



Wicks

ESTATE

MEDIA RELEASE: OCTOBER 2012

Steady does it as Wicks Estate improves the breed — one per cent at a time

Wicks Estate 2012 Sauvignon Blanc (\$18)
Wicks Estate 2010 Chardonnay Pinot Noir (\$25)

When Leigh Ratzmer — who shares winemaking duties at Wicks Estate in the Adelaide Hills with the legendary Tim Knappstein — talks about improving the breed he readily admits he’s really talking about fine tuning and attention to detail.

“We know from show results and expert commentators that our wines are up there with the best in our region, but we’re not resting on our laurels,” he said.

“What we constantly strive for, both in the vineyard and the winery, are things that will edge up our quality by a per cent or two. We work very hard at finding a few of those each vintage and we invest appropriately in the technology to carry the improvements through.”

In the vineyard that’s recently meant purchasing a leaf-plucking and canopy-thinning machine.

“I know it seems such a tiny thing, but it means that Tim Wicks, who manages the vineyard side of the operation, can precisely time opening up the canopy to optimise ripening and deliver the most highly flavoured fruit to the winery,” said Leigh.

Making sauvignon blanc is generally regarded as a straight-forward exercise — harvest ripe fruit grown in an amenable climate, extract the juice as gently as possible, control the fermentation temperature, then clarify and bottle as quickly as possible in order to retain as much as possible of the variety’s natural aromatics and vibrant freshness.

“But we’re also striving for some complexity,” said Leigh.

“We were helped this year by the season breaking into two distinct halves, with early-picked fruit showing sauvignon’s renowned raciness while a prolonged ripening period allowed later-picked material to build greater palate weight.”

The quest for complexity continued in the winery, with Leigh and Tim Knappstein breaking the crush into smaller batches and using a variety of yeasts to achieve different outcomes before putting a final blend together.

“I think what we’ve achieved is a multi-dimensional, easily drinkable dry white with ample varietal aromas and satisfying palate structure,” said Leigh.

“Sauvignon blanc has been a hero for us over the past few years, scoring a trophy at the Adelaide Hills Wine Show and winning in its class several times at the Hyatt Advertiser SA Wine of the Year Awards.

“The 2012 has already confirmed its worth in the line-up by winning gold at this year’s National Cool Climate Wine Show.”

Wicks Estate takes enormous care and pride in its sparkling wines, producing a traditionally bottle-fermented single-vintage product that offers customers tremendous value at \$25.

“We certainly over-deliver with wines such as our Wicks Estate 2010 Sparkling Chardonnay Pinot Noir,” said Tim Wicks.

“We ferment the two varieties separately and then adjust the blend to deliver exactly the combination of flavours we’re looking for —a sparkling wine that has both the zesty freshness to be enjoyed as an aperitif, but that also has sufficient palate weight to be matched with lighter foods.

“I reckon this satisfies right now on both counts, and I’m confident that a couple of years in the cellar will see it build a few more degrees of complexity.

“The 2009 vintage won the top gold medal at the 2011 Royal Adelaide Wine Show and we’re confident that this wine is at least every bit as good.”

Wicks Estate wines are distributed in Australia by Angoves: South Australia & Northern Territory (08 8264 2366); New South Wales & Australian Capital Territory (02 9713 5180); Queensland (07 3394 3699); Victoria & Tasmania (03 9768 3022); Western Australia (1300 769 266).

If you require any further information, please contact Simon Wicks on 08 8212 0004 or email simonwicks@wicksestate.com.au. High-resolution product images can be downloaded from WineMedia’s website (www.winemedia.com.au).