



Twisted Gum

NEWSLETTER – SPRING 2011

Spring is with us again. This is the start of our fifth season here in Twisted Gum Vineyard, and we will never get tired of seeing the magic of spring in the Granite Belt. The grey gnarled vines that have been dormant over Winter awake from their sleep with delicate light green shoots forming a thin carpet of green across the vineyard. These shoots remain quite small for a few weeks and then all of a sudden they begin to grow at a rapid rate, and the vineyard is a riot of vivid green, looking amazing against the earthy colours of the eucalypt forest and granite boulders that surround us. Then the roses that are planted at the end of each vine row along the drive begin to flower, and our visitors begin to understand what Alison Coates from the Sunday Mail was writing about when she wrote her glowing article about [Days of Wine and Roses Among the Hills](#) after her stay in Twisted Gum Vineyard Cottage this time last year.

In the Vineyard

Spring is a busy time of the year, when we work long hours in the vineyard doing canopy management tasks, such as shoot thinning and “tucking up” – all by hand. With shoot thinning, Michelle and I move from vine to vine carefully removing any unwanted shoots. This is done to make sure that the yield per vine is kept at the low level we desire and also to ensure that the vine canopy remains nice and open so that the air and sunlight can reach the bunches and properly ripen the grapes.



The entry road is alive with colour

Once the canes are 60cm long or more we again go from vine to vine and “tuck up” the canes into the foliage wires above the vine. This encourages the canes to grow in a vertical direction – a method known as Vertical Shoot Positioning (VSP). This process also ensures that the maximum amount of light and air can enter the canopy. All this work is very labour intensive, but the reward at the end of the season is the very high quality fruit that produces our special wines.

In addition to being busy with canopy management, we have also planted 270 grafted rootlings in the remaining gaps in our vineyard this Spring, comprising 220 Black Muscat vines (our Pink Moscato fans will be pleased) and 50 Verdelho vines. These rootlings were grown just down the road in Ballandean by our local nursery man, Mario Costanzo. The rootlings have enjoyed the recent warm weather and have all started to grow very nicely in their *gro-guards* – which are white triangular tubes that help protect the young vines from wind, rabbits and kangaroos.

In the Winery

This year we have changed over to light weight glass bottles for our wines, so as to reduce our carbon footprint. We are very pleased with their look and feel of these new bottles, which use one third less glass relative to the standard bottle. We also had a company from Toowoomba do a carbon audit for us this year (www.enviroasset.com.au). It was their first (pilot) audit of a winery and I think they were quite amazed that they could not find any easy ways for us to reduce our carbon footprint! But this was not a real surprise to us, given that we do not use irrigation pumps, we use light weight bottles and also do so much by hand.

In our last newsletter (Winter 2011) we described the bottling of our 2011 Pink Moscato and stated that “With just 800 bottles made, you will be wise to grab some before it sells out like the earlier vintages.” Well, we did not know how quickly it would actually sell out! Soon after, we went to the Ekka and sold half of the vintage in just 10 days, with the rest selling quickly in the months that followed. So we have had to tell a number of very disappointed Pink Moscato fans that they will have to wait until the 2012 vintage is released in May 2012. Be sure to drop us an email if you want us to send you an email notification when it is released.

Gus

By popular demand, we have included a photo of Gus in this newsletter. It was tough getting this photo, because he hardly ever sits still! Gus is our three year old collie/kelpie cross. He is full of beans, and loves to greet cottage guests with lashings of enthusiasm. During late summer, Gus helps us chase the birds out of our bird nets, while at other times he keeps busy chasing dragonflies and guiding cottage guests on their walks up to see the view from flat rock. The guest book in the cottage is full of nice comments about Gus and his various antics. On a few occasions some guests have threatened to take him home – so we had to keep a very close eye on him!



Gus refuses to smile for the camera

Wine order form

With Christmas approaching, it is the time to fill the cellar with some nice wines so that you can impress the rels and friends when they drop by for a drink or three. We have attached our new Excel order form to make it easy for you to place an order. Simply insert the number of bottles of each variety you want (making sure they tally to 6 or 12). If you are ordering a case of 12, be sure to insert your [wine club](#) discount (10% for first case, 20% for second case or 30% for third in the year) and insert a 0 in the freight column to get free freight (to Eastern States). Then email the file to us so we can process your order.

Wishing you all the best for the festive season!

Tim and Michelle Coelli

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