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**Rieslingfreak**

VINTAGE

**2016**

**Newsletter No.4**

# Rieslingfreak

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Dear Riesling Freak,

Welcome to the 2016 Rieslingfreak newsletter. It has been yet another busy year for Rieslingfreak, with some exciting adventures, and the release of new wines.

*This year I would like to start by welcoming our new baby, 2014 Rieslingfreak No.9 Clare Valley Sekt Riesling. Yes, this is the first release of the Rieslingfreak sparkling - and I am excited! The good news is, I have not consumed it all as yet, and there is still some for release!*

*The past year has been busy with travel and tastings. The big trip for the year was the Riesling Rendezvous in Seattle, where Rieslingfreak was presented to the world on several occasions throughout the course of the event.*

*In October 2015 we hosted a tasting which included the entire line up of Rieslingfreak produced since we started in 2009. Alongside this, we opened up a 30 year vertical of Paulett's Riesling from the Clare Valley. It was a sensational event and I have reported some highlights below.*

*I hope you enjoy reading about our adventures, and wish to thank you for your support throughout 2015/16.*

Cheers,  
John Hughes  
Winemaker/Owner

## VINTAGE 2016

When making Riesling, I often say it is either a grape grower's or winemaker's vintage; this year was definitely a winemaker's vintage. Mother Nature decided to challenge us in the vineyard this year, providing us with a very dry and very warm spring and summer, so we had to be on the ball with our water management. Vintage was 7-10 days earlier than 'normal', but the vines were already showing signs of stress in both Clare and Eden Valley.

As a result of the dry summer, the berries were slightly smaller than average. This had to be managed in the winery to ensure quality was maintained. With careful grape handling, an adaptive approach to "normal" Riesling winemaking, and exhaustive attention to detail, I was able to produce some spectacular Rieslings from the 2016 vintage.

## YOUR 2016 OFFER

I have enclosed the 2016 Offer. I am happy to say we made the No.8 Schatzkammer from Polish Hill River this year, which has to be one of my favourites. The 2014 No.9 Clare Valley Sekt is on the list, and I really encourage you to make this one of your purchases.

For all those Riesling Freaks that have enjoyed the No.7 Fortified in the past, there is the new 2013 vintage on the list, which is perfect for the end of that dinner party, or with your favourite block of chocolate.

With the offer, please feel free to mix cases, to allow you to sample a bit of everything from the new releases.

## News

### 2014 CLARE VALLEY SEKT RIESLING

This year sees the inaugural release of the long awaited Rieslingfreak Sparkling. Made in the 2014 vintage, and harvested from the family property, the wine has spent two years in the bottle on lees, before being disgorged in June this year. The wine is dry at only 2.5g/L sugar, preserving the delicacy and racy acidity that is so synonymous with Riesling. The wine shows some great Riesling notes, which is supported by subtle yeasty/toasty notes from the secondary fermentation in bottle.

With only 230 dozen made, the wine is in limited supply. Although the wine drinks well now, I am excited to see how it ages over time. The wine is capped with a crown seal, providing you a guarantee of quality when opening each bottle. I am genuinely excited!!!

### RIESLING RENDEZVOUS

Once a year a whole bunch of Riesling Freaks get together to celebrate the world's most iconic grape variety. The Riesling Rendezvous this year was held in Seattle, where 300 winemakers, trade, and media from around the globe gathered together to celebrate Riesling.

Day one was a consumer/trade day at Chateau St Michelle Winery in Seattle, where 70 wineries from around the world all got together to showcase their Rieslings. The manicured grounds of Chateau St Michelle winery were surrounded with a number of marquees, representing the many countries attending the Riesling Rendezvous. We had over 700 consumers/media through the gates, all thirsty and enthusiastic to try the full spectrum of Rieslings. Rieslingfreak represented Australia alongside Jim Barry, Pikes, Mac Forbes, Grant Burge and Frankland Estate. The weather was warm, and the Riesling was flowing.

