



## Welcome

The silly season is upon us... that great time of year where the thought of sitting around awkwardly with family wearing those silly paper hats from the crackers, is soothed by the social acceptance of wine induced happiness!



To avoid the **Christmas** postal rush, our **seasonal wine offers** will be released next week, so keep an eye on your Inbox for some great deals.



## Alpha Crucis – 2008 Release a Huge Success

In June we launched our Alpha Crucis brand and the world-first Winemakers' Series on the back of flattering reviews by James Halliday, Max Allen and Tony Love. We have now sold through nearly 75% of the Shiraz, **SOLD OUT** of the Cabernet and have only 20 cases of the Winemakers' Series remaining.

Alpha Crucis is named after the brightest star in the Southern Cross constellation, and represents the best and brightest wines we produce. They are only released when they are of exceptional quality and value and it is pleasing to see the auction market respond accordingly with one of our Winemakers' Series selling for \$1380, making the usual asking price of \$300 seem very attractive.

To find out more about the Winemakers' Series, please call Dave at the office (08-8323 6400) or visit [www.alphacruciswines.com.au](http://www.alphacruciswines.com.au). These wines make a great Christmas gift for family, friends and colleagues. Please let us know if you would like a Christmas or birthday card written on your behalf.



## Chalk Hill – Taking The Path Less Travelled

The wine sector in Australia continues to experience some remarkably challenging circumstances. If not the pressures of domestic production oversupply then the high Australian dollar and global economic outlook have tested the mettle of even the most hardened wine folk.

Some years ago we took the position of making wines that reflected the McLaren Vale region, turning away from the big, oaky wines that were in favour at the time. Instead, we focussed on making wines that can be described as having "restrained elegance", are food friendly, show great structure and complexity and can be regarded as great value for money.

Similarly our foray into 'emerging' varietals like Barbera, Sangiovese and Vermentino started over a decade ago, and we are pleased with not only the commercial success, but also the awards these varieties have brought us to date. We hope you find our journey down the path less travelled to be just as rewarding.



## Awards – No One Trick Pony

As individuals we're a modest lot, but the combined efforts of our team at Chalk Hill give us reason to celebrate and share with you our recent success. Taking top honours was our **2011 Vermentino**, winning a Gold Medal and Best Single Vineyard Wine (red or white) at the McLaren Vale Wine Show, where **Jock** also won Best Single Vineyard Viticulturist.

Our **2010 Cabernet Sauvignon** picked up a Blue-Gold Medal in the 2012 Sydney International Wine Competition, and we are yet to wipe the smile off **Emma's** face! This is a highly coveted award received in amongst 2,000 entries.

The **2010 Sangiovese** earned a spot in the lucrative Adelaide Review HOT 100 for 2011/12 from over 1,200 entries. To make the list as one of South Australia's top 100 wines is a fantastic achievement, and to be the only Sangiovese makes it even more special.

### 2011 Vermentino

#### Gold Medal

#### Best Single Vineyard Wine (Any Style)

2011 McLaren Vale Wine Show



### 2010 Cabernet Sauvignon

#### Blue-Gold Medal (Judged with food)

Sydney International Wine Competition 2012

### 2010 Sangiovese

#### Adelaide Review HOT 100 2011/12

*"Like a visit to a foreign market, this wine is gorgeous. Warm, restrained and super perfumed with cake spices, savour meats and rose. Long, mature, and loaded with mouthcoating tannins."*

#### Bronze Medal

2011 Australian Alternative Varieties Wine Show

2011 McLaren Vale Wine Show

### Just for Laughs

Nothing to do with wine, just a few comical interludes to tickle your fancy. **Vintage comedy** and **something a bit different**. And the recent departure of **Silvio Berlusconi** – gosh we will miss him... or maybe not.



*Church Mice.*

### From the Vineyard – It's all in the Berries

Recently we came across some UK market research suggesting people are confused or unsure where flavours like chocolate, raspberry and vanilla come from in wine.

The idea of adding real fruit or flavourings isn't ridiculous if you've never been told otherwise, but is far from the truth. Wine (at least from Australia) is governed by strict regulations, and just as importantly for us, our ethos of trying to show the individual character of each vineyard in the resultant wine. All the flavours you experience in a glass can be attributed to the magic that happens inside each individual berry as it develops, and then how it responds to being fermented and aged in oak barrels.

