

Rutherglen rising



What's On

Tastes of Rutherglen - Sat 07 Mar 2009 to Sun 15 Mar 2009

Savour vintage in Rutherglen as 21 wineries celebrate the grape harvest and the region's full and abundant flavours in a festival filled with food & wine, music and fun for all!

Rutherglen Winery Walkabout - Sat 06 Jun 2009 to Sun 07 Jun 2009

From Sparkling Shiraz and classic table wine to wicked ports and mellow muscats - Walkabout is the best way to compare, contrast and buy the magnificent wines of Rutherglen. From bands and barrel racing to dancing and dinners, join in the excitement of Victoria's original wine festival

Rutherglen's top dozen

1. All Saints Family Cellar Marsanne
2. Terra Felix La Vie En Rose
3. Pfeiffer Gamay
4. Campbells "The Barkly" Durif
5. Warrabilla Reserve Durif
6. Rutherglen Estates Shiraz Durif
7. Anderson Durif
8. Jones the Winemaker Shiraz
9. Stanton and Killen Vintage Fortified
10. Morris liqueur Muscat
11. Bullers Liqueur Muscat
12. Chambers Liqueur Muscadelle

Story by ROB GEDDES - Master of Wine

Rutherglen is the richest Victorian wine town, in terms of taste and history.

Located in North East Victoria and about 30 minutes drive from Albury, Rutherglen especially has never been far from drinker's lips thanks to a range of unique styles. Local winemakers have never lost sight of the quality their vines could produce.

It's a kindly place full of warm and welcoming people where the person behind the counter might be the winemaker or family member. Autumn is the best time of the year to visit this outstanding region.

Rutherglen was the jewel in the crown in Victoria in the early 1800's and was the largest vineyard in the empire. Even with a few ups and downs in the wine market, consistency has always been there thanks to its mighty Muscats and Tokays (now called Muscadelles) and vintage ports.

A deserved reputation for big gutsy good value reds often from Shiraz was referred to as "honest" by wine writers and now an exciting new generation of

red and white winemakers are producing Durif and Marsanne. Durif is a French transplant that makes bold wines. Take a visit to Warrabilla or Campbells where you'll find some of the world's finest examples of this variety that can aged for decades.

Marsanne is local to Rutherglen and undergoes occasional bursts of refinement. With oak barrel fermentation, Rutherglen examples have never been better made. All Saints Family Cellar Marsanne is an excellent example.

The most opulent jewels flashing brightly are the better known Muscats and Liqueurs. Tokays are made from Muscadelle, a grape variety with limited use in Bordeaux. It remains one of the most fascinating wine stories in that this variety peculiar to the French region can excel in our sunshine. Made in a very sweet style and aged in a variety of different sized oak barrels, it produces amazingly rich and flavoursome wines especially those from Chambers and Pfeiffer. Tokay is

often overlooked as the Muscats are so magnificent however they are excellent winter warmers. These wines are not all the same and every winery will produce its own version.

The strength of flavour in local Muscats is recognised globally particularly those from Morris and Campbells wineries who have different styles of this nectar. Both appear in different quality levels and are described as rare for the highest quality, classic and Rutherglen for the youngest wines.

The locals are wisely working with the current trend of political correctness in wine names and the old name "vintage port" is now called "vintage fortified" and the quality has never been higher. These are not the super sweet Shiraz dominated wines of yore but more savoury and spicy and less sweet.

At Stanton and Killen wineries, they are sold in half bottles right through to magnums and make wonderful presents for 18, 21 or 25 year anniversary gifts as they have a remarkable cellar of back vintages.

A tour of the local wineries takes in history and good eating and will

unlock a wide variety of blends at very affordable prices.

All Saints has one of the most atmospheric wineries in Australia. Make sure you allow time to walk the guided trail past the Chinese quarters and the old cellar. Inside they have a full range of regional wines from the Marsanne and the amazingly powerful Durif right through to the rare Muscats and Tokays.

Rutherglen has been popular with Melbourneans as an over night destination which has allowed it to maintain high standards of accommodation and restaurant styles. Now a new events program makes it a lovely school holiday destination for northern city dwellers.

For more information contact
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www.rutherglencvic.com.au

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Phone - 1800 622 871
P.O. Box 131 Rutherglen VIC 3685
AUSTRALIA

Clockwise from top left:
The picturesque township of Rutherglen;
Durif grapes on the vine;
Tasting:
The source of the good stuff;
On the tasting trail.

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