



Twisted Gum

NEWSLETTER – SUMMER 2012

Summer has flown by this year. The cottage has been very busy throughout December and January, with more and more people discovering the magic of summer on the Granite Belt. The mild sunny days and cool evenings are just perfect for picnics among the vines, bush walks in Girraween National Park or just sipping a glass of wine on the deck as the sun sets. Visitors will be pleased to know that our local tourist organization (Granite Belt Wine and Tourism) has now produced a new *Nature and Adventure Guide*, which will inspire us all to get out there and enjoy our beautiful region in the summer months. Click [here](#) to access a pdf copy of this guide on the web.

In the Vineyard

Vineyard work is never over until the last grape is picked! In December Michelle and I were kept busy with canopy management tasks, such as leaf plucking around the grape bunches on the Southern side of each row. This allows the indirect sunlight in to help ripen the bunches and improve the fruit flavours.



A rainbow frames Twisted Gum Vineyard

In late January the birds told us that it was netting time, as they began sending in scouts looking for the first indication of ripening grapes. A full week of hard work followed as we carted the nets out of the shed (1 day), spread the nets over

our three hectares of vines (3 days) and then clipped all the nets onto the trellis wires (2 days). The nets were secured just in time, since Gus (our winery dog) was soon busy helping us chase a few determined currawongs out of the cabernet nets who had been able to get in before all holes had been repaired.

What Chardonnay is that?

Many people are now talking about the “new style” of Chardonnay that is light and crisp and unoaked which is reviving interest in wines made from this classic grape variety in Australia. The reality is that it is not a new style at all. In the past, before international law prevented wine producers from using the names of European wine regions to describe a particular style of wine (such as Burgundy or Chianti), most Australian wine producers would have called their unoaked Chardonnay wines a *Chablis*, after the French region of Chablis (in the Northern part of Burgundy) where they make lovely crisp zesty unoaked white wines from Chardonnay grapes, featuring fresh flavours of citrus and melons. This style of wine is designed to be consumed when it is young and fresh. Try it over lunch with grilled fish and a crisp garden salad – a perfect wine for our al fresco lifestyle in South East Queensland.

A little to the South of Chablis, in the central part of Burgundy near the Village of Beaune, a region known as the Côte d'Or also produces a white wine using Chardonnay grapes. However, this style of wine (often called *White Burgundy* by producers in Australia in the past) is quite different to Chablis. Their use of oak

barrels, lees stirring and malolactic fermentation produces a big wine that is designed to be aged. These wines become quite yellow in colour with age, with pronounced mouth-filling buttery flavours of stone fruits and savoury oak. They go very well with strong flavoured meats, such as rabbit or quail, and are best enjoyed with dinner on a cold winter's evening.

Both of these styles of wines, when done properly, are truly excellent wines. In fact, much of the bad press that Chardonnay received in Australia in the 1990's was the result of some winemakers taking the oaked style of Chardonnay a bit too far, producing wines where excessive oak treatment dominated the underlying fruit flavours, resulting in unbalanced wines that were at times harsh and unpleasant. It is not a surprise that people began to join the *anything but chardonnay* (ABC) club after drinking a few of these wines...

The good news is that these wines are long gone and it is now safe to rediscover the variety and pure class of Australian Chardonnay! The Granite Belt produces some truly special Chardonnays. Try our 2009 Twisted Gum Chardonnay for a refreshingly crisp unoaked style or the 2009 Ravenscroft Chardonnay for a fine example of a well balanced oaked style.



Michelle and Kate enjoy a glass of Twisted Gum Chardonnay on the deck of the Cottage

Come and see us at these events

Apple and Grape Harvest Festival (March 2-4)

Every two years the Granite Belt puts on its best frock and kicks up its heels at a big three-day party known as the *Apple and Grape Harvest Festival* (www.appleandgrape.org). This is a not to be missed event, with dozens of activities, including the grand parade, charity grape crushing, cooking demonstrations, roving musicians, art exhibitions and the very popular *Wine and Food Fiesta* held in Weeroona Park from 10 am to 6 pm on Saturday the 3rd and Sunday the 4th of March. There you can choose from a range of exciting food stalls and sample wines from 16 of the Granite Belt's best wineries while enjoying great music and entertainment.

Toowoomba Royal Show (March 29-31)

The Toowoomba Royal Show (www.toowoombashow.com.au) is one of the biggest and best shows in South East Queensland. Twisted Gum Wines are excited to be involved in the new "Tastes of Queensland" section in the Founders Pavilion, where you can enjoy our wines along with a range of quality regional foods in a café setting. So if you are at the show, be sure to escape from side show alley for while and drop by for a chat and a glass of something crisp and refreshing.

Cheers!

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