

# TAPANAPPA

## A U S T R A L I A

### TAPANAPPA TIERS VINEYARD 2008 CHARDONNAY

#### History

In 1978 Brian Croser selected the Piccadilly Valley in the centre of the Adelaide Hills because it provided the best terroirs in which to grow Chardonnay for Petaluma Chardonnay and Pinot Noir and Chardonnay for the sparkling wine Croser.

The Tiers Vineyard was the first vineyard planted in the Adelaide Hills since the 19<sup>th</sup> century and is in the centre of the Piccadilly Valley at 450 metres elevation on the site where Brian and Ann Croser live and where the Petaluma Winery was built in 1978.

The Tiers Vineyard is 3 hectares of 28 year-old Chardonnay on closer spacing of 3,330 vines/hectare with vertical canopy, the first Australian mainland vineyard on this hand-labor intensive configuration.

Another 1.5 hectares of the oldest vines on the Tiers were pulled out to make way for Dijon Chardonnay Clones 95 and 76 on devigorating rootstocks. These vines were planted on still closer spacing of 1.5m x 1.5m or 4440 vines/hectare. The fruiting wire of the new vines has been reduced to 0.5m from the ground from 0.8m in the older plantings to take ripening advantage of ground warmth at night. The fruit from this newer planting of 1.5 hectares is blended with the older vine fruit in Tapanappa Tiers Vineyard Chardonnay.

The Piccadilly Valley is the second coolest (after Foggy Hill at Parawa) and highest rainfall viticultural sub-region in South Australia, with an average heat summation for the growing season of just 1172°C days and an annual rainfall in excess of 1200 mm. The mean temperature of the hottest month January is 17.7°C. The Piccadilly Valley is a homo-clime of Dijon in Burgundy.

The soils in the Tiers Vineyard are free draining red-brown clay loams with a high content of clay (50%+) and of rock fragments. The 1600 million year-old Calc-silicate parent-rock of the soil was brought to surface by an ancient fault line, and it only exists beneath Tiers Vineyard and small portions of the neighboring properties.

From 2005 Ann Croser, the owner, has agreed to divide the crop of the Tiers Vineyard between Petaluma and Tapanappa. Tapanappa selects its Tiers Chardonnay fruit from the thinner and rockier soils on the top of the slope and Petaluma harvests the belly of the slope.

#### Vintage Notes

2008 began as a warmer than average growing season until January and February which were cooler than average. Then there was the withering heat wave at the beginning of March which produced 15 straight days over 30°C, 8 of which reached or just exceeded 35°C. The Piccadilly Valley vineyards were not damaged by the heat wave as occurred elsewhere in South Australia where the temperature exceeded 40°C for most of the 15 days. However, the hot spell did advance grape maturity and Tiers Chardonnay was harvested 2 weeks earlier than normal on the 17<sup>th</sup> of March, at the end of the heat

wave. 2008 was a warm harvest in the Piccadilly Valley, accruing 1227°C days of heat during the growing season versus the average of 1177°C days.

The 2008 harvest of Tiers Chardonnay yielded the moderate crop level of 7 tonnes/hectare without fruit thinning. 2008 was one of the driest harvests on record only recording 35 mms for the 6 month growing season until harvest in March. The hand-harvested fruit was delivered in perfect condition to the winery, which is situated at the foot of the Tiers Vineyard.

### Winemaking Notes

Immediately on arrival at the winery, the Tiers Chardonnay fruit was de-stemmed, crushed and chilled to 3°C on the way to the air bag press. Cold juice was gravitated away from the skins through the press and only light pressings were added back. A small amount of SO<sub>2</sub> was added to the juice on the way to the tank where the juice was allowed to settle for 4 days. SO<sub>2</sub> was the only addition to the juice prior to fermentation.

The clear juice was racked to new (50%) and 1 use (50%) oak barriques from the French forest of Vosges. A selected yeast strain, native to the vineyard, was added to initiate fermentation and the bacteria for the malo-lactic fermentation was added at the same time.

The primary fermentation was complete in 6 weeks after which the yeast lees were stirred in the barriques weekly until the malo-lactic fermentation was complete 2 months later. At the finish of malo-lactic fermentation the wine was racked from barrique, SO<sub>2</sub> was added and the wine was put back to barrique to sit on lees for a further 6 months.

After a total of 10 months in barrique, the 2008 Tapanappa Tiers Vineyard Chardonnay was racked clear and prepared for bottling. The wine was bottled without filtration in March 2009. The in-bottle analysis of 2008 Tapanappa Tiers Vineyard Chardonnay is: Alcohol 13.9%, pH 3.11, total acid 7.46 gpl as tartaric, SO<sub>2</sub> 135 ppm, volatile acid 0.50 gpl.

### The Taste of the Wine

Tapanappa's 2008 Tiers Vineyard Chardonnay is a very typical wine of the Tiers Vineyard in a warm vintage. The varietal aromas are ripe peach and melon. Subtle marzipan and brioche aromas and flavours are contributed by the malo-lactic, yeast lees contact and oak.

A consistent terroir feature of Tiers Chardonnay is its very significant texture followed by a savoury finish and the persistence of the flavours. The Tapanappa 2008 Tiers Vineyard Chardonnay will develop spicy honey and brulee characters with bottle age of up to 10 years.

### Winemaker

Brian Croser

*Bottled on the 10<sup>th</sup> of March, 2009. Only 1500 cases produced. RRP \$80/bottle.*