

# MEDIA RELEASE

## **BAROSSA BLEND THE BEST AT THE 2006 HOBART INTERNATIONAL WINE SHOW 24th November, 2006**

A Barossa blended red, which has a recommended retail price of \$23 a bottle has beaten off strong competition from some of Australia's most famous wines to take the top trophy at the Hobart International Wine Show.

Thorn-Clarke's *Shotfire 2005 Quartage* – a 100% Barossa blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Malbec, Cabernet Franc, Merlot and Petit Verdot, grown exclusively from Thorn-Clarke's vineyard estates, – was commended by the judges as a wine of outstanding quality.

The 2005 Quartage was awarded a gold medal and trophy in Class 44 for Best Blended red wine in addition to the Chairman's trophy for the Best Wine of the Show.

The same wine had already been awarded four silver medals at wine shows this year.

This success follows the highly acclaimed 2004 vintage of the same wine which won four gold medals and four trophies at wine shows throughout Australia.

Thorn-Clarke Wines was launched in 2002 as a result of the 37 year marriage between David and Cheryl Clarke (nee Thorn). The Thorn family have grown vines in the Barossa since the 1870's and still proudly own and manage some of the oldest vineyards in the region.

The win is another reward for geologist David Clarke and his family. The family has planted four diverse Barossa vineyards over the last 20 years, enabling them to blend wines grown from different terroirs which adds complexity and richness to the wine.

“When we started out 20 years ago I knew from my geological research that the varied Barossa geology and soil types offered us a broad palate to work with. Then when we started making trial blends in the 1990s it became clear that the vineyards complemented each other brilliantly and provided us with a new level of flavour complexity. We have blended to take advantage of these sub regional and micro climatic characteristics.”

“Our philosophy is to over-deliver in terms of the quality we offer at each price level. Wine lovers remember wines which are stunning value and we work hard to ensure that whether people buy the Sandpiper range at \$15 or the Shotfire range at \$23 they are drinking wines that are excellent value for money.” ...2

The trophy winning wine, which was first vintaged in 2000, was initially based on only four of the classic Bordeaux varieties – hence the Latin *quartage*. However, Thorn-Clarke’s estate grown Malbec was so exceptional in 2004 that it was included in the blend for the first time making the 2004 release a classic five varietal Bordeaux blend. Vintage 2005 produced some exceptional Malbec and it has once again been worthy of inclusion in the 2005 release of the *Quartage*.

Winemaker Derek Fitzgerald said “More Malbec than Merlot has been used in the 2005 Vintage rather than the 2004’s greater Merlot presence because of the contribution the Malbec makes to the wine. The 18% Malbec helps to give the wine intense colour while adding richness, mouth feel and some nice blueberry characters.”

“The key to good Malbec is being able to successfully ripen the fruit. Our St Kitts vineyard at the Northern end of the Barossa provides a fantastic environment to do that.”

“The wine is a deep inky purple colour. There are lifted dark fruits, cedary oak and some perfume from the Petit Verdot on the nose. The palate is rich, ripe and full bodied. The wine is bursting with flavours of blackcurrant, plums and Christmas pudding. The supporting oak has dark chocolate and vanilla essence. The tannins are chalky but complement the wine to give it great mouth feel and length of fruit and oak flavours.”

“The Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc fruit come from the old vine Kabinige Block near Krondorf on the Barossa Valley floor and they provide wonderful upfront berry fruits; the Malbec from the drier northern St Kitts vineyard balances the cool climate Angaston vineyard Petit Verdot which provides great depth of flavour and intensity, while the Merlot, also from St Kitts, gives the palate a wonderful suppleness. The grainy tannins add to the rich mouth feel of the wine.”

“The grapes are sourced from multiple vineyards dotted across Thorn-Clarke’s estates, and combined with the use of several barrel cooperages, means that the wine is blended from over 34 distinct parcels.”

“There is an awesome length to this wine with lingering berry fruit and spicy oak.”

“Australian wine lovers became very familiar with the wine last year as sales surged following the Adelaide Wine Show win. People will be delighted with the lineage we are creating with *Quartage* in that the 2005 has once again been shown to be one of the finest wines in the country.”

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