

TAPANAPPA

A U S T R A L I A

TAPANAPPA TIERS VINEYARD 2005 CHARDONNAY

History

In 1978 Brian Croser selected the Piccadilly Valley in the centre of the Adelaide Hills as the best terroir 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 19th century and is in the centre of the Piccadilly Valley where Brian and Ann Croser live and where the Petaluma Winery was built in 1978.

The Tiers Vineyard is 3 hectares of 26 year-old Chardonnay with closer spacing (3330 vines/hectare) and vertical canopy, the first Australian mainland vineyard on this configuration. The oldest vines on the Tiers were pulled out in 2002 to make way for Dijon Chardonnay Clones 95 and 96 on rootstocks that were planted on still closer spacing of 1.5m x 1.5m or 4440 vines/hectare in 2003. The fruiting wire of the new vines has been dropped from 0.8m to 0.5m from the ground to take ripening advantage of ground warmth at night. This new planting of 1.5 hectares will be used in Tapanappa Tiers Vineyard Chardonnay when the vines mature in 5 to 7 years time.

The Piccadilly valley is the coolest 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 it 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 from the 1600 million year-old Calc-silicate parent rock that exists only beneath Tiers Vineyard and a small portion of the neighbouring properties.

From 2005 Ann Croser, the owner, has agreed to divide the crop of the Tiers Vineyard between Petaluma and Tapanappa.



TAPANAPPA

A U S T R A L I A

Vintage Notes

2005 was a cool vintage in the Piccadilly Valley accumulating just 1113°C days of heat during the growing season versus the long-term average of 1172°C days. In fact April was the only month after flowering that was warmer than average and the fruit had been harvested by the time the April burst of heat arrived at the end of the first week..

A modest crop of 6 tonnes/hectare was hand harvested in the first week of April in cool air, sunny and dry conditions. The analysis of the fruit at delivery was sugar at 23.9 Brix, pH 3.19. and acid of 8.0gpl as tartaric.

Winemaking Notes

The hand picked Tiers Chardonnay fruit was delivered to the winery adjacent to the vineyard. The fruit was de-stemmed and chilled to 5°C on the way to the air bag press. The cold juice was gravitated away from the skins and only light pressings were added back. A low level of SO₂ was added to the juice on the way to the tank where the juice was allowed to settle for 4 days. The SO₂ was the only addition to the juice prior to fermentation.

The clear juice was racked to new (70%) and 1 use (30%) 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 end of malo-lactic fermentation the wine was racked from barrique, SO₂ was added and the wine was put back to sit on lees for a further 4.5 months.

After a total of 8 months in barrique, the 2005 Tapanappa Tiers Chardonnay was clear racked from barrique and prepared for bottling. The wine was bottled without filtration in January 2006.

The in-bottle analysis of 2005 Tapanappa Tiers Vineyard Chardonnay is:
Alcohol 13.5%, pH 3.26, total acid 6.0 gpl as tartaric, SO₂ 140 ppm, volatile acid 0.46 gpl.

The Taste of the Wine

Tapanappa 2005 Tiers Vineyard Chardonnay captures the personality of this special 26 year-old vineyard. In every way a distinguished site, the Tiers Vineyard has consistently produced the most complex and complete Chardonnay of the Piccadilly Valley.

The colour is pale lemon. The aroma is very complex but ripe white peach can be discerned amongst the roasted malt, crème brulee and cinnamon of the oak, yeast and malo lactic influences. The flavour is of sweet ripe fruit supported by a soft and full texture. Despite having a significant mouth feel and flavour the finish of the wine is savoury and long.

Winemaker

Brian Croser

Only 450 cases made