



Welcome to 2009 – I hope everyone had a happy and safe holiday season.

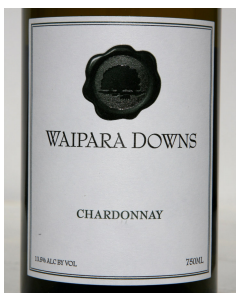
We enjoyed 10 days in Bunbury, two hours south of Perth, with our sons. It was fairly hot and quite humid although the beaches are fantastic and the light winds helped keep the temperature down a bit. We visited a farm approximately two hours inland from Bunbury on a particularly hot day. This farming region is home to a lot of wheat and canola crops. During the hot summer days they have non-farm vehicle movement times. No tractors, headers or machinery allowed in the paddocks to try and avoid fires starting. Needless to say there wasn't a lot to do that afternoon except watch South Africa beat Australia in the cricket! It certainly is a very isolated region and running to the dairy for a pint of milk takes on a whole new meaning. Also spent time in the Margaret River wine region, 'market research' of course. Tasted some nice wines and some not so nice.

Our vineyards are still doing what they should, however there was a hail storm a few of weeks ago which damaged a couple of the Valley's vineyards to quite an extent. Luckily we came out unscathed. Currently we're spraying for botrytis which is a mould caused by moisture that gets into the bunches. This is applied prior to the bunches of grapes starting to fill out and closing up into tight bunches. The bird netting will start to go on at the end of the month and before this everything will be tidied up and vines tucked under the wires.

Tip of the Month: To keep crayfish scrummy, wrap individually in wet newspaper, then gladwrap and place in the fridge. Will keep fresh for 3-4 days.

Pick of the Month: Waipara Downs Chardonnay 2007 RRP \$23-26

Say it right: Shar-don-nay



Every year Waipara Downs Chardonnay consistently impresses with its rich full palate, displaying crème brulee characters along with the traditional vanilla, honey and nuttiness. Careful cellaring will evolve this wine.

Food matches – Rakaia River salmon, any seafood, crayfish, chicken, light cheeses, avocado.

Available in selected retail outlets

Have a great month and enjoy the summer holidays.

Pip

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