

ROCKFIELD

ESTATE VINEYARD

MARGARET RIVER

Winter 2005

FROM THE VERANDAH...

We had record June rains and the vineyard moved quickly from glorious autumn golds and reds to bare winter vines (see picture below). The view from the verandah in July changes daily influenced alternately by driving rain, warm sunny spells, cool vineyard mists and crisp white frosts. Pruning is progressing well and we are getting great structure for the 2006 vintage. At the end of June we bottled our first 2005 wines with the Semillon Sauvignon Blanc, Unwooded Chardonnay, Semillon and Rosa now bottled and looking the best of these varieties to date. They will be released over the next few months so watch out for them. The 2004 vintage Semillon has finished with a rating of 95/100 by James Halliday with selection for the 'Prime Minister's Cellar' (read article below). See you soon at the Cellar Door.

"Wine is proof that God loves us and wants us to be happy"

Samuel Johnson

Dr Andrew Gaman



Above: Rockfield Chardonnay vines this Autumn

Autumn Colours

Autumn is always a beautiful time of the year on the vineyard. After vintage the vine leaves gradually turn a lovely golden brown, as the vines prepare for winter hibernation. Morning and evening mists bring extra crispness to the air, and temperatures drop markedly. It is a relatively peaceful period for the vineyard after the fast pace of vintage, and before pruning begins. A good time to take stock and admire the beautiful scenery.

Winter marks the commencement of pruning in the vineyard, which usually continues for a couple of months. Once pruned the vines are left in their dormant state until bud burst in the warmth of spring. (See our pruned vines on page 3)

More Acclaim for Rockfield Semillon

The 2004 Rockfield Semillon has already received critical acclaim, and was awarded a gold medal and the trophy for best Semillon at the 2004 Margaret River Wine Show. This success has continued with a score of 95/100 from James Halliday in his recently released 2006 Wine Guide. As a result the wine has also been selected for the Prime Minister's Cellar, a prestigious invitation limited to 12 of Australia's top wines. The wines are signed by the Prime Minister and then auctioned through the Humpty Dumpty charity group at the annual Wimbledon ball. Rockfield has been selected for the Cellar for two years running, with our 2001 Rockfield Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon making the selection last year.

Sadly, our 2004 Semillon is now SOLD OUT. However, with our new 2005 Semillon promising as an even better wine, we are now taking pre-release orders. The wine is due for general release in September.

YOUR SAY...

More great comments below from our cellar door visitors' book.

"Look out Big Boys' here comes Rockfield!"

Lauren & Libby, Bondi, NSW

"Lovely"

Masa & Chikako, Japan

"Excellent Wine"

Claudia Mayer, Vienna, Austria

THE VINES...

The 2005 vintage commenced with early bud burst, and (surprisingly) with some red varieties bursting before the whites. With this in mind expectations were high for the resultant 2005 wines. A crucial decision late in the season to hold off picking our reds (due to rainfall) proved to be one of our best timely decisions, with crops of circa 2 tonnes per acre yielded. The crop weathered the rain with ease, and delivered us the little extra we were after.

Whites were harvested earlier than usual, due to a moderate maritime climate providing consistent warmth with fewer temperature extremes.

The vineyard team is now busy completing pruning of the vines, in preparation for bud burst around September.

In summary, the vineyard was looking great for the 2005 vintage, and the quality of fruit harvested was excellent.

Alex Gaman – Viticulturalist

THE WINES ...

The 2005 whites are showing fleshier characters of stone fruit, pear and guava. Coupled with excellent fruit quality and a more terroir-based winemaking approach, these wines are displaying greater intensity and finesse.

Bottling has been successful to date, with the 2005 Semillon Sauvignon Blanc, Unwooded Chardonnay, Semillon, and Rosa now bottled, and due for release in September.

The 2005 Reds surprised us. We expected leaner reds due to the cooler season, however they have proven to be more powerful with very well weighted tannins, excellent colour and concentrated berry flavours.

Andrew Gaman – Winemaker

ROCKFIELD REVIEW

Campbell Mattinson – Sommelier Magazine 2005

"...The wines are fresh, lifted, aromatic, dramatic in their style. The Semillon is excellent, and so too the Cabernets. Hunt them down."

"Rockfield has arrived. It's a beautiful, gravelly, cool-sited estate on a significant cut of land, and if the wines keep looking as good as this, then expect to hear a lot more about them. The 2004 Semillon, sealed under screwcap, is outstanding, as is this fine, elegant, varietal red..."(2002 Cabernet Merlot – see Wine in Review section for remainder of quote)



Show Judging

As mentioned in the previous newsletter our winemaker Andrew Gaman Jnr was an Associate Judge at the 2004 Margaret River Wine Show, and a steward at the 2004 MT Barker Wine Show. This year he has been selected as Associate Judge for both the Royal Perth Wine Show and Mt Barker Wine Show. He has also been accepted into the Australian Wine Research Institute Advanced Sensory Assessment course this September, in Adelaide. Well done, Andrew!

