



Western Australia

Ray Jordan's Guide to

wine

2008

One of WA's most experienced winemakers, John Griffiths, runs this little operation in addition to other consulting activities.

Faber is the Latin word for craft and Griffiths's aim is to craft flavoursome wines that reflect the regional character of the Swan.

The Baskerville vineyard, chosen because Griffiths believed it was the best site for Verdelho, shiraz and brown muscat, has typical West Australian 'coffee rock' soil – shallow, low in fertility but with good water holding capacity. This enables Griffiths to grow low-vigour wines and produce crops of ripe, highly flavoured grapes with little or no irrigation, fairly typical of the Swan Valley.

The wine making philosophy aims to achieve extraction, flavour and fruit sweetness and a tough culling regime is adopted to maintain quality.

Additions to the excellent range of reds include a verdelho and a new shiraz.

A wine studio is due to open in 2008. Recent awards include golds for the Reserve shiraz 2003 at Perth and petit verdot 2005 at the WA Wine Show.

This is an impressive new venture making limited quantities and is well worth seeking out.

The Wines

Verdelho 2006

Another very good Verdelho from Faber. The aromas show nice creamy tropical characters with touches of cashew, while the palate has lovely textural qualities that add something else to this variety. Sustained palate.

91/100

Riche shiraz 2006

Plenty of earthy savoury aromas with a little vanillin and cedary oak influence. Palate has a dry earthy finish with some plump fleshier fruit in the middle palate. Refined and stylish example of Swan Valley shiraz.

87/100

Petit verdot 2006

Stylish example of a variety normally used as a blending component with cabernet. Full bodied and powerful with lifted cherry and savoury earthy characters. Should handle some extended cellaring.

85/100

Reserve shiraz 2004

Rich dark and brooding shiraz loaded with savoury, earthy notes filling a substantial palate. Lots of briary blackcurrant and licorice with some well-weighted oak gobbled up by the immense fruit. This wine redefines what is possible with Swan Valley shiraz

94/100