



SINGLE VINEYARD ORIGIN
APOGEE
ANDREW PIRIE TASMANIA

NEWSLETTER WINTER 2013

Visits by appointment
1083 GOLCONDA ROAD LEBRINA TASMANIA 7254
INFO@APOGEETASMANIA.COM T: (03) 6395 6358
WWW.APOGEETASMANIA.COM

WELCOME TO APOGEE NEWSLETTER WINTER 2013

After a busy first summer season at Apogee this newsletter fulfils my promise to keep in touch with friends and visitors to the cellar door and on-line customers. This issue sees the launch of the much-awaited first Apogee Deluxe Rosé 2011, made mainly from Pinot noir, and the 2011 Vintage Brut which has now 20 months on yeast in the bottle prior to disgorging. Thank you for past support and don't miss participating in our draw for 6 special bottles of the Rosé.

Look out for features on Apogee in the August *Financial Review's* magazine and *UK Decanter* magazine.

Andrew Pirie

WORSHIP AT THE ALTAR IN CHAMPAGNE

May 2013

Despite some erosion of the fizz market by Prosecco and Cava, champagne territory remains the holy grail of sparkling wine and its centre-piece has to be the very altar where Dom Perignon worshipped at the Abbaye of Hautvillers on the hillsides above Epernay. This church has been owned privately by families related to the early Moët-Chandon Empire and is now maintained by Moët.

It is where I was lucky enough to attend a private technical tasting with the chef de cave, i.e. the chief oenologist, of Moët et Chandon and Dom Perignon.

Trained as a medical doctor but eschewing that career for something more sensory Richard Geoffroy, as maker of at least 1 million bottles a year of Dom Perignon Vintage and Rosé in addition to Moët et Chandon and other bread winners in the Moët LVMH stable.

Dom Perignon is a significant component of the LVMH business when you consider the turnover in the DP brand alone probably exceeds €200 million, not to mention the halo effect of its brand. As Richard said, he does not really mind that most of it is drunk without appreciation in fashionable night clubs around the world, as long as a few bottles are drunk by those who love Champagne!

Even though the wine industry is noted, the welcome extended to us was generous. This was partly due to time Richard spent in his formative years in Australia, with visits to Tasmania which he fondly remembered. For someone in an elevated position in France's most successful wine region he is remarkably warm and humble.

We tasted the newly released 2004 Dom Perignon followed by the 2003 and 2002. The 2002 Rosé made from 60% Pinot Noir was then poured and was the standout wine of an extraordinary line-up. Then followed the 1996 and 1990 Vintage wines followed by 2003 Rosé. Finally there was the 1973 from a very cool year - still in great shape. All wines showed great quality, poise and restraint. The wines are made without barrel influence which is slightly different to the Apogee approach but in common with, if I can dare make a



Andrew Pirie with Dom Perignon-maker Richard Geoffroy (left) at Hautvillers (La Champagne).

comparison, my wine-making plan to craft a vintage wine every year.

The DP wines are at the pinnacle of the "Champagne" brand, arguably close to the epicentre of fashion marketing in the world. What a privilege to be in the tasting seat with the master.

APOGEE - NEW WINES IN THIS RELEASE

The 2011 growing season in northern Tasmania was an old fashioned "Champagne" style of summer - moderately cool, wet and humid. Harvest took place in the second week of April after a long ripening period producing grapes with good composition for sparkling (low sugar and high acidity coupled with lots of flavour). Most importantly, Apogee's unique pruning system kept the vineyard free of botrytis, the fungus that makes great sticky wines in the Sauternes tradition, but is the enemy of sparkling. In my experience these more humid seasons make very good whites and sparkling and are less favourable for reds.

APOGEE DELUXE VINTAGE BRUT 2011

The composition of this wine in terms of the break-up between the key varieties chardonnay, pinot noir and pinot meunier is part of the craft of laying the base for a fine bubbly. Long term experience suggests that in the Pipers Brook district an equal balance of the pinot varieties and chardonnay delivers the best outcome. The fine tuning is that cooler years require a little more of the pinot's in the blend while in the warmer years a touch more chardonnay. Meunier is a powerful contributor and is very valuable in a cool year.



