



DE BORTOLI

NOBLE ONE

Botrytis Semillon



The 25th Vintage release Noble One gave our winemakers an excuse to do a vertical tasting of all Noble One vintages since 1982. A tough assignment but someone had to do it! The tasting was held in May 2009 and may give those who have older vintages in their cellars some insight as to how these wines are developing. The oldest vintages whilst past their peak nevertheless are very interesting – very deep in colour with tawny/amber hues and developing aged spice and marzipan characters.



Tasting Panel

Julie Mortlock, John Coughlan, Rob Delgado, Matt Hogan
Joel Veenhuizen, Kate Barnett

Winemakers' Top 3 Picks

1. 1987 vintage
2. 2002 vintage
3. 1984 vintage, 2007 vintage

1982 VINTAGE

Background: The first release De Bortoli Botrytis Semillon 'Sauternes' made by Darren De Bortoli. Superb vintage for botrytis with a perfect balance of warm sunny days interspersed with light showers to produce the required humidity for the development of botrytis. Harvested late April.

Tasting Note: Deep tawny orange with green olive hues. Aromas of dried fruits, allspice and some spicy oak. The palate remains luscious and honeyed with length, texture and fine acid balance giving finesse.

1983 VINTAGE

Background: The threat of rain meant harvest occurred earlier in the season resulting in a lighter style. As happens in Sauternes, a portion of Sauvignon Blanc was included in the blend [the first and only time because it is difficult to obtain good botrytis with Sauvignon Blanc in this region].

Tasting Note: Again aged, deep tawny orange in appearance with with olive hues. A variety of aromas still evident including tea, lychee, toffee and orange peel. Rich and luscious with spicy characters and drying oak finish.





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1984 VINTAGE

Background: Perhaps the most perfect conditions we have ever experienced for botrytis. Rain over Easter followed by frosts and dry weather resulted in very clean, perfectly even distribution of botrytis throughout the vineyards.

Tasting Note: Medium deep orange with olive hues. Aromas of marmalade, dried fig, citrus peel and spice. A rich opulent wine that is holding its age extremely well with excellent structure, integrated oak and great length of flavour.

1985 VINTAGE

Background: Refreshing autumn rains resulted in good ripeness and botrytis infection although some other moulds were present.

Tasting Note: Deep golden amber with green hues. Aromas of stone fruits, quince, lemon rind, marzipan and hints of coffee. A lighter style with terrific acid balance, depth and palate structure.

1986 VINTAGE

Background: Dry weather meant botrytis did not occur until quite late in the season. Harvest commenced in late June and some raisining of the fruit was evident.

Tasting Note: Deep amber with olive hues. Typical botrytis characters of apricot, marmalade, and citrus peel. The palate reflects the dry season with raisined, caramel flavours and has a soft, lingering finish.

1987 VINTAGE

Background: Early ripening combined with late harvest rains provided ideal conditions for botrytis producing sound fruit with very good botrytis throughout the vineyard. Hand picking began in mid May and was completed over 10 days.

Tasting Note: Medium burnt orange with bronze hues and savoury, stone fruit aromas. This was the favourite. It is still an amazing wine with a myriad of complex flavours and aromas of sweet fruit nectar, dried apricot, marmalade, toffee and soft vanillin oak. Unctuous but with great balance of sweetness, acid and length.

1988 VINTAGE

Background: Harvest occurred from late April to mid May at very good ripeness levels with moderate, clean botrytis and some raisining of the fruit.

Tasting Note: Pale orange with olive hues. An array of aromas from crème caramel, lychee, nougat and toffee to spicy vanillin oak. Rich botrytis and dried fruit flavours, very luscious and showing great length and seamless oak.

1989 VINTAGE

Background: Heavy rains at the end of March resulted in many different moulds other than botrytis infecting the grapes. No Botrytis Semillon was produced in 1989.