



# elderton wines

## A BAROSSA CLASSIC



**W**illial have to confess my love of, and declare my passion for, The Barossa based Elderton wines who in my opinion produce perhaps some of the best wines in Australia and which are in some cases beyond comparison.

Elderton wines is a small, family owned and operated winery, situated in the heart of the Barossa Valley. The Elderton vineyard, which was planted in 1894 by the Scholz family, was purchased by the Ashmead family in the late 1970's and started producing labelled bottled estate wine from the 1982 harvest. 2011 saw Elderton's celebrating its 30th vintage as a winery.

Since winning the prestigious Jimmy Watson Trophy at the 1993 Melbourne Wine Show being bestowed the title of World's Best Shiraz Trophy at the 2000 London International Wine & Spirits Competition, Elderton wines have become an icon with a cult following. This following is best explained in part by the ancient 72 acre Barossa Floor Vineyard is the two standout blocks, namely the Command Shiraz block (planted 1894) and the Ashmead Cabernet Sauvignon block (planted 1944).

The Barossa is of course a gourmet lover's paradise enriched in a strong cultural heritage reflected in its wine, food, buildings and people. The Barossa has a typical Mediterranean type climate with dry summers and mild winters. Most rain falls between April and October and the average rainfall is around 550 millimetres.

Richard Langford, winemaker, takes control of the day-to-day operational aspects of winemaking at Elderton and is joined by Lorraine, Cameron and Allister Ashmead on the blending and styling bench.

A recent tasting of some the most exceptional wines I have tasted for quite some time included two wines from Elderton – the Ode to Lorraine Cabernet Shiraz Merlot and of course none other than the Command Shiraz.

### ODE TO LORRAINE

The Ode to Lorraine Cabernet Shiraz Merlot 2008 shows warm, generous fruit characters aged for 24 months in French (80%) and American (20%) oak. With an alcohol level of 14.5% it is big and classy red.

The Ode to Lorraine is a blend of the finest barrels of each of the Elderton Estate varietals selecting a blend of Cabernet, Shiraz and Merlot which best reflects the

nuances of each variety. The 2008 vintage used open top concrete fermenters (chilled), hand pump-overs, cap submerging and barrel ferments.

### COMMAND SHIRAZ

The Elderton Command Shiraz has established an enviable reputation since the first vintage in 1984. It is truly one of Australia's best and most highly regarded iconic wines. The Elderton Command Shiraz grapes are grown on a selected portion of the Elderton Estate vineyard, from vines planted in 1894. Grown on rich river silt soils and red brown earth over limestone, in a Mediterranean climate, with cropping levels less than 4 tonnes per hectare.

The 2007 is 100% Old Vine Barossa Valley Shiraz shows a very dark purple colour with bright magenta hues. The nose is classic chocolate, violet and delicious cedar ending in a rich and generous palate with dark chocolate, plums and black pepper flavours. In oak for 32 months (new American oak) it is has alcohol of 14.5 – this wine is a must for any serious wine connoisseur.

*Greg Bondar*

Food and Wine Editor



# *amanda's* ON THE EDGE

**A**MANDA'S On The Edge Restaurant is located on the Windsor's Edge Vineyard in the beautiful Hunter Valley some 161km or approximately 2½ hours' drive from Sydney.

With more than 120 wineries, the Hunter Valley produces some of the best wines in Australia from a crisp Semillon to a ripe Shiraz. The Hunter Valley is truly the getaway the good life in food, recreation and wine allowing you to enjoy boutique accommodation, welcoming guesthouses, or just B&B for that special getaway.

It is within this setting that Amanda's On The Edge Restaurant can be found with stunning sweeping views overlooking the vineyards and surrounding countryside. There are magnificent views from every table and you can dine alfresco in summer or in winter get cosy by a welcoming fire. A mixture of international and modern Australian flavours the restaurant with its simple but functional décor, is a very pleasant dining venue with great service and for some a better option for lunch rather than dinner if you want to enjoy the sweeping scenery.

My recent visit was enjoyable definitely worth a visit if you are staying in the region for a few days. For our entrée the seared scallops with a ginger, soy & sesame sauce topped with shallots was a treat whilst the Prawn Pasta comprising linguine tossed with prawns, pancetta, garlic, baby romas, spinach, lemon & shaved parmesan was a real pleasure. The alternative for me would have been the Pork Belly with crispy skinned braised pork belly on wok tossed king brown mushroom noodles. My wife

enjoyed the Spatchcock with roasted Portuguese spiced spatchcock with a warm potato, fennel & aioli salad. There is a two course minimum Saturday evenings and there is also vegetarian Menu.

There is also no shortage of quality accommodation within easy reach of Amanda's on the Edge with the closest being Windsor's Edge Cottages, located on the same property as the restaurant. Windsor's Edge Cottages are luxurious self-contained cottages on the estate and only a short walk to the restaurant.

If you require transport to and from your accommodation for lunch or dinner, there is the reliable Vineyard Shuttle Service who offer a restaurant transfer service for \$10 a person return. For something different and the thrill of a lifetime there is always the Hunter Wine Helicopters who offer you the ultimate in arrival.

The restaurant also caters for functions (maximum seating 75 people) with two private dining rooms for corporate groups or private parties. Open for dinner 7 nights and Lunch Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday. It is BYO for wine only at \$5 per head corkage.

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