



WHISKEY GULLY WINES
FINE WINES FROM QUEENSLAND'S GRANITE BELT

PLUCKERS' PLANET

Wine - how classy people get wasted



Dearest Pleasant Pluckers

We hope you will forgive us for being late getting the March Tasting Pack to you but we have a good excuse: we wanted to wait to get back our 2010 Bright Eyes Sparkling Colombard from Petersen House where we sent it to be disgorged, dosed and the bottles fitted with corks, muselets, hoods and labels.



The truck arrived on April 9 and we've been savouring the wine ever since. Now, we are pleased to say, you can share the experience. Please enjoy.

Bright Eyes was long in the making... a bold experiment, in fact, on its lees in the bottle for years. As Rod MacPherson, our winemaker, observed: "Very French". We think it's lovely and age suits it.

Two of the other wines in the pack are also newly released. To balance this we decided to feature a couple of Shiraz - the Piazza Red and our most recent Division Bell.

The first is simple and a typically European style lightish red, while the other is elegant, medium-bodied and oak matured. They make an excellent and interesting contrast. The Piazza is reminiscent of the house reds served at many restaurants in Italy and France.

Both wines are in short supply. They remain on our current list but if you wish to purchase some, get in quick.



Finally, we have included a museum wine, our 2000 Rep Red. These were among the surplus museum wines we discovered in last year's stocktake. Robert Channon and John opened a bottle the other night and imbibed its soothing richness and velvet finish - lucky them.

Rest this wine upright for 12 hours and decant four hours before serving.

What's in the Pluckers' Autumn Six Pack

Bright Eyes Sparkling Colombard

Crisp and refreshing with a mature, yeasty nose, citrus and apple palate and a wonderful fine bead resulting from prolonged maturation on lees. Welcome to the world, Bright Eyes.

Blush Black Muscat

Refreshing and soft with rose water fragrance and the distinctive spicy flavour of the black muscat fruit. It is lightly fortified - our first fortified wine, in fact.

2015 Pangloss Colombard Chardonnay

Elegant, intense and golden, this late harvest wine has honey, apple and apricot aromas and a luscious nutty palate with lingering butterscotch and citrus finish.



Dr Pangloss was the hero's ever optimistic tutor in Voltaire's novel Candide.

Optimism was required in the making of our Pangloss.

Voltaire (by Nicholas de Largillière)

2013 Piazza Red

A fresh, light Shiraz with lifted spice on the nose and a hint of cut flowers. Sweet fruit balances soft, spicy tannins and the finish is crisp.

2014 Division Bell Shiraz

Aromas of raspberry, perfumed oak and hints of leather. It is well balanced through the palate with good length and subtle earthy and savoury tannins on the back palate.

2000 Rep Red Cabernet Sauvignon/Shiraz

Aromatic medium-bodied dry red with intense blackberry and spice characters against a backdrop of vanillan American oak.

We hope you enjoy the autumn six pack. Chill the sparkler and whites, let the younger reds breathe a little, be methodical and gentle with the 2000 Rep Red and don't drink 'em all at once. If you are wondering about the value of your pack, a 2000 red we donated a couple of years ago fetched \$200 at auction. The retail value of the other five totals \$130.

Cheers

John & Denice

What's on

Harvest Dinner - April 28

Our annual harvest dinner for our Pleasant Pluckers Wine Club family is on soon, so book now.

It should be wonderful. The four courses will match lovely wines, old and new. We've chosen a simple but tasty menu. If there's room we'll use a single table so we can get to know one another better.

Menu: *Gravadlax of Salmon with mustard and dill sauce*

Vine-ripened tomato soup with parmesan crisps and homemade ciabatta bread

Rosemary and garlic grain-fed rump of beef with wine demi-glace sauce, Yorkshire pud and veges

Normandy Tart and crème fraîche



The Chardonnay harvest breakfast.

A plethora of Pluckers

Give Denice a call (07 4683 5100) or email (denice@whiskeygullywines.com.au) if you would like to come.

7 pm April 28. \$95 for Club members; \$120 for non-members. Food and wine included.

Sunday is Open Day for Pluckers. We'll show you around the vineyard, farm, kitchen and the cottages (from 10am).

Grazing the Granite Belt - May 19/20

It's back and this year should be bigger and better than ever. May is a great time on the Granite Belt. The countryside looks a treat and we switch to reds to keep the creeping cold of evening at bay.

Grazing the Granite Belt is about you getting the best of everything - being bussed around a circuit of wineries (three circuits to choose from) and enjoying gourmet food courses matched to individual wines.

What better endorsement could there be than to say that the locals have embraced it as great value and a wonderful day out.

Whiskey Gully Wines has invited Lee Williams to augment our entertainment this year and he and John will be performing both Saturday and Sunday.

Our menu is at right. You will need to book both the bus transport and your meal and wine tickets. Go online to <https://granitebeltwinecountry.com.au/event/grazing-the-granite-belt>. Otherwise give Denice a call and she'll get you organised.

