

THE FRUIT

During the 2001 vintage we had access to some exceptional gewürztraminer from the Stephens family's Wyncroft Vineyard in the Eden Valley. Even though it was quite a warm vintage in the Barossa, it was cool enough in the higher Eden Valley to produce fruit with both the intensity and delicacy required for first-class gewürztraminer. The fruit was machine harvested at night at just over 12° Baumé and transferred immediately to the winery.

THE WINEMAKING

Initial processing aimed to minimise skin contact and the consequent extraction of harsh phenolics. To this end, the already cool juice was immediately separated from the skins and transferred to tanks for 48 hours of settling under refrigeration. About 40 per cent of the juice was racked and cold-fermented over a prolonged period. To maximise flavour and structure, a high degree of solids was included in the rest of the juice which was divided into three batches. These were used to experiment with fermentation using different yeast and temperature regimes. About 20 per cent of the total was fermented using the natural yeasts brought in on the fruit to the winery. The final blend includes all four batches, with the delicate freshness of the conventionally fermented component balancing the fuller, richer flavours derived from fermentation on solids. The wine was bottled in September 2001.

(2001 Eden Valley GEWÜRZTRAMINER)

The wine is a light straw in colour with green highlights. On the nose it shows incredibly spicy, upfront fruit with obvious lychee-like characters. While not as pungent as the gewürztraminers of Alsace, the aroma shows many of the characters of that region. The palate is soft, round and quite viscous. The spiciness follows through the bouquet and provides persistent lingering palate flavour. The combination of smooth, glycerol-like viscosity and fresh acidity produces a white wine of great depth and length. While this wine is attractive in its youth, like the gewürztraminers of Alsace, it will be drinking at its best at three or four years of age.

THE COMMENTS

Each year we experiment with new techniques and varieties to hone our winemaking skills and investigate new wine styles. The resultant experimental batches, though of limited quantity, are often of exceptional quality. We have decided to bottle these wines separately and offer wine lovers the chance to taste some quite different styles.

