



# brook eden

PIPERS BROOK: TASMANIA

NEWSLETTER : WINTER 2008

The black swans and their brood of cygnets on the pond below the Pinot block.

## 2008 Vintage report

Vintage 2008 was warm, dry and BIG, yields were as high as 2001 and 2004 but, unlike those years, 2008 had ideal ripening conditions. Debate raged as to why, and ideal flowering conditions in early December seems to be the reason. We looked at the data-loggers and found a 36 hour period bang in the middle of flowering where the temperature stayed between 12-23°C.

Berry sizes were about normal, but every bunch had 30-80% more berries. This was the case throughout Tasmania. We dropped more fruit than Ramsay drops the f-word and still we had a plentiful year. Some vineyards had a little more heat than they'd asked for, but we still stayed cool and just got over the line before rain and late-season frost closed everything down.

Good flavours across all varieties, good colour in the Pinot. We're going to see some fine wines from 2008.

We've used 70% wild, 30% cultured yeast ferment with the Pinot and full barrel-ferment with the Chardonnay, in about 40% new oak, but with a couple of (large) hogsheads in the mix to keep the oak influence as a subtle layer, rather than let it dominate the fruit. If you liked the '05, then I think you'll be impressed by this.

## WINE SPECIAL

Because it's winter, and it's our birthday, we've got 3 great offers on orders 'till the end of September:

- The winter favourite everyone waits for to re-stock their cellar. 12% off the total of the order, or freight-free, which ever you prefer.

### OR (exclusive to Vintage Club members)

- Buy 2 cases of wine, and get your next tasting pack for half-price, or
- Buy 4 cases of wine, and get your next tasting pack for free!

## Brook Eden turns 20

The farm has been here for yonks, but the vineyard has it's 20th birthday this year. To celebrate, we're thinking of bottling just one or two selected barrels of our best Pinot Noir, from the 2008 vintage, into Magnums. Each bottle will be individually numbered and presented in a traditional wooden wine box.

We don't have prices yet (we're still making the wine! and have to find someone to make us the boxes, etc) , but numbers will be limited. If you'd like one, send us an email and we'll contact you when we know final pricing.

## Brook Eden's Blanc-de-Noir sparkling "Eve"

This is still some way off from being disgorged, but it is looking brilliant. We opened a bottle last month to check its progress: pale salmon blush colour, fine persistent bead, hints of strawberry and brioche with good balance and length. We want to give it a minimum of 36 months on lees, but we'll hold some for at least 60 months, because we think it is going to be awesome.

## 2007 wines

All our 2007 vintage wines bear the special "friends" label. This is because, for the first time in 20 years, Brook Eden lost its entire crop to the devastating frosts of October 2006.

It was a consequence of the drought and the same frost event that devastated the Yarra valley, King valley, Coonawarra, Golburn valley and much of Tasmania. The Tasmanian Bureau of Meteorology and University of Tasmania Researchers have told us that the series of weather events that combined to produced the frost haven't occurred since the beginning of weather data recording in Tasmania.

Life on the land. Win a bunch of trophies and medals one year, get bombed by frost the next.

But we'd like to thank the friends who provided us with a few bins of superb fruit so we could at least have a small vintage.

Thank you.



Sue, Peter, Tim, Jules, Adam & Chilli loading up the olive harvest.

## Biodynamic trials

We started down this path last vintage (in fact we began growing our Riesling crop in 2006 using only organic inputs). We borrowed a stirring machine from a nearby biodynamic farmer to “stir” our first applications of 500 during the 2008 vintage and by the time you read this, we should have taken delivery of our own set of “flow-forms”, to stir the preparations before spraying them out in the vineyard and pasture.

No, we’re not about to braid our hair (I don’t have enough to anyhow), extol the virtues of mung beans and tofu, or conduct tantric rituals at the cellar door. But we are going to take Brook Eden down a path that will see us :

- cease using chemical inputs
- improve our soil health and the long-term sustainability of Brook Eden
- improve our vines’ health and their ability to naturally resist pest and fungal disease
- improve our fruit quality, particularly skin thickness and flavour
- produce wines that truly express the “terroir” of Brook Eden.

We’re not alone in traveling this path, many significant Australian and New Zealand wine brands have been biodynamic for many years. Among them: Cullen’s; Castagna; Felton Road and of course the greatest French producer of them all Domaine Romanée-Conti.

## VINTAGE CLUB MEMBERS: Want 5% off your next tasting pack?

If you’re an existing Vintage Club member and you change address, or your credit card details change, let us know when it happens and we’ll deduct 5% off the price of your next tasting pack!

