

# orange

FOR WINES  
NOT FRUIT



**M**y recent travels over the June long week-end took in the Central West region of Orange located some 260km west of Sydney on the slopes of the Great Dividing Ranges.

With varying altitudes of 600 metres and with vineyards planted as high as 1,100 meters the climate of the

Orange wine region can best be described a cool with a winter-spring dominant rainfall with the three driest months being the ripening periods of February, March and April.

It is in this region that Philip Shaw selected to make classic wines with elegance, depth and bright fruit in 1988. Philip Shaw Wines are sourced entirely from his 47 hectare Koomooloo Vineyard which produces a clearly defined varietal character that displays elegance, power, and length. Interestingly, Koomooloo is one of the highest vineyards in Australia at around 900m where the hand kept vineyard is evidence by hand pruning, shoot thinning, leaf plucking, crop thinning, and hand picking.

Philip has now been making wine in Australia for more than four decades and he approaches each aspect of winemaking with a healthy mix of innovation and unrelenting quality standards. At a recent tasting I was highly impressed with his wines which I found not only interesting but highly complex in terms of nose and fruit on the palate. I can swear I saw Burgundy overtones in his Chardonnay (see below).

Two wines that stood out for me in both style and quality was the No.89 Shiraz 2008 and the No.11 Chardonnay 2009 – both these wines make up part of Philip's 'Numbered Series' wines. My tasting notes reflect the quality and complexity of these wines.

**PHILIP SHAW**  
ORANGE, AUSTRALIA

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*Greg Bondar*  
Food and Wine Editor

## WINES OF THE MONTH

### Philip Shaw No.89 Shiraz 2008 - \$50.00

The fruit for these wines came from two blocks of nearly 20-year-old vines with a yield of 3-4t/ha. Interestingly there is 1% of Viognier from his block 19 which was co-fermented with a batch of Shiraz. This has added complexity and complements the peppery character associated with this cool climate Shiraz. This wine displays flavours which are vibrant coupled with the aroma of spicy fruit characters. Soft fine tannins combine with great length of flavour to give a wine of youth that will repay cellaring. The wine was aged in barrels comprising 50% new fine grain French and American oak for 18 months. Well worth tracking down for the enthusiast.



### Philip Shaw No.11 Chardonnay 2009 - \$35.00

This wine is really worth cellaring. This wine displays a light, bright straw colour with a green hue indicating youth. The aroma displays citrus tones and white peach characters with subtle oak. The crisp flavours are indicative of the varietal characteristics of the grape variety giving a much sought after mid-palate softness. The integrated oak adds texture to deliver a fineness that is long and clean. This wine clearly displays Chablis like characteristics and has a similar ageing potential so you can easily hold onto it for until 2018.



# racine

## AT LA COLLINE FRENCH AND DRAMATIC

The June long-end is a great time to experience new destinations and flavours and it was the NSW Central West region that offered challenges in both – the town of Orange and the restaurant Racine (at La Colline Wines).

For those interested in history the word 'racine' has a number of meanings but perhaps the best known is that of the French dramatist and satirist Jean Racine born (Jean-Baptiste Racine) in 1639 in the former Picardy province in northern France. Racine was the greatest tragedian of the French classical period and his plays displayed his mastery of the dodecasyllabic alexandrine.

The other common meaning of 'racine' in a culinary sense is that it is a root, part of a plant growing underground which anchors the plant and absorbs water and nutrients.

It was this latter meaning that caught the eye of Chef Shaun Arantz who, with his wife Willa, run and own Racine Restaurant in the wine regions of Orange.

Set amongst the beautiful vines of La Colline (French for 'The Hill') with sensational views, Racine Restaurant is a spectacular venue for anyone interested in elegant fine dining. The menu is both innovative and creative with a focus on the best local produce which becomes evident in almost every serving.

At dinner my wife Lynne and our Doctor colleague Joe and his wife Margaret were greeted with warmth and courtesy and it was hard not to be impressed with both the country décor and the simplicity of style – very chic.

We all ordered a different entrée to experience the creative style of Shaun's efforts and we were not disappointed with either the country terrine or the beef tartare. For the mains I savoured the pork belly whilst others swooned over the whole pressed duck, venison loin and slow cooked snapper fillet. As for deserts we were amazed at both the quality and finesse of the servings but for me the apple mille feuille was truly outstanding.

Interestingly, the Racine Kitchen has a range of patisserie products made in the Kitchen at Racine and sold to various outlets in Orange and include bread, baguette's, croissants, sweet and savoury tarts, brownies, banana bread and speciality baked goods on request.

So, if you are after that memorable dining experience then you must head for Shaun Arantz's Racine Restaurant in Orange with sensational rural views across the vineyard, valley and the lights of Orange. Racine Restaurant encapsulates the best of Orange.

racine  
la colline

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