

## Paulmara Estates

Welcome to our almost Winter '08 Newsletter..... Vintage 2008 presented us with the earliest vintage on record. We picked our first load of Semillon grapes on February 7<sup>th</sup>! We picked our last load of Sangiovese on March 7<sup>th</sup>! 4 weeks and vintage was over. Our Block 1 Shiraz that is labeled as our Syna shiraz was harvested on February 21<sup>st</sup>, compared to March 2<sup>nd</sup> in 2007. Winemakers around the country are touting 2008 as the best vintage since 1998! The flavours, the colours, the finesse of the fruit are all exceptional despite the heat wave we had in March when the temperature didn't drop below 20C for over 14 days. We fortunately harvested the majority of our fruit before this heat wave. The high quality of this vintage can be contributed to the considerable amount of rain we had in spring, compared to previous years and the 10 day period in February which saw the temperature drop allowing the fruit flavours to develop and catch up with the baumes.

Water continues to be a major issue for farmers around the country as every month that passes brings no where the rainfalls that we need to replenish our dams, rivers, and aquifers. We as grapegrowers were given a mere 32% of our water allocation this past growing season, mandating that many of us purchase additional water at additional costs. We ourselves had to purchase an extra 6ML to get through the growing and harvesting season. That's an exorbitant amount considering we have an 8ML allocation in normal years! The March rains we had came at the perfect time for us as they irrigated the vineyard immediately after harvest, a very important time as it allows the nutrients to be pulled back up the vine.

Despite the lack of rain, the Barossa Valley is beautiful at this time of year. The leaves on the vines are changing colour and beginning to drop to the ground in preparation for dormancy and pruning, while cover crops are beginning to sprout between the rows.

This year we have decided to graft 5 acres of our Merlot to Shiraz. In 1999 we grafted 2 acres of the Merlot to Shiraz and it has been a real success story. The fruit coming off of that Block 3 is producing A grade quality and we believe the time has come to expand that planting.

The time of year is also here when we begin to harvest our olives. Crop levels are huge this year and the colour of the extra-virgin olive oil resembles liquid gold. Our 2008 Zeus' Nectar is delectable, flavoursome and pure. Order yours now – available in sizes from 375ml to bulk litres.

**Medal news....** Our 2004 Syna was awarded **TOP GOLD** medal at the 2007 Riverina Wine Show. This medal reiterates that our Syna Shiraz require age in the bottle before being released to reflect the true flavours and quality. (One of the reasons we don't release our wines until they are at least 18 months old, often with the recommendation to cellar before enjoying.) Speaking of which I just read a

very interesting letter to the editor (March '08 WMB) in response to an interview with Geoff Merill. Geoff believes that most Australian red wine is released too early. James Hall of Brothers in Arms reiterates this by stating "We naturally want people to be impressed by our wines. So we made a decision.. to present our wines in a state of readiness. If someone is purchasing one of our wines, it is most likely for the first time, so we really only have that one opportunity to impress and hopefully encourage them to buy that next glass, or bottle or dozen." We agree Geoff and James.... We take the same approach!

### **Wine vintage update...**

**2002- only 1 pallet left.** Drinking **EXTREMELY** well and selling like hotcakes, especially in Queensland of all places! Order yours while it's still available.

**2008-** Comfortably sitting in new French oak barrels for the next 18-20 months. This baby is going to be bigger than Ben Hur... we'll keep you updated on this one. Remember our 2006??? Let's just say 2008 is even more promising.....

**Winter is coming so order your Syna Shiraz and enjoy a warming glass a night!**

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