

PAUL CONTI *Wines*

THE MAKING OF MEDICI RIDGE 2009 PINOT NOIR

Jason produced a tiny parcel of the 2009 Medici Ridge Pinot Noir from an impressive bundle of cool-climate Manjimup fruit.

Minimal intervention in the winery meant the wine was made the traditional way, or as Jason puts it “like Nonno (grand-dad) used to make it.”

Fermented in open-top fermenters and gently basket-pressed into Burgundy barrels, the wine received absolutely no additions or finings - just a little filtration prior to bottling, bringing unadulterated pinot flavours to the forefront.

Jason says it was one of the most enjoyable winemaking experiences in his career, mainly because he allowed the wine do all the work while he sat back and watched its talents unveil.

“There’s a really lovely story around the inception of this wine,” says Jason.

“After the fruit is hand-picked it’s immediately dropped into bins and placed into cold-storage transport for its journey up to Perth. I did my usual pilgrimage to the depot to collect my meager two bins of precious fruit only to be told it hadn’t arrived...unbeknownst to me, it was still sitting in cold-storage at the Manjimup depot...so the next day, I successfully collected my fruit, brought it home, admired the gorgeous small berries and made a surprising discovery,” he says.

The extended time in cold-storage meant the fruit took longer to start its natural ferment after crushing. This is actually a traditional Burgundian technique called ‘cold-soaking’ and is intentionally applied to fruit to bring out a deeper, richer colour in the wine.

The deep red of the pinot grape-skins is slowly extracted over an extended “chilling” period, and suffice to say, the 2009 is a sensational ruby red which is quite uncommon in local pinots.

“Inside one-ton fermenters I let the fruit sit in its juices and allowed the wine to start its own natural fermentation. This is a great way to build complexity in the wine,” says Jason.

After four days Jason added cultured yeasts and let the ferment take its natural course. The old basket-press (which is well over 50 years in age) was dusted off and the wine was pressed into a receival receptical (aka: a bucket!) before pouring into seasoned Burgundy barrels where the wine completed its primary and malolactic fermentation over six months. On completion, the wine was simply racked, filtered and bottled.

No fining, no cold-stabilisation, just bottled intentionally young to capture the ripe, vibrant flavours.

Important note: Due to little application of additives, the wine, when stored over time, may develop a harmless crust or settlement. We advise de-canting the wine before serving.