As we see the winter grasses slowly fade to shades of yellow and brown, the McLaren Vale landscape shows the contrasting vibrant greens of the vineyards and the browns of the weathered ancient hills that surround us. We are now at flowering stage, and it marks one of our busiest periods in the vineyard, with our viticulturists Jock and Matt managing the canopy (vine shoots) to create the best environment for berry development. They are seeking vine balance, a 'sweet spot' where the balance between the crop level and vine health is at its optimum, and will ensure (fingers' crossed) that the vine will produce the best flavours and characters in the berries. That's how we end up with wines that show layers of flavour, with descriptors that encompass fruit, spice, earth and texture.



These pictures show berry development: 1) Flowering/Set 2) Enlargement 3) Veraison 4) Maturity

It's well known that you can make bad wine from good fruit, but bad fruit will never make great wine! So next time you're enjoying your favourite Chalk Hill wine, have a sip for the vineyard boys and girls who work hard to ensure Emma has some fantastic flavours to capture in the winery each and every year. If you have any specific questions about our vineyards, or viticulture in general, send us an **email** - we're happy to help you learn.



### Chalk Hill Moscato Jugs

To your favourite jug add:

Plenty of ice

Dash (or two) of gin

Slurp of Elderflower cordial

Squeezed fresh lime

Fresh mint

Top with Chalk Hill Moscato

Straw optional

Enjoy!



### The Best Jugs in McLaren Vale

Nothing beats some lovely jugs, no more so than when they're filled with tasty cocktails and that's where our **Moscato** comes into its own as the ideal social lubricant for your summer of adventures with family and friends. The perfect jugs are at your fingertips, just simply throw in a couple of handfuls of ice, a dash or two of gin, a slurp of Elderflower cordial, squeeze in some fresh limes and/or lemons, toss in some fresh mint and then top with Chalk Hill Moscato. Refreshing, easy drinking, flavour filled, low alcohol and dead sexy, you'll be the talk of every pool party and summer BBQ. As UK wine writer Matthew Jukes recently put it, *"I simply adore this frivolous, frothy, grape-juice sparkler and you will, too. Drink it ice cold and just try to take that cheeky grin off your face"*. More recipes can be found on our [website](#), and feel free to share with us your own concoctions... we might even reward you with a bottle or two of Moscato for your efforts!

### Food and Sangiovese

Whether or not you subscribe to the whole food and wine matching concept, or just simply enjoy any food, with any wine, any time, there is something magic about that perfect combination of flavours and textures that some eating experiences offer. We proactively seek to make wines that are very much food friendly, showcasing restrained elegance and great structure, coupled with fruit and savoury complexity that compliment flavours in food, and acid that heightens the palate. It might sounds a bit 'wine wanky' but the Mediterranean styling of our wines takes inspiration from the culinary cultures of Europe – enter our **2010 Sangiovese**. Recently voted into the Adelaide Review HOT 100, this wine has all the hallmarks of a food savvy style, and will confidently support many styles and flavours in food. It's origins in Italy are a good starting point for food paring ideas, rustic wood fired pizzas, tomato based pasta dishes, cured meats etc. Here's a [recipe](#) from the Masterchef Kitchen, sure to tick all the food matching boxes, and provide a praise worthy dish at your next gathering.

### Friday 'Knock Offs' with Style

We all know that Friday lunchtime is actually the start of the weekend, right? Or maybe that's just the wine industry? Either way nothing says 'goodbye' to the work week and 'hello' to the weekend like a couple of 'knock off' drinks amongst colleagues and friends. Well instead of heading to the dodgy local or drinking the leftover stale beer from last years' Christmas function, why not invite us to come in and showcase our range of premium wines? Whether it's a structured tasting or informal chat, you'll be sure to enjoy some great wine, learn more about Chalk Hill, and receive some exclusive pricing too. For those interested but not in SA, we can put together a tasting pack to make it easy for you to host your own Friday afternoon gathering. [Email](#) Dave with any questions or to register your interest.