of the Mount Horrocks Watervale Riesling, Cordon Cut and Semillon.

### 2014 WATERVALE RIESLING

Just five thousand vines on a five acre estate vineyard at Watervale produce nine hundred cases of this truly outstanding limited release riesling. Over the past twenty-two years it has been consistently acknowledged as one of Australia's best.

The Mount Horrocks Watervale Riesling vineyard, in the north eastern corner of this famous Clare Valley subregion, is planted on the very edge of the highly prized red soil

over limestone. Surrounded completely by open land where cattle graze, its relative isolation only benefits the strict application of organic practices which Stephanie has adopted.

As the fruit ripens, Stephanie regularly walks the vineyard, tasting the fruit and taking samples for analysis, then when deemed ready: bam! Stephanie swings in a team of no less than 25 pickers to hand harvest the crop within two days, while it's at that critical point of ripeness.

Every few hours, as the harvesting continues, a small truck shuttles the grapes to the winery to process the freshly picked fruit. After removal of stalks and gentle crushing, the free-run juice is separated. Only this component is ever used. This is part of the secret of how Mount Horrocks has, for decades, found it unnecessary to fine any wine made, meaning all of Stephanie's wines not only qualify for European organic wine status, they are also vegan and vegetarian friendly.

*Bright, lime-edged, pale white gold.*

*A spring garden of florals – lime blossom, honeysuckle and spice.*

*Bell-clear, pristine, almost crystalline, this is a typically delicate yet long on flavour Mount Horrocks Riesling displaying lemon-lime and tropical fruits and pleasing minerality. A wine of great purity and style that will age confidently for 10-12 years.*

### PRAISE FOR THE 2013

Bright light yellow colour. Restrained, fresh, youthful aroma, with some lemongrass and lemon pith notes. Pristine. Juicy, rich, fruity palate with great depth of fruit generosity. It finishes clean and dry, but the fruitiness invites you in and makes it very accessible. A superb wine. Great now and will age well too. 94 points.

**Huon Hooke, huonHooke.com, August 2013**



## 2013 SEMILLON

Stephanie's isolated four acre Semillon plot of three thousand eight hundred vines ascends the slopes of Mount Horrocks over the hill from the Riesling vineyard. Situated on much poorer shale-clay loam it is bordered by an increasingly rocky profile to the east.

Harvest decisions are once again more innate than technical, with Stephanie tasting the fruit two or three times a week as it ripens, all the while watching the weather forecast.

The 2013 vintage was hand-picked in mid February, gently crushed and destemmed, then very gently pressed. The free-run juice was settled in tank prior to fermentation in French oak barriques, one third of which were new. The barrels were regularly lees stirred as the wine developed over its eight months in the oak cellar.

The final wine was assembled after numerous taste trials of the barrels, bottled without fining then returned to the cellar for a further nine months ageing prior to release.

*Vibrant white gold.*

*True to style aromatics: appealing apple, pear and spice.*

*Super-stylish textural wine whose scents flow through to the palate, along with fuller nectarine and stone fruit notes, and ripe lemon.*

*Creamy oak. Displays lovely balance: poised and persistent, with lipsmacking flavour. Delicious now, with barbecued spatchcock or cellar confidently to 8 years.*

### PRAISE FOR THE 2012

"Stephanie Toole's oak-fermented semillon offers better drinking than ever in the outstanding 2012 vintage. Fuller bodied than riesling, but lighter than chardonnay, it offers rich flavours but also delicacy and the unique lemon-and lemongrass-like character of the variety. Though fermented and matured entirely in oak barrels, the oak influence is subtle – perhaps adding a vanilla-like flavour – and perceived more in the silky texture the process adds to the wine..."

**Chris Shanahan, Canberra Times, November 2013**



Mount Horrocks Semillon vineyard is bordered by a rocky profile

## 2014 CLARE VALLEY CORDON CUT

All Mount Horrocks wines are estate grown however Cordon Cut is always from two vineyards, due to the inclusion of the grapes grown at the tiny Station Vineyard at Auburn, in front of the Cellar Door. Visit during February to April and you can personally see the cane cut vines hanging from their trellis, the fruit raising naturally in the crisp Clare Valley air.

The underlying principal of this special wine is that the canes are completely severed and the bunches of grapes are left hanging on the vine. This causes the grapes to shrivel like raisins, naturally concentrating the flavour.

It's a complex, highly risky process requiring both skill and experience. The decision to pick is made by Stephanie based on appearance and taste. Technical analysis in this case is of little value. Intimate knowledge of the process on the other hand is critical.

Hand picked at the end of April and in five separate fermentation vats, Stephanie's experience comes into play once again, as fermentation is halted when she determines the flavour to be right, and while considerable residual sugar remains.

The 2014 harvest gave a much smaller quantity of wine than normal, with just six hundred cases produced.

*Glittering pale white gold.*

*Appealing vibrant, floral, lime and spice notes.*

*Succulent and juicy, candied citrus fruits with hints of ginger, vanilla and other heady spices, trademark minerality and balancing fresh acidity. Here, in its naturally concentrated form, crystal-clear Riesling varietal character sings its melodic song. In a word, delicious.*

*Cellar 8-10 years, enjoy with tarte tartin.*

### PRAISE FOR THE 2013

A great season for one of Australia's finest dessert rieslings, uniting unctuous intensity and honeyed sweetness with well-structured acidity. It's as alluringly complex as ever, a gorgeous amalgam of lemon and lime, peach, baked apple, honey and mixed spice. Brimming with persistence and appeal, this is a vintage that will live long. 95 points.

**Tyson Stelzer, Wine Taste Weekly, December 2013**



Lovely raisined cane cut fruit ready for harvest

