

Function Report - Trentham Estate Wines at Manju

23rd April 2002

Trentham Estate Wine Tasting at Manju Restaurant,

Sometimes one goes out for an evening's entertainment and happens upon a marvellous conjunction of company, food, wine and service. On Tuesday 23 April 2002, the members who attended the Trentham Estate Tasting at Manju Restaurant experienced such an occasion.

I was fortunate to be sitting at a table with people from a diverse range of occupations. The diners included the guests, Anthony Murphy, the winemaker at Trentham Estate, Shane Ryan from Vintners, Wine Distributors, two schoolteachers, two members involved in retail sales of wines, a proprietor of a Bed and Breakfast, and me. With such an eclectic mix of employment, as well as a number of the guests knowing each other, the conversation was both free flowing and wide ranging. The world would be a much better place if world leaders took our advice!

On arrival at the restaurant, members and guests were greeted by President Bob and Helen, and were shown to their tables where they were served Rosemount Sparkling Pinot and Japanese style savouries.

Anthony Murphy was introduced to the guests, and he gave a short, interesting history of his personal and company's background.

Anthony's family initially moved to the Merbein area and grew dried fruit there. In 1960 they moved to the Trentham Cliffs area to grow citrus. Anthony's father decided to concentrate on growing wine grapes after a downturn in the citrus industry. The citrus industry's loss has been the wine industry's gain.

Anthony commenced winemaking as a hobby and then decided to study at Roseworthy. Because of the need for students to have worked in the industry for twelve months prior to attending Roseworthy, Anthony commenced employment at Mildara. On graduating from Roseworthy, Anthony returned to work at Mildara for a further eleven years, prior to concentrating on the family business at Trentham Estate.

Trentham Estate processes approximately 1200 tonnes of grapes per year, and retains about 600 tonnes for estate bottling.

Our first course was a choice of prawn and vegetable soup, or a chicken entrée. The food was delightful and was marvellously complimented by the Trentham Estate Viognier, and Chardonnay.

Viognier grows well in Mildura. The variety has been worked on and cleaned by the CSIRO at Merbein. It is fermented without oak and is bottled fresh. It certainly goes well with fish soups, or chicken dishes.

The Chardonnay is produced in a classic style, and has only a little oak. A lovely wine.

With the main courses of either Fillet of Beef or Blue Eye Fish, Anthony chose a Nebbiolo and a Shiraz.

The Nebbiolo vines are a fairly recent planting and come from northwest Italy. The wine is high in tannin; is rather lean looking and has (from my notes written at the time), "an interesting zip on the front of the tongue". The Nebbiolo is an interesting contrast to Shiraz, Merlot and Cabernet varieties.

The Shiraz was made from vines planted in 1948. Anthony mentioned that there were a lot of white ants in the vineyard, but these did not detract from the quality of the wines.

With our sweets, which were a choice of either crème or orange caramel, we were served Trentham Estate Noble Taminga. Taminga has been developed by the CSIRO from a blending of Riesling,

Farana and Traminer grapes. The grapes were originally grown for Mildara, but are now retained for estate bottling. As the tasting notes provided say, "A luscious botrytis style with aromatic spice, honey, apricot and citrus fruit flavours which makes a perfect accompaniment to cheeses and citrus desserts. The essence of Sunraysia."

Our thanks are extended to Anthony Murphy of Trentham Estate for a most informative discussion on his company and wines, and to Shane Ryan of Vinters, who helped facilitate the evening. The food served was simply superb. The staff at Manju Restaurant provided the service that is desired, but often not achieved. Their discrete serving of wine and food contributed to a marvellous evening's entertainment. All members and guests would heartily recommend this venue as a marvelous venue for dining out.