

**MEDIA RELEASE****April 30, 2010**

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**VINE  
WINE  
DINE**

Following the grapes from Terroir to Table

Event 1 – 5<sup>th</sup> June 2010

**Thomas Wines, Arrowfield Estate and Polin & Polin**

'Classic Hunter with a Contemporary Flavour'

The Around Hermitage Vine, Wine, Dine weekends kick off on June 5 with a tour of three very special vineyards, followed by a degustation dinner with the winemakers.

Around 50 people on each June weekend will have the opportunity to not only visit award-winning vineyards, and wineries, but also to learn hands-on from the owners how the vines are managed and the wines created. They will then enjoy a degustation dinner at which hand-picked wines from the day's vineyards will be chosen with each course. The winemakers will join the dinner to explain how the lessons learned during the afternoon apply to the wines on the menu.

The first event is on Saturday June 5, when three vineyards will open their doors to guests and disclose the secrets of how contemporary winemaking has affected the classic hunter varieties.

Thomas Wines specialises in Semillon and Shiraz, sourcing fruit from some of the Hunter valley's most distinguished sites, and producing world class, uniquely regional wine styles. Established in 1997, Thomas Wines has gained a formidable reputation as one of the Valley's leading producers with a tightly focused range of various styles of the regions signature varietals, led by two flagship single vineyard wines – Braemore Semillon and Kiss Shiraz. Says winemaker Andrew Thomas: " We have developed our winemaking over the years to produce Hunter Semillon with both early drinking appeal as well as excellent cellaring potential. Our focus with Shiraz has been on producing a more 'contemporary' style showing more fruit intensity and vibrant aromatics whilst retaining the savoury palate texture for which Hunter Shiraz is so famous."

Arrowfield Estate Vineyards has mature plantings of Semillon, Chardonnay, Verdelho and Shiraz, some dating back to 1973. The Semillon and Shiraz has been deliberately planted on shallow free draining soils to naturally control vigor and yields, producing fruit of exceptionally intensity. They will be displaying their Show Reserve wines which come from their mature low-yielding vines and is only made in years that have fruit of exceptional quality. The Semillon is released only once it has been cellared in bottle for a minimum of 4 years. Winemaker Barry Kooij believes this is when the Show Reserve Semillons are at their best: "Complex bottle developed toast and honey characters become evident while still retaining crisp citrus acidity. The advent of screwcap closures has enabled us to cellar the wine with complete confidence." Hunter Valley Semillon with a few years bottle age has the weight and complexity to make a perfect food match with game bird such as quail. The Show Reserve Shiraz is made in a robust style. "This wine is all about structure and richness of flavour, the use of specially selected modern yeast strains helps us achieve this. " It is very much a food wine with the savoury tannin structure the Hunter is renowned for and is ideally partnered with hearty red meat dishes such as braised beef cheek.

Polin & Polin was established in 1995 when the Polin Family planted fourteen acres of grapes in the Hunter. They named their wines in honour of the pioneers that established themselves in rural NSW. They specialise in the varieties that made the Hunter great, particularly Shiraz and Chardonnay, and are producing them in the modern style which focuses more on balanced, drinkable wines then maximising intensity. "The production of our 'Tudor' Chardonnay has changed by carefully controlling the amount oak and secondary fermentation" says Matt Polin, "this leads to a more subtle and refined wine that matches perfectly with grilled swordfish". The 'Convicts & Catholics' Shiraz has been made as a less intense style that goes really well with lighter red meats. "On June 5 we will be serving this with a veal and red wine reduction" he said. "These two really work well together rather than one dominating the other, again focusing on balance."

**Look out for the following events in the next few weeks:**

- 15<sup>th</sup> June** – 'Sustainability in Vineyards – the new Horizon"  
**MacQuariedale Organic Wines, Wombat Crossing, Kurrajong Vineyards**
- 19<sup>th</sup> June** – 'Re-emerging Varietals'  
**Tintilla Estate, RidgeView Wines and DenMar Estate**
- 26<sup>th</sup> June** – 'Terroir'  
**Keith Tulloch, Marsh Estate and Polin & Polin**

## **Around Hermitage**

Often referred to as the 'picturesque part' of Pokolbin, the Northern area around Hermitage Road boasts some of the most spectacular rural and mountain views and is now home to what are generally regarded as some of the best boutique wineries, cellar doors, restaurants and accommodation in Pokolbin.

The Around Hermitage family has grown dramatically in the last 10 years. Business members now include a plethora of medal-winning wineries and cellar doors, restaurants and cafés, accommodation venues, wedding Venues, wine tours, antiques, galleries and more.

## **Vine, Wine, Dine**

Each Saturday in June the Vine, Wine, Dine coach will pick up 50 guests from participating Around Hermitage accommodation in the afternoon and take them to 3 vineyards and wineries. There they will be given informative and entertaining presentations about the art of producing the best grapes, with tastings conducted by the wine-makers themselves.

After the third 'wine experience' the coach will take participants to a top local restaurant for a six-course degustation dinner, with each course paired with wines from the tour. The winemakers from each vineyard will work with the restaurant chef to choose special wines that best compliment each course.

Said Ian Napier: "The dinner will be very relaxed, because we want our guests to take their time to enjoy the food and wine without worrying about how they'll get back to their accommodation. We will have transport running throughout the night to meet the needs of the guests."

The 2010 Vine, Wine, Dine event, is limited to only 50 guests on one day of each weekend in June, so visit the Around Hermitage Website [www.aroundhermitage.com.au](http://www.aroundhermitage.com.au) for full details of participating wineries, cellar doors, restaurants and accommodation.

Vine, Wine, Dine bookings can only be made at [www.winecountry.com.au](http://www.winecountry.com.au)

The "Vine Wine Dine" Facebook page is also up and running

For further Information:  
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