



# DE BORTOLI WINES

## Tick Tock - the Hunter Valley Wine Clock

The pendulum of fashion has swung far and wide for the Hunter Valley during its 150-year history. From its beginnings as the start of the wine industry to its near abandonment in favour of other regions and wine styles, the Hunter is again set to be appreciated as one of Australia's iconic wine regions; this time by the De Bortoli family with their \$5million winery and vineyard expansion.

The De Bortoli family has made many significant contributions to the Australian wine industry. As pioneers of the Riverina, they led the way for quality and value for money wines in the 1950s through to today. Darren De Bortoli pioneered the Botrytis Semillon style 'Noble One' that gave the Riverina a new lease of life.

Moving to the Yarra in 1989, De Bortoli again emerged as an innovator and regional leader. Leanne De Bortoli's contribution to regional promotion and quality tourism both nationally and internationally is well recognised and the family winemaking efforts have significantly raised the Yarra Valley's reputation with their production of premium cool climate wines, including winning the Jimmy Watson Trophy.

As a company the family understands the role of regionalism in wine awareness for consumers, tourists and trade alike and give generously to increase the profile of all regions where they are associated.

Today they have made a home in the Hunter Valley. With wine tourism booming in the region their purchase of the former Wilderness Estate will be seen by a huge percentage of passing traffic and 'wine tourists' visiting the area each week. At the cross roads to the entrance of the valley, the property (currently being upgraded) will provide a gateway to furthering the knowledge of visitors while showcasing the Hunter Valley, Black Creek and some regional NSW wines.

Complementing each other, the Hunter will derive benefits from the well-respected De Bortoli name while the De Bortoli family will also benefit from the easier access to fruit from vineyards with a distinctive regional voice to broaden their comprehensive portfolio.

The De Bortoli family, like many people, has a passion for Semillon and Shiraz from the Hunter. Steve Webber's time with Lindemans working with Hunter icons such as Karl Stockhausen and Gerry Sissingh exposed him to many great Hunter wines and this experience is also important to the family's passion for styles that are uniquely Australian. With a focus on Semillon, Chardonnay, and Shiraz and plans for individual vineyard bottling in these varieties it will be exciting to watch, and of course taste, the results of the development.

Winemaker Scott Stephens sees the opportunity to contribute to the evolution and standards of Hunter Shiraz and Semillon as unique regional wines. Hunter Semillon is world renowned for its delicacy of subtle citrus flavour, capacity to age and change body and texture in the bottle. Local Shiraz is known for its medium body structure, savoury flavour profile, mid palate fruit and balance of flavour, tannin and alcohol. These characteristics do not appear in the other regions where De Bortoli produces wine, so they offer many opportunities for the winemakers to experiment and practice a different set of viticultural and winemaking skills.

The Hunter Valley winery represents the dreams and efforts of the late Deen De Bortoli. It was he who played a vital role in the recognition of the opportunity and brought it to fruition during the past years. The opening will be a silent salute to his energy and his vision for his family.

### **Why Choose the Hunter Valley?**

1. The family interest in quality wine means they have long had an eye on the wines of the Hunter. Steve Webber's early links with Lindemans have given him exposure to the great Hunter wines and a belief in producing the region's classics. The family feels there is a level of sophistication and historical knowledge in viticulture and winemaking in this area that offers great insights and lessons for those who look into the challenges of the district. Working to produce wines that rival the historic greats from this region will enable the practice of a different set of viticultural and winemaking skills and help De Bortoli wine makers learn more about the art of winemaking in Australia as a whole.

2. The Hunter gives the family an additional regional voice and the potential to broaden the De Bortoli offering with additional wines that are not duplicated in the current portfolio. Wines such as Hunter Valley Semillon, Chardonnay and Shiraz are all viewed as new and exciting.

3. It gives the family presence in Australia's premier region and the awareness that will flow through to all levels. The importance of the Hunter Valley in terms of national and international awareness is considerable and will grow as the world looks to Australian wines with distinctive regional flavours. The Hunter Valley is the most visited region in Australia with over two million visitors each year giving it an unparalleled role in creating awareness of the wine tourism experience and the important producers in Australia. There is no doubt that the Hunter Valley is a significant icon to wine drinkers due to the styles it produces and their ascendancy in Australia for cellaring styles. The family is joining this league with its Hunter winery.

4. The position of the winery within the Hunter Valley is a powerful drawcard for the public and the winemakers. The extraordinary opportunity to develop the location gives easy access to the best Hunter vineyard soils and is convenient for the public. De Bortoli customers cover the spectrum of Australian wine drinkers and as a result the Hunter Valley winery will have an important educational role in teaching more about the range and styles of wine the company produces.

5. The Hunter Valley vineyard holding will balance the family vineyards by giving them access to a warmer climate fruit with its gentle conditions. The sandy loams and red clay soils around the new winery are those that have traditionally produced the best Hunter reds and whites. The opportunity to have a winery that can take fruit from the emerging NSW regions will be a learning curve for all.

6. Extending the family sense of hospitality (with the Yarra as the role model) the Hunter will enable the family to create another regional set of experiences for the public. The family belief in "La Dolce Vita" means they see the enjoyment of wine and food as the living embodiment of their efforts.

### **What does the future hold for De Bortoli Hunter Valley?**

1. More vineyard redevelopment and planting.
2. Increased specialisation in the Hunter Classics with super premium wines on offer.
3. More landscaping of the winery surrounds.
4. Limited accommodation for journalists and trade.

### **What is on offer?**

- De Bortoli Hunter Valley Verdelho 2003 RRP\$17
- De Bortoli Hunter Valley Semillon 2003 RRP\$17
- De Bortoli Hunter Valley Shiraz 2003 RRP\$17
- De Bortoli Hunter Valley Chardonnay 2003 RRP\$17