

The wine is everything

Samuel Spurr

As Justin Taylor leads a wine tasting class he comes across as an affable, personable and welcoming man passionate about wine. Justin, a grandson of "Big" Bill Taylor, who set up the family owned winery in the Clare Valley north of Adelaide, loves a top drop, not least his own family's creation.

As Justin leads the tastings of Taylor's wines; we learn of the winery's history, we hear many amusing personal anecdotes. The evening lives up to the company's motto, that "the wine is everything".

"Big" Bill Taylor and his brother John were originally Publicans in Sydney before being torn towards the Clare Valley in 1969. A trip to Bordeaux confirmed their interest in wine whilst the *Terra Rossa* soil, a red brown loam over limestone soil found in the Clare Valley and celebrated as an excellent soil for Cabernet Sauvignon, led to the beginnings of Taylors winery. Since then, the Terra Rossa has helped produce award winning wines and a vibrant family owned company.

In 1973, after only a few years in the business, the Taylors Estate Cabernet Sauvignon won the grand slam of wine awards, winning gold medals at every national wine show in Australia. Since that great feat, Taylors have gone on to win more awards although Justin is keen to see more regulation of awards. "I would like to see more regulation of wine awards so as to increase the credibility of the medals printed on labels," Justin says. He further goes on to explain that Taylors only enter into capital city and major international wine shows.

At this tasting, Justin is keen to present Taylors Cabernet Sauvignon and Riesling varieties. The highest echelon of the winery is the Taylors St Andrews drop, fashioned under the watchful eye of Chief Winemaker Adam Eggins. The Cabernet, a 2000 vintage, is readily enjoyed for its rich blackcurrant character while the French oak adds cedar and tobacco to the finish. The Riesling, a 2000 vintage, displays notes of honey, toast and lime and is best matched with seafood.

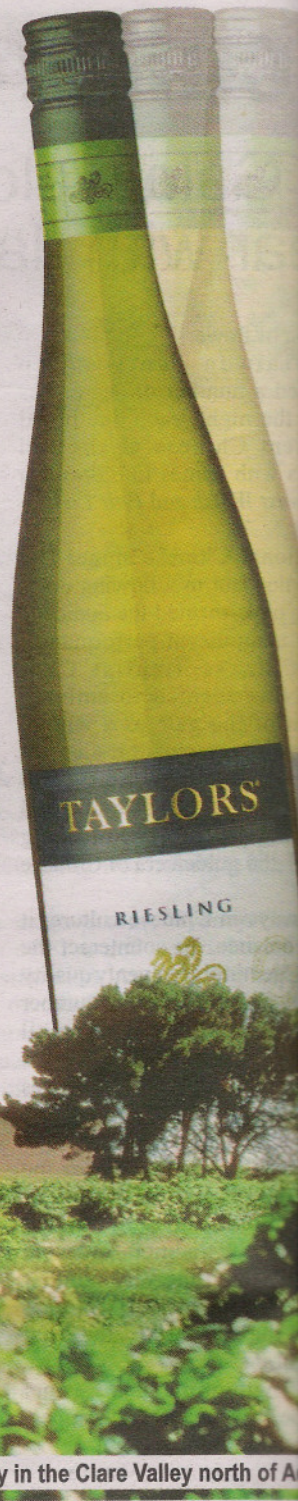
"Jaraman", an Aboriginal word

for seahorse gives its name to range of Taylors wines. Seahorse fossils were discovered when the winery's dam was being built and led to the use of the seahorse as the company's crest. A vast inland sea previously occupied the Clare Valley leading to its bountiful, fertile soil.

Among the standouts of this line is the Jaraman Cabernet Sauvignon which has fruit from the Clare Valley combined with the Coonawarra whilst the Riesling is quite floral and is also a combination, with fruit from both the Clare Valley and Eden Valley being used.

Taylors Estate and Taylors Promised Land are the other two lines in the Taylors repertoire. Taylors Estate Cabernet Sauvignon and Riesling have won medals at a national and international level and are priced competitively. The Riesling is a great pairing with spicy dishes while the Cabernet complements red meat.

As for the future, wine lovers can expect from Taylors, along with a little help from fertile Terra Rossa soil, a continuation of excellence and an assurance that the wine is everything.



The Taylors winery in the Clare Valley north of A