



boutique ITALIAN VINEYARD & WINERY



Di Lusso Estate is a boutique vineyard and winery in Mudgee, New South Wales, inspired by the wines and foods of Italy. Owner, Robert Fairall, a truly nice guy, is a former economist, a job which took him around the world. He recalls memories of travelling for business, as well as pleasure, through

Italy which wet his Rob's appetite for something other than data and numbers. It was during his four years in Wellington (New Zealand) in the pioneering late 1980's that he formed the vision of life as a vigneron.

Following years of research and frequent travelling through the wine regions of Australia, Rob fell in love with Mudgee as a place to visit. He found it far enough from Sydney to

be peaceful, yet a growing destination for wine lovers, superfine wool growers, artists and graziers. With an interesting history of Italian varietal grapes and wines going back more than ninety years, it didn't take long for the Di Lusso mission to get underway.

Di Lusso, specialising entirely in Italian varieties and blends, has an extensive range of Italian style wines including Moscato, Pinot

Grigio, Vermentino and reds such as Sangiovese, Barbera and Nebbiolo, which are all made in the Italian style of being medium bodied but savoury. Rob has also experimented successfully with his medium-dry Vino Rosato which is an excellent match for salamis and other antipasti combinations. His dessert wines range from the Aleatico, which is aromatic and sumptuous, to Picolit, which shows light and refreshing fruit. Last but not least is Rob's very own Appassimento which is a vin santo style wine just right for dipping biscotti. Di Lusso also grows olives and figs and are Italian in origin.

The Di Lusso winery and Cellar Door in Mudgee is a popular venue for weddings, anniversaries and corporate functions and visitors are often seen enjoying the daily winemakers lunches under the pergola overlooking Lago di Lusso. Through membership of the club, Rob offers recipes, wine trivia, news

of forthcoming wine events, and boasts what he believe is the best Loyalty Rewards Program of any winery in the country.

During my last tasting, I was impressed with Rob's blends, such as the il Palio (using Sangiovese, Barbera and a touch of Cabernet Sauvignon) resulting in a wine that drinks well with food or just on its own. If I had to pick the top of the class, I would go with Rob's Nebbiolos and the 2010 vintage looks like being a stunner with the 2009 already sold out.

The Di Lusso Barbera is also a must to try. Grown throughout Italy, Barbera officially ranks as Italy's second most planted red wine grape variety just behind Sangiovese. It performs best in Piemonte where it traditionally has played second fiddle to the great Nebbiolos of Barolo and Barbaresco. In recent years, winemakers in Piemonte have been treating Barbera with much greater respect and there are some stunning wines now being produced in Asti and Alba.

For more information visit www.dilusso.com.au

Greg Bondari
Food and Wine Editor



WINE OF THE MONTH



2007 Barbera

The 2007 season in Mudgee was a dry & while the vines suffered mildly from summer heat stress, they ripened their fruit reasonably well with a healthy crop. The grapes were machine harvested, crushed and then fermented in open concrete vats. The temperature was allowed to rise to about 30°C and then cooled to prolong the fermentation period. The wine was pressed from the skins and transferred to barrels for malolactic fermentation and maturation. About 30% of the wine was matured in new French oak. The wine was blended, fined and underwent a light filtering prior to bottling in October 2008. The wine displays an intense ruby red colour. It shows youthfulness and freshness. The aroma is typically sour cherry, raspberry fruit with hints of richer plums and spice. There is underlying earthiness and a hint of cedary oak. With bottle age it will develop more complex secondary characters of cigar box, dried herbs and aniseed.

A Leisurely DINING EXPERIENCE AT LOCHIEL HOUSE

Set in a charming heritage cottage located in the foothills of the Blue Mountains at Kurrajong Heights, Lochiel House offers fine dining from Thursday to Sunday.

Lochiel House was built in 1825 by former convict Joseph Douglas and his wife Mary Orr Burgess. Originally named Ivy Lodge, it served as the first accommodation house in the area. Today, the inn retains all of its original rustic character, while delivering some of the finest cuisine in the area.

The atmosphere is colonial and quaint with a generously shaded courtyard adding to the restaurant's peaceful setting. Both Monique and Tony are chefs and worked with two of the industry's leading Chefs, Neil Perry and Kylie Kwong. Showcasing the Hawkesbury region's finest seasonal produce, the cuisine on offer is thoughtfully prepared.



Monique and Tony

Accompanied by a workable wine list, or BYO (at \$15 per bottle), the menu offers the diner cuisine which is both creative and unique.

Both Monique and Tony enjoy crafting contemporary dishes that accentuate the clean flavours of quality, local and seasonal produce.

The Hawkesbury and Blue Mountain regions experience all four seasons, sometimes in one day, so they take advantage of this by changing the menu seasonally. The wait staff are very pleasant, attentive and eager to offer a range of quality wine glasses to match the wines – from Bordeaux to Burgundy glassware.

For entrée there is a creative range of culinary delights including Spanner Crab, Marjoram, Chive & Broad salad, Chilled Fresh Pea Puree or Potato Gnocchi, Sautéed Chestnut Mushrooms and Jerusalem Artichoke Cream. For the mains, Asparagus and the mains diners can prevaricate over the Okonomiyaki - Japanese Vegetable Pancake, Seaweed Salad, Pickled Ginger, Cucumber, Rising Sun Sauce or Spiced Butter Poached Spatchcock, Marrons, Okra, Celery Hearts, Cashew Nuts, Fenugreek Sprouts. For dessert the Warm Chocolate Pudding, Caraway Caramel Ice Cream, Pop Corn, Cumquats is hard to beat. So if you are looking for that long lunch then Lochiel House is a treasure find.

Lochiel House also offers vegetarian and gluten free dishes. The menu consists of 2 courses for \$62 or 3 courses for \$78 from Thursday to Saturday. Alternatively, on Sundays and Public Holidays they offer the 2 courses at \$70 or 3 courses at \$86.

Lochiel House
1259 Bells Line of Road,
Kurrajong Heights
Lunch Thursday - Sunday
from 12pm until 3pm.
Dinner Thursday - Saturday
from 6pm until 9pm.



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