



WHISKEY GULLY WINES
FINE WINES FROM QUEENSLAND'S GRANITE BELT

PLUCKERS' PLANET

Wine is the only art you can drink



Dearest Pleasant Pluckers

It's a relief for us and the vines to have completed the harvest. Each vine shed the energy-sapping burden of 4 kilos or so of sugary grapes; for we humans, harvest released tension wrought by concerns about weather, disease, caterpillars, ravenous birds, pernickety machinery, the odd fox and ageing bones.

Perhaps that's why we're generally so happy during harvest and why we so much enjoy the big breakfast Denice cooks up when we are picking.



Completing the Shiraz harvest. Lovely clean grapes and, hopefully, dense, tasty wine.

This year, the worst drought that everyone can remember was our dominant concern. Sadly, many neighbours ran out of water during the season and this impacted crops and incomes.

Fortunately, our water held out and the crop was of generally good quality. Yield varied from block to block but the total was only just below average as it turned out. Thanks to the almost total absence of rain it was the first year ever we found not a hint of disease.

In April our winemaker, Rod MacPherson, pronounced the whites to be sound and, though it is early days, he is chipper about the reds.



A thoroughly deserved vintage breakfast. Well done to all of our pluckers

Aside from the continuing dry weather, life is good. Our 2017 wines for this Autumn's tasting pack have been delayed due to unforeseen circumstances. So, we decided instead to celebrate our current release 2016s under the banner "Sweet '16".

What's in the Pluckers' Autumn Six Pack

2016 was a wonderful year which produced excellent fruit-driven reds and whites that also exhibit what the French call terroir and we sometimes call minerality.

2 x 2016 Reserve Chardonnay

Combining really good fruit with excellent oak and barrel ageing on lees produced notes of vanilla, peach and toasted almonds with a palate showing figs, creamy yeast and citrus. It is developing beautifully.

2 x 2016 Montesquieu Malbec

The 2016 crop produced bright, juicy fruit. The resulting wine, released in March this year, is medium-bodied with a bountiful perfume of mulberry and cherry. The palate is soft and approachable with raspberry and subtle oak, and smooth tannins complete a firm finish.

2 x 2016 Parliamentary Blend

They say a blended wine should be greater than the sum of its parts. Here we used Shiraz (40%), Cabernet Sauvignon (40%) and Malbec (20%) and we think it fits that definition. All three are evident on the nose and the palate is a complex compote of dark berry fruit with hints of earth and leather. The finish is long.

We hope you enjoy the selection. They are all suitable winter drinks and all will cellar well. Their retail value is \$164 so we've achieved our aim of ensuring Club members get great value.

If you haven't already visited our revamped website you will find a Club page where you can order wine and ensure you get your discount of 10% and \$10 freight to southern Queensland.

2019 Harvest Dinner - May 11 7pm.

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

As we have done previously, we'll be vertically tasting some of our museum stock with wines matched to a four course meal.

To book give Denice a call (07 4683 5100) or email (denice@whiskeygullywines.com.au)

\$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).

Cheers

John & Denice

What's on 2019 Granite Belt Grazing

Grazing the Granite Belt is on the weekend of May 18/19. Bus tickets have already sold out! However, you can self-drive if you wish to and still enjoy the experience.

Participating venues will allow you to purchase wines and meals at a price equal to the Granite Belt Grazing tickets.

For more information visit: <https://www.facebook.com/GrazingtheGraniteBelt> or <https://granitebeltwinecountry.com.au/event/grazing-the-granite-belt-2>

It's Grazing's sixth year. It's great entertainment and the locals have embraced it as wonderful value and a brilliant day out. Whiskey Gully Wines will have live entertainment both Saturday and Sunday.

Our menu is at right. Let Denice know if you are thinking of coming.

New Release - 2016 Montesquieu Malbec

The Malbec story began in France centuries ago when most of the Bordeaux Wine Region was planted out to it. Over the years, it made way for Cabernet varieties plus Merlot and Petite Verdot. However, small parcels of Malbec remain in Bordeaux and it is used for blending, generally in small quantities, more to enhance the nose than the palate.

It is ubiquitous in the Cahor area, just south of Bordeaux but it is best known - and best grown, in the opinion of many - in Argentina where, after minor dabbling by French emigres, it was adopted widely on the advice of French experts. It thrives on the lea slopes of the Andes Mountains at Mendoza (up to 1200 metres) and produces dense, dark, juicy wines. Notes on our Montesquieu wine are on page 1. We haven't yet reached Andean heights but we are starting to understand the vine and that's apparent in the wine. A Mendoza trip is on our 2020 agenda.

John's traveller's tales

On our recent trip to France we visited Montrachet, near the southern end of the Burgundy Wine Region, host to the most famous producers of White Burgundy.

This piece is timely as I just received notification from a wine merchant, whose acquisitions I follow, that a shipment of Thomas Morey Wines, of Chassagne-Montrachet, have arrived in Australia, including the 2017 Domaine Thomas Morey Bâtard-Montrachet, Grand Cru (from Puligny-Montrachet) which is a snip at \$599, the normal price being \$699. Yes, that's the bottle price. Needless to say, we'll pass on this until the next Lotto draw.

Chassagne-Montrachet and Puligny-Montrachet are adjacent villages on the limestone ridge of Côte de Beaune. Their variant angles to the sun make all the difference, according to locals, though which is better depends on whom you ask. However, the chardonnays deserve their reputation as the world's best and Premiers Crux higher up the majestic slopes are vaguely affordable. Grands Crux of Chassagne-Montrachet are deemed weightier, with more pronounced fruit, while the Puligny-Montrachets draw tighter with more subtlety and minerality. Frankly, the difference wasn't all that apparent to this little Aussie possum.

However, we loved most wines we tasted and we brought home a superb bottle of Jean Chartron's 2016 Clos de la Pucelle, Premier Cru. We cracked it recently with winemaking friends and compared it to a chardonnay from Mersault, which neighbours Puligny-Montrachet, along with our own and one other Granite Belt chardonnay. All wines had remarkably similar body and length, while the French wines were notable chiefly for their mineral qualities, whereas the Granite Belt wines offered more clean, tasty fruit (and are more affordable).

Purchase our wines on-line: <https://www.whiskeygullywines.com.au/our-wines> or call Denice on 07 4683 5100

~ Grazing the Granite Belt 2019 ~

Tapas
Ironbark smoked babaganouj with olives and house-made flatbread. Wine: 2015 Reserve Chardonnay
Fresh snapper and mushroom puff pastry pie with parsley sauce. Wine: Betty's Block Colombarde

Gravadlax of salmon with Dijon mustard and dill sauce
Wine: Black Muscat Blush

Paté du foie with orchard fig chutney and crouton
Wine: 2016 Frosty's Rosé

Grimaud duck pithivier with minted peas
Wine: 2016 Parliamentary Blend

Grilled venison sausage with caramelised onions
Wine: 2016 Montesquieu Malbec

Desserts
Sponge pudding with caramelised local apples and whipped cream Wine: 2015 Pangloss Colombarde Chardonnay
Chocolate mousse with espresso ice cream
Wine: 2006 Nectar Colombarde

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



2016 Montesquieu Malbec retails for \$26 per bottle (less 10% for members)



White Burgundies are 100% chardonnay. This Premier Cru wine, from Puligny-Montrachet, retails for €65.