



## President's Message

Hello everyone, And Merry Xmas.

Hard to believe we are already at the end of the year.

Its been another fast year and a trying one for some of the members. I hope that 2024 brings better luck for those who have had a 2023 they would rather forget.

On behalf of all the committee and myself we wish all a happy and safe Xmas and a wonderful new year. And we look forward to hopefully catching up with you all in 2024.

To start 2024, we will be running wine classes in the month of February so if anyone has any friends who think they would like to make wine, book em. Cost is still \$165 per student, and we will be running the classes over two Saturdays to be announced in Feb.

A Reminder that the December meeting is our Xmas Party to be held again at the Balnarring Hall on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> December.

Cheers for now and Merry Xmas.



## December 2023

[www.fawg.org.au](http://www.fawg.org.au)

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### Coming Up

HOHOHOHOHOHOHOHOHOHOHOHO

**Sunday 3rd December 12pm**

**-FAWG Xmas party \$28/\$35**

[fawgpres@gmail.com](mailto:fawgpres@gmail.com)

Tuesday 5th December 7pm

**-FAWG faults night at Peninsula Beverage Company \$60**

[vermaasjodi@gmail.com](mailto:vermaasjodi@gmail.com)

Every Friday and Saturday in December

**-Cinema in the Vines at Tokar Estate**

<https://www.tokarestate.com.au/pages/cinema-in-the-vines>

Every Friday in December 8pm

**-Comedy in the Cellar at St Kilda Cellars Wine Bar and Bottle Shop St Kilda free**

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/comedy-in-the-cellar-tickets-265737577247>

Saturday 16th December 12pm-9pm

**-Flock to the Fields Beer and Wine Festival Geelong Racecourse +/- Wallington \$55**

<https://events.humanitix.com/flock-to-the-fields-wallington-beer-and-wine-festival>

Sunday December 31 7pm

**NYE at Pier 10 Shoreham \$175**

<https://pier10.com.au/events-3/new-years-eve-celebration-2/>

Also see the Events listing Vince shared on What's App

# CORDON CORNER

By Mike Payne

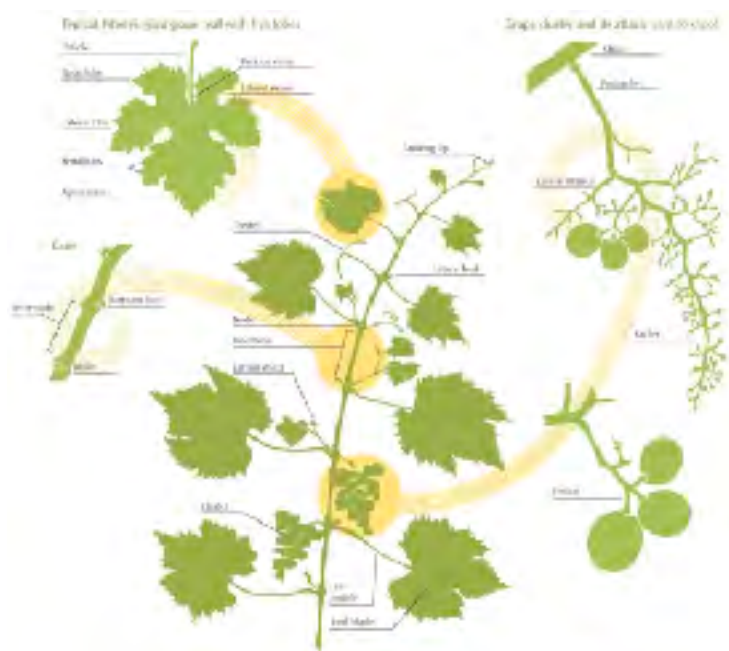


Once flowering has gone through, (hopefully successfully), the vines turn their attention to vegetative growth to ripen the fruit, increase vine size and maintain the general wellbeing for what may lay ahead. This usually causes an increase in lateral shoot and leaf growth and in some varieties with available soil moisture may cause a bit of a

task with regards to maintaining and managing the canopy for good coverage of fungicide sprays. Note, that weather conditions in December could be somewhat variable where we are situated so have your fungicides to the ready.