Days two and three were Riesling master classes. I was asked to be on the panel

of the Beyond Dry tasting, showcasing sweeter styles of Riesling from Europe, America, Australia and New Zealand, which provided Rieslingfreak with some great exposure. Rieslingfreak No.8 and No.5 were both shown in the master classes, with a great response from winemakers, trade and media. The highlight of the tastings for me was the 2012 Donnhoff Oberhauser Brucke Riesling Auslese, from Germany, which is just an amazing wine, with very limited supply in Australia.

### KICKING GOALS SCHOLARSHIP

This year sees the commencement of the Kicking Goals Scholarship. Rieslingfreak has joined forces with Foundation Barossa and the Tanunda Club to establish this new Scholarship designed to support children in the Barossa Valley who have a physical disability. The Scholarship will help support a child through their last two years of high school, by providing both funds and mentoring, and also contribute towards their further education. The ultimate goal being to help these children complete their education, and hopefully to find employment in the Barossa Valley.

I am extremely proud to have initiated and continue to support this exciting and worthwhile program. For every bottle of Rieslingfreak sold at the Tanunda Club, Rieslingfreak is giving \$5 towards the Scholarship, a partnership that has already been successful in raising \$5000 in 2015/16. Rieslingfreak would also like to acknowledge Barossa Quarries and Riesling For Good for coming on board, and further contributing towards Kicking Goals Scholarship.

### BACK VINTAGE RIESLINGFREAK

Last October we took the opportunity to open all the Rieslingfreak wines produced since we started in 2009. We had 31 bottles of Rieslingfreak on the table, representing every vintage and every wine we have made.

Together with this tasting, I took advantage of the auspiciousness of this event to do a vertical tasting from one of my favorite producers in the Clare Valley, Paulett Wines. We looked at every vintage going back to 1984, with some amazing Rieslings among them. Not often do you have the opportunity to do a 30 year vertical from the one producer and one grape variety!

The great news is, all the Rieslingfreak wines are aging well, and if you have any back vintages in your cellar, there is no rush to open them. The 2009 Rieslingfreak No.6 was a definite standout for me, with the Aged Release Riesling maturing nicely. Other highlights were the 2012 Rieslingfreak No.3, and the 2011 Rieslingfreak No.5 which are both drinking particularly nicely at the moment.

It was awesome looking at 30 years of Paulett's Riesling. There were many

highlights from this tasting, with the most noticeable difference being the change in closure from cork to screwcap. I think the wine industry has a lot to be thankful for with the screw cap, and I see this closure benefiting Riesling, and allowing many of us Riesling Freaks being able to enjoy aged Riesling over the next many decades. The stand out wine for me was the 2010 vintage, which was still looking fresh, and would be one to cellar for decades to come.

### JAMES HALLIDAY FIVE STAR WINERY

Rieslingfreak is proud of being shown as a 5 star winery in the latest James Halliday Wine Companion. Scoring some great results for the 2015 wines, we are hoping James will be just as impressed with our 2016 vintage!

## Grower Profile: Rob and Lyn Jaeschke

Rob and Lyn Jaeschke are the growers for the Rieslingfreak No.2 and No.8. With the original vines planted by Max Schubert from Penfolds, and the property was purchased by Rob and Lyn in 2010. Now known as Hill River Vineyards, Rob and Lyn are investing in viticultural practices, which is continually improving grape quality.

With three dams, totalling 600 mega litres, the vineyard has access to ample water. Riesling vineyards that have good water, in my opinion, often end up being the best.

This vineyard was originally selected for the Rieslingfreak No.8 due to its ability to grow large vines, which produce big bunches and large berries. These bunches are perfect to produce the Kabinett style we are aiming for with the No.8, and the flinty/mineral style we aspire to with the No.2.

I wish to thank Rob and Lyn for their support over the past four years, and look forward to working with them in the future. Also a big thankyou to Harry, who works the vineyard for Rob and Lyn, and is doing a superb job!

