

TAPANAPPA

A U S T R A L I A

TAPANAPPA 2016 TIERS VINEYARD 1.5M CHARDONNAY

History Of The Vineyard

In 1978 Brian Croser selected the Piccadilly Valley in the centre of the Adelaide Hills as the best terroir to grow Chardonnay for Petaluma Chardonnay and Pinot Noir and Chardonnay for Croser sparkling wine.

The Piccadilly Valley is the second coolest (after Foggy Hill at Parawa) and highest rainfall viticultural sub-region in South Australia and 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 beneath Tiers Vineyard and small portions of the neighboring properties.

In 2003 the Croser family removed 1.3 hectares of the original Tiers Vineyard Chardonnay, planted in 1979 in the Piccadilly Valley as the first Adelaide Hills vineyard. The area was replanted with the French Bernard clones 76 and 95 on rootstocks on very close spacing and at only 0.5 meters above the ground. This unique section of The Tiers Vineyard produces earlier ripening, fuller flavoured Chardonnay than the 1979 old vine, OF clone Chardonnay on own roots across the centre road in The Tiers Vineyard.

Vintage Notes

2016 was the warmest vintage on modern meteorological records in most of the southeast of Australia. If you wish to prove this look at the CliMate site, australianclimate.net.au, and choose the geographical site you wish to examine. Go to How's the Season?, then Season's Progress, then select the region you want to look at and finally select Data Type-Heat-Sum base 10°C, Starting In-October, Lasting For-7 months.

Scrolling down the array of curves for the chosen location will reveal the heat summation for all years back to 1949 and invariably the curve at the top by a wide margin will be 2015, which is October 2015 through vintage 2016 to April 2016.

The heat summation for the 2016 growing season at the Tiers Vineyard in the Piccadilly Valley was an extraordinary 1539°C days compared to the last 12 years average of 1235°C days. The 2016 heat summation is way ahead of the next warmest vintage, 2010 at 1360°C days.

2016 vintage was uncharted territory for me even after 47 vintages. Despite the persistent warmth there were no extreme heat events and only 13 days between October 1 and April 30 exceeded 30°C and only two of these exceeded 36°C. The sugar levels were very moderate at 23 to 23.5 Brix, the acids surprisingly held up at 7.5gpl (2 grams of malic) and pH's remained in control at 3.2.

The Tiers 1.5m section was hand harvested on the 12th of March and so unique is this small area of Chardonnay that we made the decision to bottle it separately in the 2015 vintage and again in 2016.

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Winemaking Notes

The Piccadilly Valley Chardonnay was hand harvested into 0.5 tonne bins.

At the Tapanappa winery, the fruit was de-stemmed, crushed and must chilled to 2°C on the way to the Wilmess Merlin airbag press. The cold juice was lightly pressed to tank and after gravity settling, the partially clarified juice and its fluffy lees were racked to French Vosges oak barriques, 33% new and the balance 1 and 2 use and allowed to ferment at the cool air temperature of the Piccadilly Valley autumn.

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The “in bottle” analysis of Tapanappa 2016 Tiers Vineyard 1.5M Chardonnay is;

Alcohol	13.9%
pH	3.12
Total Acid	7.2gpl

The Taste of the Wine

2016 Tapanappa Tiers 1.5M Chardonnay ripened early and fully because of the very warm growing season and the unique early ripening effect of the Dijon Chardonnay clones on de-vigorating rootstocks on close spacing and close proximity to the warm ground at night.

Riper honey and fig characters complement the typical Tiers Vineyard peach flavour and aroma and significant texture. The Tiers 1.5M Chardonnay is softer and richer than the old Tiers Chardonnay from across the road. The wine finishes with a grapefruit and quince nuance again typical of The Tiers 1.5M Vineyard terroir expression.

The 13 year-old Tiers 1.5M Vineyard has clearly confirmed its status as a “distinguished site” and the 2016 Tapanappa Tiers 1.5M Chardonnay “*is a pure expression of a unique Australian terroir.*”

Winemaker

Brian Croser

Bottled 18th of February 2017. Only 360 dozen made.