

Tête A Tête

The newsletter of the Domaine A / Stoney Vineyard

PO Box 137 Campania TAS 7026

Spring 2012 | Volume 17



2012 Vintage Report



For every year that passes I become more excited about the potential at Stoney Vineyard. With careful vine management I believe we can produce great wines even in the toughest years. The philosophy is simple: keep yields low to maintain high quality. Our vineyard manager, Jeremy Harris brings to the vineyard many years of experience in Bordeaux and he, too is surprised each year at the quality of fruit from our small 11 hectare site.

Cool climate viticulture is a tricky business, particularly in the wet La Nina years but the results are worth the risk. Over time, we have learned how to embrace the season and work with nature to overcome the limitations of challenging growing conditions that arise from time to time. It is largely a matter of restricting the yield by keeping an eye on bunch numbers and opening up the size of the canopy to the sun.

Alongside the balance of fruit, tannin and alcohol, we believe natural acidity is an important factor in wines that are built to age. Grapes that are ripened in the correct location achieve natural acid balance. Under ideal circumstances, grapes need one hundred days to ripen between flowering and harvest. The importance of sunshine hours through the ripening season is paramount because it is sunshine that ripens fruit, rather than heat. At Stoney Vineyard we are placed in a remarkable sun spot that allows a long, cool ripening season with extended daylight hours. This means mean we are able to achieve excellent natural balance and depth of flavor without the need of any additions. Like wine scribe and thinker Mr Andrew Jefford, we too believe in the beauty and 'naturalness' of balanced wine. If you begin with the right location, a winemaker is merely a caretaker helping the juice through fermentation, then caring for it in the cellar and guiding it finally into bottle.

Vintage 2012 was a year with typically warm and sunny conditions. We have no problems to report, other than a nasty October frost destroying almost half an hectare across parts of the lower vineyard blocks. The first signs of budburst were in the beginning of Spring. We had vigorous growth around late December and early January, which meant we needed to pluck new green shoots and trim



the tops. It was not necessary to irrigate during this vintage.

We picked approximately three weeks earlier than 2011. The Pinot Noir came off on the 19th March, Sauvignon Blanc the day after and the Cabernet Sauvignon a week after that. As with every year, there was no disease present at all. Yields were down considerably but the quality was rewardingly high.

H. Peter Althaus

Premier Release—Petit a by Domaine A

Not everyone has the patience to await the ultimate reward of a wine that has been cellared to reach its peak. At Domaine A, we are committed to investing in maturing our wines far longer before release than most others. Now for some years, Peter has been hard at work, secretly creating a fine wine possessed of genuine ageing capacity that can yet be enjoyed while relatively youthful.

For the first time, we are finally able to reveal Petit a by Domaine A.

This is a special wine that originates from the same ancient terroir and bears the hallmark typicity of Domaine A Cabernet Sauvignon. Benefitting from identical viticultural rigor, it is an assemblage of classic Bordeaux varieties including Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot. Under the gentle and fastidious hands of H. Peter Althaus, it is crafted to evolve and soften a little

earlier. The blend will vary slightly each year, according to our site, our senses and the season.

2008 is proving to be a vintage of tremendous quality and consistency. Grapes achieved excellent ripeness and perfect natural acid balance over a warm, dry season. According to Peter, we harvested some of the best Cabernet Sauvignon of the decade. We trust you will appreciate Petit a in its primary brilliance, but like all our wines it will also mature gracefully for many years in the same way as the great wines of the world.

2008 Petit a by Domaine A

A mouth filling and harmonious expression of terroir suffused with captivating florals, Asiatic spice and whispers of mint. A dense core layered with cassis is supported by fine, velvet tannin structure and the pure natural balance of Tasmania.

Pre-arrival Offer

We are proud to extend the premier release of **Petit a by Domaine A** to our loyal customers as a pre-arrival offer, direct from the estate.

Orders can be placed now for delivery in December 2012.

domaine-a.com.au



The Petit a label was designed by Swiss-based graphic design guru, Dario Zuffo who created the original Domaine A concept.

WIN

Twelve lucky Domaine A fans will each receive a bottle of the premier release 2008 Petit a by Domaine A, personally autographed by Peter Althaus.

To enter the competition, visit the contact page on the Domaine A website and enter your details online to join our mailing list. Goodluck!

domaine-a.com.au

COMPETITION DRAWN 1 DECEMBER 2012.
YOU MUST BE OF LEGAL DRINKING AGE IN YOUR COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE OR AT LEAST 18 YEARS OLD TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR ENTRY.



Domaine A detail by Tom Samek

Domaine A welcomes Louise Radman



Domaine A begins a new chapter this month, as Peter and Ruth Althaus welcome Louise Radman to the team as head of global marketing and public relations. Louise moves in the highest circles of the international wine and media worlds. She studied at Loreto and Roseworthy colleges and holds a bachelor degree in wine marketing from the University of Adelaide. Louise sits on the board of

Wine Communicators of Australia and the national executive of Sommeliers Australia. She is a Len Evans scholar, wine show judge and respected journalist in her own right. She spent many years in department head and purchasing management roles for Hyatt Hotels. Louise is active on numerous panels including Australia's wine list of the year awards, best sommelier of Australia competition and the AWRI advanced wine assessment course. Louise brings with her a wealth of experience from all facets of the industry.