WINE IN FOCUS

2002 Cabernet Merlot

\$24.00



Winestate Magazine (Mar/Apr 2005)

"Huge oak/mulberry and redcurrant nose with a sweet lift. Excellent palate style – big fruit, big tannins, big oak. Has great depth and strength of flavours."

Winestate Magazine, Apr/May 2005

"...This well crafted wine is not dominated by Merlot; rather the merlot makes an important contribution from a respectful distance. Fresh fruit, good use of oak and the sort of palate that makes a Harvey steak look its very best."

Scoop Magazine, New Release Reds, Autumn 2005

"Medium-bodied; elegant blackcurrant and savoury mix; some Bordeaux qualities; balanced tannins and oak. Quality cork."

90 pts – James Halliday 2006 Wine Guide

"...fine, elegant, varietal red. Full of dust and mulch, ash and pristine, berried fruit, it's blessed with all of complexity, length and brightness".

90 pts – Campbell Mattinson – Sommelier Magazine 2005

"The intensity is evident from the aroma. Strong mint and blackcurrant with touches of black olive and bay leaf. The quality is evident on the palate which has a fine balance, dry lean tannins and good oak treatment...A classy wine".

86 pts – Ray Jordan 2004/05 Wine Companion

****Winter Member Special****

\$20* per bottle when ordered by the dozen, plus free freight to anywhere in Australia.

(* That's \$240 dozen, normally \$288 + freight)

PURCHASE A ROCKFIELD CELLAR!

We have put together a complete selection of Rockfield wines to stock your cellar – a total of 48 Rockfield Wines for \$950 + free freight to your door anywhere in Australia. Your cellar will include:

4 x 2003 Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon (pre-release)
4x 2002 Reserve Sparkling Chardonnay
4 x 2003 Reserve Chardonnay
6 x 2005 Semillon (pre-release)
6 x 2004 Semillon Sauvignon Blanc
6 x 2002 Cabernet Merlot
6 x 2003 Shiraz
6 x 2004 Rosa
6x 2004 Unwooded Chardonnay



Purchase a Rockfield Cellar and you will also be entitled to a personal winery barrel tasting for you and 3 friends when you next visit the cellar door. To place your order either email mail@rockfield.com.au or contact us on ph/fax: 08 9757 5006. Offer valid to members until 31st December 2005.

CURRENT TASTING NOTES

2004 Semillon Sauvignon Blanc: This vibrant wine shows gooseberry, lime and pear aromas with passion fruit, honey melon and guava. There is a long grapefruit palate and finish and complexity is enhanced by partial barrel fermentation.

2004 Unwooded Chardonnay: A fresh cool climate style showing citrus, rock melon and white peach aromas with nectarines and cream on the palate.

2002 Chardonnay: Lifted varietal characters of rock melon, stone fruit and citrus are enriched by a creamy palate and barrel fermentation.

2005 Semillon: A fragrant cool climate style with barrel fermentation characters. There are citrus, gooseberry and vanilla aromas with grapefruit and honey melon on the palate. This wine may be drunk now or cellared for several years.

2004 Rosa: A refreshing rose-style wine showing strawberry, cherry, rose and violet aromas with strawberry and Turkish Delight carrying through to the palate. It is ideal as an aperitif and for summer picnics.

2003 Autumn Harvest Semillon: This delicately sweet and aromatic wine has honeysuckle and banana passion fruit aromas with tropical fruit and orange peel on the palate.

2003 Shiraz: A rich spicy cool climate style with well-integrated oak. There are plum, cassis and black cherry aromas plus pepper and mixed spice on the palate. It is an ideal wine for a wide range of dishes and occasions.

2002 Cabernet Merlot: This single vineyard Margaret River blend shows mulberry, blackcurrant and plum aromas plus violet and sweet cedary oak. There are fine soft tannins with cassis, cinnamon, mint chocolate and splashes of red cherry on the palate complimented by a long persisting finish.

2002 Reserve Sparkling Chardonnay: An elegant blanc de blanc style showing extended barrel and bottle fermentation characters.

2003 Reserve Chardonnay: A complex amalgam of barrel ferment and malolactic inputs to a creamy palate with nice melon, grapefruit and apricot. Very good balance and length. A stylish regional Margaret River Chardonnay.

For mail order of Rockfield Estate wines please print and complete the order form on the next page and either mail or fax on 08 9757 5006. Members receive FREE FREIGHT to anywhere in Australia with 1 or more case purchases. Not a member? Visit www.rockfield.com.au and follow the links to join.

