



Oldenburg Spring Newsletter, September 2011 Budburst

Spring has arrived in the Cape. It is incredible to watch how fast the rising temperatures bring life to the vineyards. Out of what have looked like dead pieces of wood for the last few months comes budburst. We now have approximately 187 days until our next harvest.....

Our winter was dryer than normal. We are fortunate to have various different sources of water as well as soils that have excellent moisture holding abilities. This becomes a great asset in the latter parts of summer, and is further enhanced by the vines' aging and increased root depth. We have just finished the pruning season, which as mentioned in our last newsletter, requires the manicuring of seventy thousand vines. Productivity management of our staff is obviously something that we pay attention to in order to do more, better, for less. We entered one of our staff members, Tienie, into a local pruning competition, where he performed admirably, achieving a 5th place out of several dozen competitors.



We joined the IWC in the recent award winning tastings in Asia. It took our wines to Singapore, Hong Kong, Guangzhou, Shanghai and Beijing. The wines were well received at all the events and some good connections were made. We will return in October for events in Seoul followed by the Hong Kong International Wine and Spirits show which takes place 3-5 November 2011.

To our minds the Asian growth story is only just beginning for wine. It will however take time to develop. China currently consumes just over 1 litre per capita, compared to 45 litres in France, 20 Litres in the UK and 9 litres in the US. Given China's vast population this still leaves it in 5th place in terms of total consumption, behind the US, France, Italy and Germany. The market is still in its infancy and whilst one hears many stories, such as the blending of Lafite Rothschild with Coke, the amusing one to us is some Chinese buying empty bottles of Lafite for several hundred US Dollars, to be refilled with cheap red wine and sold for the real thing.

With great excitement, we will be opening our cellar door tasting facility on October 17th.

We believe that the Banghoek Valley really is one of the special places in terms of beauty, not just in South Africa, but anywhere in the world. Our building has been designed to showcase this natural beauty whilst conducting our tastings. We have been joined by Marietjie Willemse who will manage our tasting facility. We encourage you to visit us to try the wines and enjoy the spectacular views. Our opening times are Monday to Fridays, 10h00 to 16h30 and Saturdays and public holidays on appointment only. Marietjie is available on email at cellardoor@oldenburgvineyards.com, or in the office on +27 21 885 1618.

We have now bottled all of our 2009 wines. Included in this we have produced our first Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon. We aged a selection of new French oak barrels for twenty-four months and will bottle age the wine for a further two years. We are extremely pleased with the result. We have also bottled our first red blend. It is a version of a Bordeaux right bank blend, based on Merlot and Cabernet Franc. We will release this blend in late 2012. The 2011 vintage continues to encourage us. Our vineyards are clearly delivering their promise of enhanced flavour profiles as they reach 'vine adulthood'. It remains early days for the 2011 reds, which will live in barrel for another year or so. The whites on the other hand, will be heading for bottling late October. Good news as we have sold out of our Chenin Blanc. We are thus excited to have the next vintage coming soon. This month we have received our first order from Canada for the Cabernet Franc 2009. We also have our Chenin Blanc listed at Le Quartier Francais in Franschoek. This restaurant continuously ranks in global top 100 restaurants, and after a recent dinner there, it is easy to understand why. Well worth a visit.

As always I trust you enjoy drinking our wines and please do look us up at the cellar door. I am sure you will find the visit worthwhile.

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