

# TASTINGS

## BEN EDWARDS

The Mornington Peninsula is home to a vast array of boutique wineries, so it is difficult for a new one to make its presence felt. Scorpo Wines in Merricks North is finding its way in such a competitive market by producing beautifully crafted wines at Kooyong Estate, courtesy of Sandro Moselle.

The Scorpo family philosophy is to nurture the vines, thus allowing the fruit to speak volumes about its origins.

Paul Scorpo's origins are Italian and he has a close family tie to the wine industry. His mother, Lucia, is from Sardinia, and the town she lived in is home to the Italian Cork Institute. Paul's great uncle owned a wine store in Sicily and his late father, Sebastian, always made wine at home. Add to this his background in landscape architecture and selling wholesale plants, and owning a vineyard seems a natural progression.

The vineyard he owns with his wife, Caroline, was planted in 1997 and is home to pinot noir, chardonnay, pinot gris and shiraz grapes. The vines are planted on the site of an old cherry and apple orchard and, as is often the case, where the apples grow well, so do the vines. The vines are planted on a hill slope, as Paul believes (just as the Cistercian monks did in Burgundy) that the best fruit grows on the hillside.

Scorpo Wines is a name to watch. The dedication to getting things right is evident and the respect for the vines and the winemaking is impressive. Paul does not want the label to become too big but instead wants the name to be synonymous with high-quality estate-grown fruit from the Mornington Peninsula.

The pale-straw 2002 pinot gris exhibits aromas of minerals, candied fruits and hints of nuts. The complex bouquet definitely resembles a wine from Alsace. The palate is rich and generous with a hint of residual sugar, which merely highlights the fruit and accentuates the crispness of the finish. Quite delicious now, this wine will age well for five years.

The bright-crimson 2001 pinot noir shows complex aromas of bright cherry fruits, plum and Asian spices, backed with minerals and, at this point, quite obvious oak. The palate is silky and beautifully textured, with fine-grained tannins providing the structure. This is a striking wine from such young vines and will continue to improve for another year while offering drinking pleasure for three to five years after that.

Ben Edwards is president of the Australian Sommeliers Association (Victoria), runs a B&B, and distributes French wines.

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**VARIETIES** 2002 pinot gris (\$28),  
2001 pinot noir (\$36)

**AVAILABILITY** Good restaurants and wine stores or by mail order

**CELLAR DOOR** By appointment only

**ADDRESS** 23 Old Bittern Dromana Road,  
Merricks North, Victoria 3926

**PHONE** 9813 3312

