



New release -
2009 Command

02



2013 vintage

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E-Gallery

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Elderton BUZZ

IT HAS ONLY BEEN A FEW SHORT MONTHS SINCE THE LAST THRILLING INSTALMENT OF THE BUZZ, BUT EVEN THOUGH EVERYONE TAKES HOLIDAYS AND EATS AND DRINKS THEMSELVES INTO A STUPOR (WE KNOW IT ISN'T JUST US), WE HAVE STILL MANAGED TO COMPILE SOME VERY SOLID AND COMPELLING EVIDENCE AS TO WHY THE WINES OF ELDERTON ARE PHENOMENAL!

Following are some snippets from the world's most read journalists:

The Rave...

~ James Halliday gave both our newly released dynamic duo of 2009 Command Shiraz and 2010 Ashmead Cabernet Sauvignon a compelling 94 points.

~ The Wine Advocate (arguably the world's most influential wine rag) released an issue on the best value wines in Australia and included every wine that we make under \$20. Amazing! Our 2012 Eden Valley (EV) Riesling, and 2011 EV Shiraz both got 90+, as did our 2012 Golden Semillon (soon to be released). We had three wines that just missed out on the magical 90 point score - 2011 EV Cabernet Sauvignon, 2012 EV Marsanne Roussanne and 2011 EV Chardonnay, all of which scored 89 points.

~ Our friends at winefront.com.au came through with a 94 point rave on the 2010 Neil Ashmead Grand Tourer Shiraz and 91 points for the newly released Marsanne Roussanne. (Incidentally, Harry Heidelberg also raved about these wines on Melbourne radio in January.)

~ And right in our own backyard, Tony Love of Adelaide's The Advertiser gave our 2011 Botrytis Semillon 4.5 stars. This wine is certainly a hit with everyone.

Whilst we do not think you need this third party endorsement to enjoy our wines, these are compelling reasons to put some in the cellar and / or fridge if the case calls for it!

The 2009 Command is here

ABOUT 30 YEARS AGO, NEIL AND LORRAINE ASHMEAD HAD THE DREAM TO CREATE A WINE THAT WOULD BECOME AN ICON. HAVING ESTABLISHED ELDERTON A FEW VINTAGES EARLIER, THEY WANTED TO CREATE SOMETHING THAT IN YEARS TO COME WOULD BE SOUGHT AFTER, COLLECTED, CELLARED AND CONSUMED AMONG GREAT FRIENDS AND FINE CUISINE. THEIR INSPIRATION LED TO THE 1984 COMMAND SHIRAZ, WHICH WAS A WINE BEFORE ITS TIME, AND ONE WITH ONLY A FEW PEERS IN THE BAROSSA.

Today, Command Shiraz is rightly regarded as one of Australia's great wines. No longer a wine before its time, it is now

often thought of as a protector of the great history and traditions of the Barossa Valley. It continues to uphold the Ashmead family vision of producing wine which shows terroir, has respect for history and stays true to its origins. And the second generation of Ashmead family, now at the helm of Elderton, love it this way.

When reflecting on Command, Allister likes to relate a quote from Gabriella Coslovich, "The assumption is that constant fiddling and fussing and tinkering is the mark of a good business when, in fact, it may just be the sign of a business that hasn't a clue - or conviction in - what it stands for." (The Age Epicure, 12 June 2012, p7).

The 2009 Command, released on 1 March, is the 24th release since inception in 1984. The vintage itself was early and

small, yet did not suffer from the same heat effects of the 2008 harvest. This release is a wine of which the family are in awe of. Power, richness and length are its hallmarks, married together with a structure that will take time to show its best. This is a wine to challenge those that think it is the even years in the Barossa that always make the best wines. In a way, the wines of 2009 are the prettiest that the Barossa has made in quite some time.

Cameron and Allister are very excited by the potential of this wine, and know that it is a great representation of that dream that their parents began a generation ago.



Blast from the past...

Having been producing and writing the Buzz for almost 30 years, we thought it may be fun to look back in time to see what the successes and issues of Elderton were a generation ago. We decided to go back to the Buzz of March 1988, 25 years ago...

Firstly the successes:

We proudly announced that we were winners in the South Australian Wine of the Year Awards - unbelievably for our 1987 Eden Valley Pinot Noir! Pinot Noir? Elderton? It is lucky that we quickly came to our senses and stopped making the wine after the following vintage. Today, the only affiliation we have with Pinot is on some of our tongue in cheek t-shirts which state, 'friends don't let friends drink Pinot'!

We also won a tourism excellence award for our tiny little (burgundy coloured) cellar door. Obviously this was recognition for the service and passion

for quality and the Barossa. Whilst our cellar door has changed in 25 years, those initial concepts have certainly remained the same.

Friends don't let friends drink pinot t-shirts available from Cellar Door.



Onto the issues of the day:

The cover story on that Buzz discusses, 'A Case for the Wine Merchant'. The article discusses the impending doom of the independent wine merchant through the proliferation of, 'liquor barns and drive ins, which are often staffed by

cash register jockeys who have little or no product knowledge.' Today, many of these wine merchants are no longer, pushed out by corporates and the consumers desire for a perceived special, it is a great shame.