~ Grazing the Granite Belt 2018 ~

Tapas

Ironbark smoked babaganouj with olives and house-made flatbread. Wine: 2014 Beverley Chardonnay

Fresh snapper and mushroom puff pastry pie with parsley sauce. Wine: 2015 Bon Blanc Colombar

Gravadlax of salmon with Dijon mustard and dill sauce. Wine: Betty's Block Colombar

Indonesian chicken satay with gado-gado. Wine: 2015 Montesquieu Malbec

Grimaud duck pithivier with minted peas. Wine: 2016 Parliamentary Blend

Grilled venison sausage with caramelised onions. Wine: 2016 Black Rod Shiraz

Desserts

Chocolate cremeaux with espresso ice-cream. Wine: 2017 Black Muscat Blush

Lime tart with fresh cream. Wine: 2006 Nectar Late Harvest Colombar

~ Dishes: \$10 or 1 food ticket ~
~ Wine matches: \$3 or 1 wine ticket ~

Vintage 2018

Vintage 2018 has been long in the making... bud burst in September last year and the final harvest, the Cabernet Sauvignon, yet to be picked as we go to press - over seven months of work for the vines and us.



Robert Kerridge and John review the day's harvest

It started well because the venerable Robert Kerridge, one of the region's great viticulturists, having recently retired, expressed interest in pruning for us, an offer we needed no urging to accept.

What Robert doesn't know about vines is hardly worth knowing.

He did a great job, setting the vineyard up for success.

Climate and weather - the French call their joint influence *terroir* - are always dominant factors and this season brought bad and good. Early hail reduced the crop but reasonable rain and temperate weather before Christmas set us up well and we finished with beautifully sunny days and cool nights over the ripening period.



Shiraz. Photos by Peter Blennerhassett

The fruit was tasty and ripe but, for some reason, yields were low with small bunches and light fruit. Never mind, we take quality over quantity any day.

Robert Kerridge returned to help pick and enjoy the results of his handiwork.

Thanks to all our pickers. They did a great job and we had a good time.

The new releases

Three of our new wines have been released and are included in the Club six pack. A fourth remains in the winery - we'll have to wait until November for that one.



Pangloss was named for Dr Pangloss, the hero's ever optimistic tutor in Voltaire's famous novel Candide.

The wine was intended as a late harvest Colombard. However, measuring the sugar levels of dehydrating fruit on a vine is a tricky thing when it gets very dry. It becomes hit and miss.

Consequently we found ourselves with a fermentation that, even after the fruit had soaked, bubbled away painfully slowly, the sugar levels so huge they impeded fermentation.

Our winemaker, Rod MacPherson, sought counsel of Paola Caberzas, Robert Channon's Argentinian winemaker, who has considerable experience with such wines. She suggested we dilute the ferment with chardonnay. This we did and eventually it stabilised, the ferment finishing some three months after it started.

So, it was a wine that nearly didn't make it, hence the optimistic name. The result is delicious, similar in style to a French Sauterne, though retaining clear Colombard traits, namely apple fragrance and firm acid. It's on our favourites list already.

Highlights

1. The big news is we think Shirley is pregnant, meaning we'll have a puppy or two to play with come late May.



Malbec has joined us

2. Billed as a male mouse killer Malbec has turned out to be a female softy and undisputed band leader of the Whiskey Gully Wines menagerie.

3. The old fig tree in the backyard somehow survived last year's devastating infestation of fig beetles and is back in full leaf, providing us with fruit.

Blush is our first Black Muscat wine. While it is a table grape variety, we've always wanted to make a lightly fortified wine with it. In 2017 we decided to do that - pressing the grapes and fermenting the juice, as we would for a rosé, then stopping the ferment with the addition of neutral spirit.



The distinctive rose water fragrance of Blush was a surprise; so good with a spicy, fruity palate characteristic of Black Muscat grapes. It's like drinking Turkish Delight.

It is proving popular and our decision to skip this year to make another may prove unwise, given that we have fewer than 1000 bottles left.

We've described our Bright Eyes Sparkling Colombard elsewhere. Aged wines are beautiful but people often complain they can't keep wine long enough to experience it. Well, we've done the ageing for you.

Time on lees ensures the bubbles are tiny and persistent. The fruit tannins become ever smoother and sweeter. Sigh!

Bright Eyes will be priced at \$36 but, for a limited time, Club members may purchase it for \$28. Let us know if you'd like some.

Lowlight

We were crushed by the untimely death of Ewan MacKenzie, a wonderful friend and brilliant jazz and blues guitarist/composer.



John, Lee Williams, Paul Clacher and, possibly, Emily, will be performing at Red Hill Folk Club in Brisbane on Thursday, July 4. Ewan was a much loved member of their little band and the gig will be a tribute to the great man.

Paris Dreaming at WGW - Ewan with Kay Sullivan

If you'd like to come along you will be warmly welcomed. It is at Red Hill Sports Club (next to the Broncos) and starts at 7pm. The entry charge is embarrassingly small for artists of their stature (Ahem). A licensed bar will operate.