A word from Louise

I have absolutely no doubt that Tasmania is the future of fine Australian wine. The coming together of ancient soil and truly cool climate gives rise to inspirational terroir set in one of the most pristine natural environments in the world. So it is with great excitement that I take up the opportunity of working with Domaine A. It is a privilege to play a small part in shaping the landscape for such

a landmark wine estate. The year ahead will be one of renewal as we embark on new strategic directions. Having said that, some things will never change as Peter strives to craft wines of subtlety and majesty, purity and complexity. Sculpted with skilled and sensitive hands, they express the beauty of site and season that lie at the heart of Domaine A. I hope to build on Peter and Ruth Althaus' astonishing vision, to find new ways of telling their story and the story of the land. I look forward to meeting many of you over the coming year and to hearing your stories too. I hope some of you will visit us at the historic Stoney Vineyard and look forward to welcoming you to the home of Domaine A.

The China Connection

We have been selling wine in China since 2003, but this last year may have been the biggest step forward in what we believe is the world's most important emerging wine market.

Building relationships is an integral part of business in China and we have formed some wonderful friendships with our distributors and clients. Our annual visits to the market are a highlight, with many stories to tell. The big wheel turns slowly in this part of the world.

The Chinese people have a genuine desire to embrace the finer points of Western culture and we have

witnessed their appreciation for wine grow over the years. Through investing time in building relationships and instilling vital education, we have been able to establish distribution networks and recognition of our brand throughout China.

On our most recent trip to China, Peter was accompanied by Sir Guy Green (Governor of Tasmania from 1995 to 2003) to open a wine education centre at the Tianjin Modern Vocational Technology College. The college will train trade and consumers about Tasmanian

wine. Peter was awarded the honorary title of visiting professor of viticulture and oenology. Sir Guy gave a lecture to 300 students and teachers on Tasmanian culture and heritage while Peter presented an introduction to Tasmanian wine. Peter will continue to travel to Tianjin once a year to educate the students on wine appreciation and the advantages of our pristine local climate and terroir.

Tiger Wines in Singapore



Last year we appointed Mr David Boxall of Tiger Wines as our agent in Singapore. David arranged some wonderful degustations, tastings and appointments for us and the wines are beginning to do very well there. Singapore is a highly competitive wine market and we value having a team with excellent knowledge and local connections on the ground. We asked David to put down some thoughts on the Singapore market...

Greetings from Singapore

Singapore is known for its hot weather, its strict rules, shopping, F1 GP and the two new casinos, but amongst wine drinkers as a place where wine can be expensive. Let's shatter that myth right now. Yes, Singapore does have a tax on wine but it's a volumetric tax so it works out at around S\$7 a bottle of red wine regardless of price. Supermarket own-label S\$7. Grange S\$7, so it makes sense to drink a decent drop here and that's what Tiger Wines imports—fine wine from Tasmania.

We're delighted to represent Domaine A and since Peter's visit last year we have been slowly but steadily gaining brand awareness with the serious wine cognoscenti. There's a very strong wine culture among both locals and expats, with regular gatherings to compare fine wines from around the world. The Domaine A Cabernet always surprises and usually knocks recognised Bordeaux from their pillars. Often, it's the first time a drinker has tried Domaine A but the result is a growing number of repeat orders. The Lady A has simply blown people away.

I've been in Singapore for over 12 years now and the biggest change in the wine scene is the huge increase in the number of brands available (there are over 200 individual wine distributors), the increase in the Australian dollar that has seen Australian wines edged out by wines from Europe and the US and a glut of iconic Australian wines from ageing investment stocks.

For a wine buyer, perhaps times have never been so good, but for a Seller, especially those of mainstream wine, times are tough. Tasmanian wine in general and Domaine A in particular, have never been mainstream so we are confident of continued growth. It's great fun introducing Domaine A to Singapore!

tiger-wines.com

Tiger Wines

Bringing you only the BEST from Tasmania's vineyards



New Releases

2006 Domaine A Cabernet Sauvignon

Seamless, round and elegant. Ripe dark cherry and plums supported by fine grained tannins. The fruit, oak and natural acid is perfectly balanced. The finish is savory, velvety and long. Awarded 5 gold stars by Master of Wine Rob Geddes, recognizing the elite of Australian vignerons with the ability to achieve consistent heights of fruit, flavor and freshness. This wine can be served with pride in the company of the world's best.

Rob Geddes MW 5 gold stars

2008 Domaine A Pinot Noir

"Deep, verging on dense, purple with a scarlet rim; right in the centre of the Domaine A style, more powerful and concentrated than any other Tasmanian pinot, or from parts further north for that matter. This gravitas has been achieved without limiting pinot varietal character, albeit different to all others."

J Halliday 94 pts

2006 Stoney Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon

"A blend of cabernet sauvignon, merlot, cabernet franc and petit verdot that spent 33 months in French barriques. Domaine A is the only winery in Tasmania able to produce a wine of this quality from this bordeaux blend, the secret being closely spaced dry-grown old vines. It is a black-fruited wine with an autocratic personality, but will loosen up to a degree over the coming years."

