

ANDREW PEACE WINES

- A

Family affair



A quarter of a century on from planting its first block, Andrew Peace Wines remains a proud family business and one of the largest family owned wineries in Australia. What started as a weekend escape transformed into a family passion. Through much toil of three Peace generations the

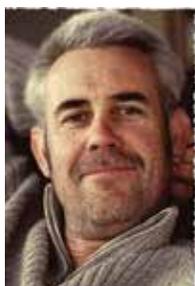
'country retreat' vineyard produced its first vintage in 1995 and a commercial winery was born.

Andrew Peace remains the Winemaker today and is still a family affair. Nurtured from the rich Murray River bank soil, the vineyard was established over a quarter of a century ago. From a first year grape intake of 3,000 tonne Andrew Peace Wines now crushes over 20,000 tonnes per year.

While long established, the winery is utterly contemporary driven with sound business acumen and utilising first class technology. It was the Victorian Vineyard of the year in 1997, the Telstra Small Business of the Year in 1999 and awarded the Emerging Exporter Award in 2001.

At Andrew Peace Wines good things come in threes. Three generations of family working to produce three distinct, quality product ranges being the Peace by Peace - a blend of Shiraz, Cabernet, Grenache and Mataro making this a medium to full bodied red that is soft, smooth and full of ripe forest fruit flavours; the Masterpeace - brimming with juicy black and red berry fruit flavours with a hint of warm spice and vanilla, and my favourite the Winemakers Choice - the flagship Sagrantino grape variety. These three product ranges boasts some very popular and well-priced bottles including Pinot Grigio, Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc, Sparkling Moscato, Cabernet Merlot, Merlot, Shiraz and very popular Sangiovese Rose to mention just a few.

The Winemakers Choice is indeed not only an



interesting grape variety but indeed a very fulsome and complex wine. For the enthusiast, Sagrantino di Montefalco are Italian wines made with 100% Sagrantino grapes in the Province of Perugia, although not necessarily in the commune of Montefalco. The wines include Montefalco Sagrantino secco, a dry DOCG red wine and Montefalco Sagrantino passito, a sweet DOCG red wine. Though Sagrantino's origins are disputed, the region of Umbria – and in particular the area around the town of Montefalco - has been the variety's home for centuries.



2007 AUSTRALIA FELIX SAGRANTINO

The flagship wine, Sagrantino is one of the best Italian varieties originating from Umbria. Andrew has the largest planting of Sagrantino grapes in Australia with this variety exhibiting a garnet-red coloured wine with a faint scent of violet petals, enhanced by an aroma and bouquet reminiscent of black berries. Its full-bodied character and mellow, spicy, warm taste, is typically partnered with roasted meats, game and piquant cheeses. Price per bottle is \$45.

Andrew Peace Wines
4077 Murray Valley Highway
Piangil, Victoria
<http://www.apwines.com/store/home.php>

Greg Bondar
 Food and Wine Editor

VERDE RESTAURANT

green with envy

I am always amazed at the names of restaurants and Verde is no exception. Whether it is used as an adjective, verb or noun the general consensus (Etymologically speaking) is that it refers to the colour 'green' and in point of fact it was one of the most popular name for girls in the early 1890's.



So we have the Verde Restaurant found in Darlinghurst where I was invited to dine to celebrate a special birthday for our dear friend Margaret. Verde has a European charm about it with original photos highlighting Calabria along with classic Martini and Rossi posters.

Besides the innovative Italian cuisine, the most arresting aspect of Verde Restaurant is the warmth and service you receive from the friendly staff not to mention the aroma of the mouth-watering Italian food that filters through the place. Eating at Verde Restaurant is an intimate and unforgettable dining experience. The beautiful Southern Italian cuisine is indeed unique found in a friendly and timeless environment able to cater for functions of up to 55 guests for an a-la-carte sit down dinner or a function for up to 40 people with enough room for stand up pre-dinner drinks, which we experienced with comfort.