So whack Brook Eden on you’re “to-do” list, let us know when you change address, or credit card, or if your card’s expiry date has changed (since we last sent you a tasting pack) and we’ll take 5% off the price of your next tasting pack. That’s a pretty good deal for a phone call.

**Any club member who hasn’t received their tasting pack this year, please contact us. We have a number of packs undelivered because of address/details changes of members we have been unable to contact.**

## Olive Harvest 2008

Sue’s son Tim brought a couple of mates down to play some golf and get in a little fishing over the June long weekend. They also helped us pick a small, but good quality crop of olives which we’ve cold-pressed and will filter and bottle in the next month.

If you’ve had our oil before, you’ll remember its wonderful green-gold colour, with plenty of up-front fruit flavour, a touch of pepper and lingering finish.

## A few places we recommend

We’ve added to our web site a small, but select list of places throughout Tasmania we’ve particularly enjoyed staying, or eating at in recent times. If you’re traveling in Tassie, feel free to use our list. We think you’ll be impressed.

## A jar of golf balls

A professor stood before his philosophy class and had some items in front of him. When the class began, wordlessly, he picked up a very large and empty mayonnaise jar and proceeded to fill it with golf balls. He then asked the students if the jar was full. They agreed that it was.

The professor then picked up a box of pebbles and poured them into the jar. He shook the jar lightly. The pebbles rolled into the open areas between the golf balls. He then asked the students again if the jar was full. They agreed it was.

The professor next picked up a box of sand and poured it into the jar. Of course, the sand filled up everything else. He asked once more if the jar was full. The students responded with a unanimous ‘yes.’

The professor then produced two glasses of wine from under the table and poured the entire contents into the jar, effectively filling the empty space between the sand. The students laughed.



Sue, helped by the ducks, chooks & Chilli pruning the chardonnay vines.

'Now,' said the professor, as the laughter subsided, 'I want you to recognize that this jar represents your life. The golf balls are the important things; your family, your children, your health, your friends, and your favourite passions; things that if everything else was lost and only they remained, your life would still be full.'

The pebbles are the other things that matter like your job, your house, and your car. The sand is everything else; the small stuff. 'If you put the sand into the jar first' he continued, 'There is no room for the pebbles or the golf balls. The same goes for life. If you spend all your time and energy on the small stuff, you will never have room for the things that are important to you.'

'Pay attention to the things that are critical to your happiness. Play with your children. Take time to get medical checkups. Take your partner out to dinner. Play another 18. Do one more run down the ski slope. There will always be time to clean the house and fix the disposal. Take care of the golf balls first; the things that really matter. Set your priorities. The rest is just sand.'

One of the students raised her hand and inquired what the wine represented. The professor smiled. 'I'm glad you asked. It just goes to show you that no matter how full your life may seem, there's always room for a couple of glasses of wine with a friend.'

—anonymous

### To order wine

Either mail or fax back the enclosed order form, or go to our web site and scroll down to "order wine" under the "our wines" menu.

If ordering on the web, just submit your completed order form and we'll contact you to confirm pricing, adjust for any special offers and get your card details.

### Ramblings around the spittoon

As we've said in past newsletters, there's more waffle written about wine than there is about Sydney real estate. So, here's a few more in our occasional series of wine-speak definitions to help you wax lyrically at your next blind tasting.

**BOTRYTIS** : Sometimes referred to as Noble Rot. In certain circles is considered to be a state only achievable after years of dedicated, daily consumption of fine old Burgundies. Winemakers and growers producing table wines curse it, but those magnificent floral, sweet desert wines (stickies) wouldn't be possible without this grape-destroying fungus. Botrytis Cinerea is an aggressive fungus which attacks ripening grapes, causing them to shrivel and rot. However, late-season inoculation of very ripe Riesling or Semillon bunches with Botrytis renders them perfect for making delicious, rich dessert wines. The fungus extracts water from the berries, concentrating the fruit flavours. The resultant mouldy, rotting mass is pressed very gently in the winery, the free-run juice settled and fined then fermented. The ferment is stopped before the wine is dry, leaving significant residual sugar, (typically 15-50g/L), resulting in a sweet wine style.

**DRY** : Wichita in Kansas USA, any day of the week. However in a wine ferment, when the yeast has converted all the grape sugars into alcohol, with no residual sugar, the wine is termed dry.

**LENGTH** : Nothing to do with emails flogging Viagra, wine-speak length refers to how long the flavour of the wine lingers in your mouth after you've swallowed it. Truly magnificent Pinot is often referred to as having a Peacock tail, ie. It fills out spectacularly at the end. Just like the emails promised really.

