



# PHOENIX C.C. WINE APPRECIATION CLUB

## NEWSLETTER

### August Tasting:

Our August 2026 club night was a landmark event for the Phoenix: it was the first time that a club event was led by a person (or group of people) who were not club members.

Four members of the Capercaillie team hosted the



evening: Lance and Kylie Mikisch, John Hart and Raymond Chen, and Lance, Kylie and John each took the opportunity to share insights into the wines they presented.

It was something that Lance (the winemaker) said that struck a particular chord with many of the attendees: he explained that his approach to winemaking was “leave it alone”, aka

### Non-Interventionist Winemaking

This concept was promoted in the 1980's and 90's, referring to an approach to winemaking where a producer does as little as possible to the grapes (in the vineyard) and to the juice they yield (in the winery). The goal is to let the grape variety, the specific environment in which they were grown and the features of the prevailing weather conditions of the year in which they were grown shine through in the wines, rather than attempt to emulate the wines

produced in a wholly different locality with its own soil type, geographical features and climatic conditions. More recently, the updated term “minimal intervention winemaking” has been adopted in recognition of the reality that situations can arise, quite often beyond the control of the grape grower and winemaker, where steps need to be taken to ensure the viability of the harvest.

The underlying philosophy of this approach is if the use of toxic herbicides, fungicides, pesticides and artificial fertilisers is avoided in the vineyard, then the winemakers won't need to worry about the presence of “residues” in the wine; if the grape grower achieves a balance between the sugar (which will become alcohol), acid, tannin and flavour-producing components in the grapes, the winemakers won't need to apply chemical “adjustments” to achieve a balanced wine.



Furthermore, in practice, hand harvesting is preferred over mechanised harvesting, so that only healthy bunches of grapes are delivered to the winery; yeast strains that are present on the “bloom” of the grape (the powdery-looking surface of the grape skins) are preferred over the use of cultured yeasts; compounds that “adjust” the colour of the

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wine are shunned; the use of preservatives, like sulphur dioxide, are avoided or minimised; clarifying the wine by “racking” (allowing sediment to form at the base of the vessel containing the wine and siphoning off the clear liquid above it) rather than filtering and / or “fining” (adding an agent to the



wine to bind with floating or suspended particles, causing them to settle before racking the wine.

### Visitors:

With so many of our regulars still overseas, we were fortunate to have four visitors at our August meeting.



Keith Kirby not only returned, he brought his daughter, Jessica with him, quipping “you will be the youngest in the room”, and she was.

So good to see Michelina back with us for a tasting, too. We also welcomed Mike Hilton, as a guest of David S and Kay. It is always great to see members bring guests along. It is the ideal way for our little Phoenix to grow.

### Christmas Celebration:

We have heard from most people, with their Christmas preferences, so the Committee will be looking at the results. Some great suggestions. Watch this space.

### September 10 Tasting :

We have another Winery visit for September. Orange Mountain Wines, a small family owned business, made Noel and I extremely welcome on our recent “wine tour” and have agreed to present.

Hope you still have some room in your “cellar” after the Capercaillie visit, because this was another winery which absolutely impressed the pants of us. We loved every single wine we tasted and Julie and

Terry are an absolute delight. I’m sure they will have Order Forms available, too.



We are so looking forward to welcoming them to Phoenix.

### Future Events:

Rod has several in the pipeline, including a presentation by Oldfield Cellars and a tasting featuring Australian

Wines from Italian Grape Varieties.

Grüner Veltliner and Tempranillo are the most widely planted, and most highly regarded, wine grapes of Austria and Spain respectively; we’ll taste 3 different Austrian Grüner Veltliner wines and 3 different Spanish Tempranillo wines and discuss how these two grapes are adapting to Australian conditions.

### Wine Delivery:

The Committee arranged to collect the wines from Capercaillie, rather than pay the \$15.00 per case delivery charges, and Phoenix absorbed the cost. However please note that future orders will most likely incur delivery charges, which we will do our best to minimise.  
- Rod & REN