In 2011, the composition comprised 31% pinot noir 24 % chardonnay and 35% pinot meunier. Given some age from disgorging, what we call cork age, the pinot components will fatten and give body. Right now they are quite lean and racy. Some of the oak components of the base wines show through but will blend in with time.

Do not forget the disgorging date is included on the back label so that you can track cork age and wine development. Ideally drink with at least 6 months elapsed from Disgorging Date.

Being a new vintage the wine is still quite pale but shows fine mousse and a persistent foamy collar when poured. Inhale bread yeast, rich apple and red berry aromas, butterscotch and honey with a faint briny oyster-shell character which is part of our terroir.

Alcohol: 12.5% alcohol/volume.

APOGEE DELUXE VINTAGE ROSÉ 2011

A much anticipated first release of a salmon-pink sparkling from Apogee made from 90% Pinot Noir, 10% Chardonnay. For me the Rosé is the peak of the fizz-craft as it derived from a complicated maceration of skins in the juice to bleed pigment and a later addition of pinot noir red wine (also made from Apogee). The final blend is critically sensitive to these additions as they give light tannins to ensure back-bone and balance.

The inspiration for this wine is the full bodied rosés from Ay which are pinot noir dominant and are noted for their softness and roundness.

The aroma is pure perfumed pinot noir with raspberry, red currant coulis and roses. The palate is softer than the Deluxe Brut, and has a velvety texture offset by the fine bubbles and fine tannins.

Alcohol: 12.7% alcohol/volume.

TASMANIAN VINEYARD OF THE YEAR 2013

APOGEE WINS ROYAL AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY TROPHY

It was rewarding, and perhaps surprising, to have won this award with a vineyard that is only six years old. However, in my experience fortuitous combinations of vines, soil and climate, the very essence of terroir, coupled with the right management system do better even early than less favourable vineyard combinations.

According to RAS chief judge Frank Walker:

"Judging takes everything into account from weed control and the vineyard's nutrient strategy, to irrigation, disease control, and the vigour balance of the vine.

Andrew carefully chose his site for Apogee, with particular attention to climate and other environmental factors, to produce grapes to achieve a complex style of quality sparkling wine as well as table wine.

Andrew takes a very particular approach to achieving the outcomes he wants. He monitors environmental factors on the vineyard carefully and undertakes regular soil testing and leaf analysis. His viticultural management processes are thorough and efficient, and he has a very good business plan."

The Richard Langdon trophy was presented at Apogee on June 16th in the company of around 70 Tasmanian vignerons who gathered to hear detail of the vineyard's cultural practices.



R Apogee Cellar Door with first Bay of Fires walkers October 2012.



L Disgorging in winter - showing the ice-plug in the neck of the bottle.



The new Deluxe Vintage Rosé 2011 in the rosé glass

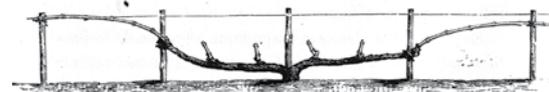
BALLOT

For orders received by 2 SEPTEMBER 2013 there is a chance to win a unique six-pack of Apogee Deluxe Vintage Rosé with 6 Apogee Rosé glasses. The back label will be inscribed with the name of the recipient. Each order receives one place in the ballot. Should you refer new members to the Mailing List each order will add a place in the ballot.

ORDERING THIS RELEASE CLOSING DATE FOR BALLOT 2 SEPTEMBER 2013

The following options are available should you wish to order:

1. Fill out and scan the order form and email to info@apogeetasmania.com
2. Go to the website and make a secure order online
3. Fax the order form to 03 6395 6361
4. Enquiries to info@apogeetasmania.com



WEBSITE - www.apogeetasmania.com



The website has been updated with tasting videos for each wine in this release. Go to apogeetasmania.com for a visual tasting note of the 2012 Alto Pinot Gris, 2011 Deluxe Brut and 2011 Deluxe Rosé.