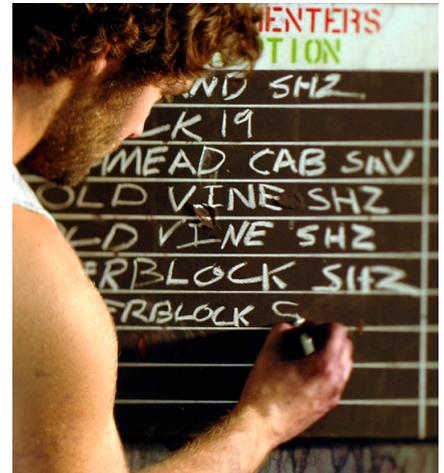
The final paragraph of this article is as relevant today (if not more so) than when it was written 25 years ago. 'As an independent winemaker in an industry dominated by the majors, Elderton have considerable sympathy for the wine merchant threatened by the uninformed who place little emphasis on quality brand reputation and brand integrity. Wine lovers and consumers who seek out house brands, and low prices from direct mail houses and low image pallet sellers will continually place their palate at risk and save little if at all. At Elderton we recommend you track down your local wine merchant and introduce yourself. Look around. You will enjoy the experience.'



Vintage 2013

That time of year is upon us again! The winery is raring and ready to go. Earlier this year a couple of our open fermenters 'had some work done'. They were stripped and re-concreted so there could be no leaking through the cracks that tend to appear when fermenters date back to the 1950s. Brett had also been hard at work in the fermenters. He scraped the wax from last year off the walls and floors and re-waxed to seal and protect.

Richard, our Winemaker, provides his thoughts on the upcoming vintage: The end of 2012 has passed, the world didn't end (again!) and vintage 2013 is rushing forth. The spring and summer have brought little rain or respite from the heat, the cool nights are a blessing - not the usual heatwave with 28 degree nights. Then, just as grapes are turning, things change, jumpers come out of the closet as cool nights become cold and hot days become cool. The flavours are building and here on Feb 1st we were crushing. The vintage will be swift, the berries are small, tannins intense. It never comes soon enough, it will never be swift enough, it is never easy, but it is always fun.



If you are on our mailing list, but do not currently receive email updates and would like to, we would love to hear from you at Cellar Door via 08 8568 7878 or email jess@eldertonwines.com.au



A tale of two walls. Original concreting on the left, with many vintages of character, and on the right what an open fermenter looks like under its concrete skin.



Brett, our Cellarhand, working during the heat of summer to clear last year's wax before re-coating the walls and floor with fresh wax.

A special vintage

THE ASHMEAD CABERNET SAUVIGNON BLOCK, PLANTED BEFORE WORLD WAR II, IS A CHERISHED POSSESSION OF THE ASHMEAD FAMILY. PLANTED OVER 70 YEARS AGO, THE BLOCK REPRESENTS SOME OF THE OLDEST CABERNET SAUVIGNON VINES THAT STILL EXIST ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD.

In 1998 the decision was made to show the world that the Barossa and Elderton were more than a one trick pony. Elderton decided to take varietal Cabernet to the next level. Time and cost pressures were ignored in the pursuit of excellence, with the intention to showcase a 100 per cent Barossa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon that could take on all comers, be they from Bordeaux, Napa, Margaret River or Coonawarra.

2010 is the 11th release and we think this sits equally with the special vintages of 2002 and 2004 as the pinnacle of production from the wonderful old vines. This is a very small production wine and we hope you can find

some room in your cellar for this - you will not be disappointed.

2010 was a special year for the Ashmead family: a wonderful vintage; the drought was well and truly broken; and in December the family was blessed with two beautiful babies. William Neil Campbell Ashmead was born on 3 December, to Cameron and Julie (their second son), and then just under two weeks later Allister and Rebecca welcomed their third daughter, Annabel Lucy Ashmead on 15 December.

Both Wills and Bel are lucky kids. In scraping in to 2010 they have been honoured with one of the greatest vintages of Ashmead Cabernet Sauvignon to date. They were also exceedingly lucky that they weren't born a month later, as there will not be a 2011 Ashmead released.



Vintage Festival frivolities

Vintage festival is upon us again this year and Elderton Strikes Back is a feature event. Join the Elderton crew, including Cam and Al, as we attempt to ten pin bowl scores of more than 100, purely to save face.

What Elderton Strikes Back III. An evening of shattering pine, fine wine and delicious swine.

When Wednesday 3 April, from 6pm

Where Barossa Bowl, Menge Rd, Tanunda

For more details contact Tush - 08 8568 7878 or elderton@eldertonwines.com.au



Gallery



Above: On 3 November 2012 we held a Masterclass at Cellar Door. We had visitors from all over the country, including WA and QLD. The attendees enjoyed a walking tour of the vineyard hosted by Cam, Al and our Vineyard Manager Peter Wild. Over four stops, wines were tasted at their origin vineyard block - e.g. three vintages of Ashmead were tasted at the block of Cabernet Sauvignon vines planted 1944, from where the grapes are sourced each vintage.



Top: Richard Langford, our winemaker, posing as Thor during his November 2012 'tour de oak' in France. Above: Mr & Mrs Per Balleby, Eldertonians from Vejle, Denmark, enjoying a 2007 Command at Christmas time.

Left: The first grapes of vintage 2013! Chardonnay from the Greenock vineyard picked on 6 Feb. Right: The new Elderton administration building 'Global HQ', was opened on 16 November 2012 with presentation of a plaque to Andrew Willmott, Elderton's Maintenance Manager, who managed the project. Pictured are Al, Andrew, Cam and Dougie (Andrew's offsider).



The Second annual Masters & Commanders Cup at Tanunda Pines Golf Club, held in November 2012. A great day was had by all, with the 'farthest travelled' award going to Freidrich and Dagmar visiting all the way from Germany!



To share photos of you and your friends enjoying Elderton, email jess@eldertonwines.com.au