**PALATE** : An enormous drain on your finances. Both acquiring one and then satisfying one. From the moment you first realise a Nuits-St-Georges from a good year is actually a bit better than the oh-so-convenient box with the neat plastic tap, you're sunk.

**PERSISTENT** : A four-yr-old who's spotted the lolly shelves near the check-out; all telemarketers; and the earnest, seven-day-bike-riders who arrive on your doorstep to give you the Good word, as you're trying to scarper off to the footy with your mates. If the flavour of a wine lingers, well after you've swallowed it, it has a persistent palate.

**PUNT** : The one on the Hawksbury is the only thing preventing a 1hr 9m Sydney-Pokolbin, the back way, no matter who's car you borrow. It's also the domed-bottom of Champagne bottles. Gives the bottle extra strength to withstand internal pressure and somewhere for the wine-waiter to shove his thumb when pouring to impress.

**SWEET** : Not dry and not to be confused with fruity, which describes stories circulating after the annual Team Building weekend in the Hunter. Sweet results from un-fermented grape sugar, or residual sugar left in a finished wine to impart... yep, sweetness.

**VOLATILE** : Usually how the rest of the evening is after you declare the '86 Latour your host has just served tastes just like your favourite cask red. Also refers to VA or volatile acidity, which is the smell of acetic acid and/or ethyl acetate.

### Like our wine? Why not join the Vintage Club?

Joining costs nothing. All you need to do is buy a minimum of 6 bottles at the normal price and you are eligible to join! To keep your membership current, you also agree to purchase the annual 6-bottle tasting pack (\$115\* + freight, and sent to you in April-May each year).

Membership gives you access to special member-prices on all our wines, priority ordering of special releases, and tasting of some of our new vintage wines (via the annual 6-bottle tasting pack) before they're even available at the cellar door.

### NOT YET A MEMBER OF THE VINTAGE CLUB?

#### Here's a birthday special just for you:

Buy 2 cases of wine (straight or mixed variety) at the regular case-price, join the Vintage Club before September 30th, 2008 and we'll give you this years 6-bottle tasting pack for half price. Once you're a club member, you can also take advantage of the members-only prices on all our wines.

You can join the Vintage Club by phone, fax, email, or by ticking the (join the vintage club) box on the enclosed mail order form.

### Chilli's corner

Winter is here. Drat. It's not enough to suffer the indignity of wearing that stupid coat they put on me, but to compound the humiliation, they leave me at a boarding kennel while they ponce off to attend some wine event at Cradle Mountain, then again two weeks later when they're off to some Pinot Conference gabfest. A boarding kennel! Me, Chilli-the-Wonder-Dog. Infernal place was full of dogs. Dogs, no bed in front of the fire, no couch, no liver treats, just dogs. Have you ever noticed that dogs smell?

This is the thanks I get for being the best mouser on Brook Eden. Better than the stupid cat.

If it wasn't for the new outdoor day-bed, liver treats, couch and bed in front of the fire, I'd be off. Mark my words. Then who'd lead visitors to the cellar door??



### I would like to join the BROOK EDEN VINTAGE CLUB

NAME : \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS : \_\_\_\_\_

SUBURB : \_\_\_\_\_ STATE : \_\_\_\_\_ POSTCODE : \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE : \_\_\_\_\_ MOBILE : \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL : \_\_\_\_\_

Please charge my annual, 6-bottle tasting pack of Brook Eden wine (\$115\* + freight)# to the credit card below :

\*This is a saving of more than \$50 on the normal retail price of the wine.

MC  VISA

CARD NO.

EXPIRY DATE   /   SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

ANY SPECIAL DELIVERY INSTRUCTIONS : \_\_\_\_\_

Send this back to us in the enclosed self-addressed envelope, or phone, fax or email the details to us and we'll get your first tasting pack sent out to you, together with your membership number.

FREIGHT\* PER 12 BOTTLE PACK (approx half for a 6 bottle pack):

Tasmania : \$6 Melbourne : \$15 VIC Country : \$17 Sydney, Gosford, Wollongong, Newcastle : \$21 ACT : \$22 Adelaide : \$21

SA Country : \$23 Brisbane : \$24 Gold Coast : \$25 QLD Country : \$30(NEAR) \$35(FAR) Perth : \$30 WA Country : \$33(NEAR) \$38(FAR) NT : \$40

All prices include insurance. Remote locations may attract surcharge. \*Prices valid at time of printing (1st August 2008).