Under chef Antonio Ruggiero it soon become obvious that food is more than a passion given that only a handful of chefs have distinguished themselves with a repertoire of signature dishes and trademark flavours at such an early age. At 36, Ruggiero is widely acknowledged as one of the most exciting Italian chefs to emerge in Australia since 2007, when he opened Verde restaurant on Stanley Street, East Sydney. As Head Chef at Verde, Ruggiero is passionate about bringing the flavours of Southern Italy to the rest of the world. His menus are praised for their intelligent fusion of traditional and contemporary ingredients, and Ruggiero makes regular guest appearances on popular Australian television programs thanks to his expansive knowledge of Southern Italian cuisine.

The diner has a wide choice and for Starters (Antipasti) there is the option to start with a combination of small starters and antipasti including such delicacies as arancini balls with grape tomato salsa or Mozzarella di buffalo, vine ripened tomatoes, basil, E.V. olive oil or the much loved Antipasto selection of meats, olives, provolone, red pepper.

As with any Italian feast you cannot pass up on the classic pasta dishes such as gnocchi pan fried, Mozzarella di buffalo, parsley, tomato sugo or the ravioli with ricotta, spinach and pine nut, sage butter, Pecorino or that much loved Linguine Crab. There is then the choice of the confit of duck leg, herb gnocchi, caramelised balsamic Pear, the pan fried Snapper, saffron pappardelle, peas, baby capers, butter sauce or the spatchcock roasted, eggplant, capers, olive, grape tomato, aioli. Moreover, for the dessert (Dolci) you have the wonderful warm bitter chocolate fondant, strawberry Marsala or my favourite the buffalo milk gelato with berries and yellow gum honey.

Verde Restaurant Bar

Phone (02) 9380 8877

Cnr. Stanley St & Riley St Darlinghurst

Greg Bondar

Food and Wine Editor



Leura Garage

PARKING AT ITS BEST

There is no doubt that Leura in the scenic Blue Mountains is a must destination for the day-tripper or for those staying for a culinary week-end.

The Leura Garage (set in the original Leura Garage with modern trendy decor, reflecting on the past history of the building with indoor and outside seating) is one of those modern trendy places that deserves a visit not once but many times. Offering a fresh approach to hospitality in the Blue Mountains the Leura Garage is the ideal venue for a snack, a coffee break or for that cosy dinner with indoor or outdoor seating depending on the elements.

Wine consultant Peter Bourne is chuffed with the suggestion that the Leura Garage wine list is a cellar door for the vineyards of the Central Ranges of New South Wales.

Owners father and son, Peter and James Howarth, have developed a proven dining model for the much loved Blue Mountains village of Leura patronised by locals settling in for the afternoon to tourists with a spare hour moving through the mountains.

Leura Garage chef Misha Laurent has created his own food niche in the mountains offering it's New Orleans' signature muffuletta sandwiches, pastries cooked on site or a casual antipasto platter featuring serrano ham freshly cut on the restored 60-year-old Continental slicer giving diners such options trying tapas, pizza, pasta, or risotto . The menu reflects Misha's French and German

heritage and experience working in Germany, Toronto, and Singapore. The menu has a European influence because Leura was lacking in that area according to Misha. So whether one is after that lazy breakfast (week-ends only) or grazing all day with bistro type food and stone fire pizza all day or to an evening meal with shared tapas style options this unique little venue has it all.

The local produce is evident with Trunkey Bacon and Pork at Orange supplying the pepperoni sausage, chorizo, spare ribs, ham and pancetta, Gelato Ingredients Manufacturers of Australia Pty Ltd (GIMA) from Molong produces ice cream, and Misha is talking to Megalong Beef about its beef aged on the hook. Interestingly the coffee chosen for Leura Garage is a blend of Ethiopian and Brazilian beans giving it a unique 'sweet' flavour.

Open Saturday and Sunday 8.00 am until late and Monday, Thursday, and Friday from 11.30 am until late it is a short and pleasant walk from Leura railway station.

Leura Garage - Cafe - Restaurant- Bar
84 Railway Parade, Leura
Phone: 4784 3391

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 Food and Wine Editor

