

T'GALLANT

T'Gallant is the sailor's abbreviation of topgallant, the top sail of square-rigger sailing ships. It connotes the peak, the best, the epitome. T'Gallant's winemaking philosophy is the same. Winemaker Kevin McCarthy is driven by an extraordinary commitment to quality. European winemaking techniques and philosophies have influenced Kevin's approach and the results can be seen in the glass.

The 2007 T'Gallant Claudius Mornington Peninsula white wine is on the edge, inspired in part by the controversial but fascinating wines of Josko Gravner in Friuli (in far North Eastern Italy, near the Slovenia border). A blend of Chardonnay (80%), Moscato Giallo (5%) and Gewurztraminer (15%), Claudius was made using red wine techniques such as extended maturation on skins, 100% new oak and bottling without fining or cold settling.

T'Gallant Claudius 2007

Viticulture

The 2006/2007 growing season followed a very dry winter and started with an early bud burst. A cool spring in October and November resulted in a smaller fruit set which ultimately led to reduced yields. Some rain in January and February helped vines to remain in good condition in preparation for harvest. Overall fruit quality has been good with the smaller berries leading to intense fruit flavours. The fruit was sourced from two vineyards in Mornington, one in Main Ridge and the second at Balharring.

Viniculture

As winemaker Kevin McCarthy boldly states, "Every rule has been broken with this wine!" All of the fruit was handpicked and 30% was de-stemmed by hand. Claudius is fermented on skins and was hand plunged in only two small 1200 litre fermenters. The wine was then pressed into 100% new French oak barriques, where it was matured for seven months.

There's a deep attractive green gold colour in the glass, while on the nose there's obvious 'wild ferment' character with struck match, gun flint and spice before attractive aniseed and dill characters make an appearance. There are also some floral aromatics from the moscato component with the new oak sitting nicely with the fruit. The palate sits well away from anything 'new-world'.

There's a lot going on with great length on the palate and a phenolic mouthfeel that one doesn't expect in a white wine. This sets it apart though - making it a 'sommelier's wine', as it screams out for food. There is Chardonnay's ripe stone fruits that balance well with the oak, with undertones of spice. Seeing it's made like a red wine, it's not surprising the Claudius has the texture and mouthfeel that is expected from a red wine.

Suggested Food

Corn fed chicken (skin on) with a green peppercorn cream sauce.

Cellaring

Drink during the next five years.

Technical Analysis

Harvest Date:

pH: 3.48

Acidity: 6.2 g/L

Alcohol: 13.0%

Residual Sugar: g/L

Bottling Date:

