



Cellar Link Australian Wine Masterclass
The Langham, Hong Kong 5th November 2009

Notes by **Nick Bulleid MW**



Penfolds Grange Bin 95 Shiraz Vertical

This group of five wines beautifully showed the evolution of this classic wine from its relative youth at seven years of age, when grape and oak flavours are not fully married and tannins are yet to soften, to a highly complex fragrant wine of outstanding flavour and maturity.

Across the 17 years, the continuity, consistency and stamp of Penfolds were impressive.

2002 Vintage - Deep red colour with a little purple.

The nose is still quite closed and unevolved, yet shows rich sweet fruits, ripe dark berries and well-married vanilla characters from new oak.

A beautifully balanced palate with tannins that are firm, yet beginning to be approachable. There's good length of flavour but the wine is yet to build complexity.

The 2002 has started on its journey to maturity, but still needs another five years to develop further and will continue to age well for at least fifteen.



Jeannie Cho Lee MW

1998 Vintage - Moderately deep red colour.

A highly complex nose which has developed beyond simply berry characters to a fragrant cedary complexity.

The palate shows the same complex flavours, with beautiful richness and depth of character, although the oak still sits apart slightly. The tannins are dense, yet balanced and match with wine's dense flavours.

This is a great Grange that is beginning to show what it can achieve, but which will develop a more intense bouquet and complex flavours over at least 25 years.

1995 Vintage - Medium-deep garnet red colour.

The nose is beautifully fragrant, with ripe, developed fruit, cigar box complexity and hints of chocolate.

The wine reveals itself as leaner in style than the other four. The tannins have a distinctly firm edge although the flavours are nonetheless rich and maturing well. The wine is approaching maturity, but will still continue to build more fragrance and soften further over another 10 years.

1990 Vintage - Mid garnet red colour.

Incredibly intense, almost luscious nose, with wonderfully sweet fruits and cigar-box complexity. Fruit and oak are now perfectly married.

Perfectly poised palate, with a seamless line from entry to finish and great depth of flavour. The tannins are soft, yet ever-present and mouth-coating. Excellent length.

This is an outstanding Grange that more than lives up to its great reputation. It is fully ready to be enjoyed, yet will hold its quality effortlessly for 15 years.

1985 Vintage - Mid brick red colour.

The nose is highly complex – even perfumed - suggesting cigar box, earth and forest floor characters, yet still retains fruit sweetness.

Mature, cedary flavours beautifully match the fine, balanced tannins in a palate with beautiful line and length.

The wine is now fully mature and can be enjoyed over the next five years.



De Bortoli Noble One Vertical

2007 vintage - Pale golden yellow colour.

Very fine, rich nose, with intense apricot character and beautifully integrated new oak.

The palate is very luscious, with concentrated stone fruit flavours, balanced sweetness and a light touch of oak astringency to dry the finish.

This is an excellent vintage for Noble One. It will gain more complex flavours over many years.

2002 vintage - Mid golden colour.

Very rich nose, complex nose with dried apricots and hints of toffee.

Luscious, fat palate with great depth of flavour and length. This wine now shows a knife-edge balance between youthful fruit flavours and bottle-aged complexity – a beautiful stage of development. From here, the flavours will move in a marmalade direction, with still greater complexity.



1996 vintage - Mid golden colour.

Highly complex nose, with distinct cumquat marmalade characters. Excellent depth.

Beautifully balanced palate with excellent richness and length.

This now has extraordinary complexity and it's hard to see how it could gain with further cellaring, although it should hold these characters for several years.

1991 vintage - Medium-deep brass.

The nose is very similar to the 1996, with a very complex marmalade bouquet. The palate is rather softer and less structured than the '91, but with similar flavours, which are lifted by a little volatility on the finish.

The wine is fully mature, with very complex flavours. A lovely aged wine at its peak.

1985 vintage - Medium-deep brass.

Highly concentrated nose, showing considerable richness and mature, cumquat marmalade characters.

The palate shows similarly rich, complex flavours, but is rather disjointed, finishing with a slightly aggressive texture which does not interfere, however.

This was clearly an extraordinary wine when younger but, if this bottle was typical, it has begun a slow decline.

1984 vintage - Medium-deep brass.

The nose is similar to the 1985, with some additional toffee-like overtones from bottle-age.

Rich, fully mature flavours with marmalade, toffee and even a little coffee, the balance holding well.

One of the first Botrytis Semillons made in Australia, showing their quality and staying power and now at its peak