J Halliday 95 pts

2009 Domaine A Lady A

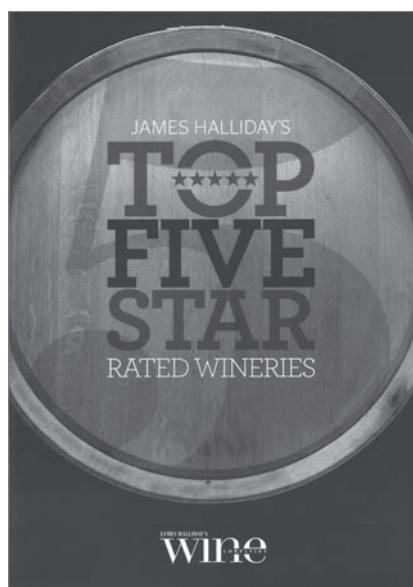
"Mid straw, vibrant green hue; and exotic blend of gauva, spice, nectarine and blanched almonds; the palate is unctuous, complex, extremely fresh and long, and there is no denying the strong 'Euro/Bordeaux' accent of this wine; complex sauvignon made with aplomb."

J Halliday 95 pts





"...complex sauvignon made with aplomb."



2009 Domaine A Lady A



Domaine A / Stoney Vineyard featured in James Halliday's 'Top Five Star Rated Wineries'

 <p>2006 Domaine A Cabernet Sauvignon Rob Geddes MW</p>	 <p>2008 Domaine A Pinot Noir James Halliday</p>	 <p>2009 Domaine A Lady A James Halliday</p>	 <p>2006 Stoney Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon James Halliday</p>
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Friends of the Vineyard—Maria Lurighi



Maria Lurighi worked with us from 2001 to 2010, leaving an unforgettable mark on the estate and all those who had the pleasure of meeting her. Maria is an accomplished musician with a passion for food and wine and a truly voracious appetite for life. We asked her to share some of her memories about her time at Domaine A and working with Peter and Ruth.

Within the first month of my starting at Domaine A, we had 12 Masters of Wine arrive for a grand tasting. It was an historic occasion and life changing, defining moment for me. To hear John Salvi of Chateau Palmer and the MW's speak was incredibly moving.

When we travelled abroad, our first formal dinners in Shanghai at Jean Jaques, Tai Won Lu and Sens on the Bund were a real highlight. One of my favourite evenings of showing Domaine A wines was at a dinner hosted by Matthew Jukes at Bibendum in 2004. We went to a lot of trouble to send museum vintages over to London and the event really paid off. All of the men at the table that evening became a circle of influence for Domaine A. In particular Matthew Jukes, Paul Henry, Alistair Viner of Harrods and Hamish Anderson of the Tate Gallery.

Every day was a wonderful day to learn something from the wines at Domaine A. The three varieties Peter makes are incredible and all have been site specifically planted. When you look at Pinot Noirs which are just

beginning to show their true colours after 10 years, you really appreciate the long race they can run. I truly believe these wines speak... they are living and they have something to say to you each time you taste them.

I enjoyed learning the day-to-day business of wine but some of my favourite times at Domaine A were the wonderfully impromptu meals with all of the blow-ins. Even more, the intimate evenings spent over many glasses of wine with Ruth and Peter.

Maria remains one of our greatest friends and ambassadors. She is now manager of wine bars at Tasmania's incredible MONA Museum of Old and New Art. Her nine years at the estate helped place Domaine A where it is today. Her enthusiasm for life, love, song and laughter was enlightening and invigorating for those who came into contact with her. We wish her luck for the future and thank her for her friendship.

Domaine A Cellar Guide 2012

VINTAGE	PINOT NOIR	CABERNET SAUVIGNON	MERLOT	LADY A
1990	1995-1999	1998-2008	not made	not made
1991	1998-2004	2000-2005	not made	not made
1992	2000-2005	2002-2012	not made	not made
1993	1999-2004	2001-2010	not made	not made
1994	2002-2008	2004-2014	2004-2015	not made
1995	2000-2006	2003-2010	2000-2012	not made
1996	not made	not made	not made	not made
1997	2002-2007	2005-2010	2005-2012	not made
1998	2006-2012	2008-2018	2008-2018	not made
1999	2005-2010	2008-2016	not made	2002-2010
2000	2008-2012	2010-2020	not made	not made
2001	2010-2015	2010-2020	not made	2004-2011
2002	2010-2015	not made	not made	2005-2013
2003	2010-2016	2012-2025	2010-2020	2006-2013
2004	not made	2012-2020	2009-2019	2007-2012
2005	2012-2016	2012-2025	2012-2018	2008-2015
2006	2014-2018	2015-2030	not yet released	2009-2017
2007	2014-2018	not yet released	not yet released	2010-2019
2008	2014-2018	not yet released	not made	2011-2022
2009	not yet released	not yet released	not made	2012-2024

Suggested optimum drinking time under ideal cellar conditions for Domaine A wine.