My advice is to start thinning out the canopy and positioning shoots as soon as flowering is completed to increase air flow and allow sprays to cover the foliage and do their job.

So far, the season is looking pretty good with flowering and fruit set so crossed fingers and a bit of management we are looking forward to a good outcome. More info to come in January.



## SENTIA WINE TESTING



The guild has a Sentia wine analyser available to members to have wine samples analysed for FreeSO<sub>2</sub> and Malic Acid.

The tests can be carried out prior to guild meetings, starting at 7pm. If you wish to have your wine analysed, please ensure you arrive early and advise Kevin Murphy that you require your wine analysed.

Samples should be kept away from air (ie in a sealed bottle, or sample vial with minimum air space). Only a very small sample is required for the tests.

Costs are: Members - Free SO<sub>2</sub> \$6.00 and Malic Acid \$15.00    Non-members - \$10 and \$20



## FAWG CALENDAR

Meeting Date	Club night Activity	Competition	Tasting Talk	Industry/Event	Committee Date
November 14th 2023	Tasting of wines from Kennedys vintner	Chris Myers Red wine mini comp	Bulk Grape orders	Winemaking classes Sat 11 <sup>th</sup> & 18 <sup>th</sup> at the Eco display center	Tues 7 <sup>th</sup> zoom 7pm
December 3rd 2023	No Tuesday meeting End of year			Sunday 3 <sup>rd</sup> Xmas party at Balnarring Hall	Tues 19 <sup>th</sup> Dec Zoom Start 7pm
January 9 <sup>th</sup> 2024			TBA		
February 13 <sup>th</sup> 2024	Tips and tricks for making better wine	Sparkling wine mini comp		Wine classes to be held	Tues 6 <sup>th</sup> Zoom 7pm
March 12 <sup>th</sup> 2024			TBA		Tues 5 <sup>th</sup> Zoom 7pm
April 9 <sup>th</sup> 2024		Sheila Lee Liqueur & Fortified mini comp			Wed 3 <sup>rd</sup> Zoom 7pm
May 14 <sup>th</sup> 2024	Find out how good is your palate			wine tour with Eltham	Tues 7 <sup>th</sup> zoom 7pm
June 11 <sup>th</sup> 2024		Gordon Evans white wine mini comp			Tues 4 <sup>th</sup> Zoom 7pm
July 9 <sup>th</sup> 2024	AGM meeting Homemade night				Tues 2 <sup>nd</sup> zoom 7pm
August 13 <sup>th</sup> 2024	Cellar dwellers Unusual, Old and mulled wines			2024 Guild Show at Balnarring hall 30 <sup>th</sup> Judging day Sat 31 <sup>st</sup> public day	Tues 6 <sup>th</sup> Zoom 7pm

# POTION OF HEROISM METHEGLYN



I love good produce and take recipe creation pretty seriously. But as the great Arlo Guthrie once said, “I know I’m supposed to be singing. But you can’t always do what you’re supposed to do.” Sometimes you have to be silly.

Noodling around on the internet late one night, I came across this blog post from Patrick Rothfuss. If you’re not familiar, Rothfuss is one of the great fantasy authors, and a very funny guy to boot. He writes of his first foray into mead making:

“It’s 1999 or so, and I’m thinking that I’m going to take a crack at making some mead... I learn some interesting things. I learn that the name “metheglin” comes from the old English term for medicine. Metheglin was mead with a bunch of herbs in it. Because, as you know, herbs are good for you.

But as I read more it all started sounding like a huge pain in the ass... I wasn’t looking for a part time job. I didn’t want to babysit this goddamn thing for 6 months, petting it and taking its temperature and cooing sweet nothings in its ear.

No. I wanted to muck about with glass bottles and tubes for an afternoon. I wanted to make a potion. I wanted to do some goddamn mad science and then not think about it again until the stuff was ready to drink.

Then I thought to myself, “Self,” I thought. “This is bullshit. Vikings made this, and I guarantee that they did not own a hydrometer. They just thumped it together in a barrel and then drank it and pillaged some shit.”

Now, I do like my hydrometer. I think the Vikings probably would have used yeast nutrient if they’d had some (and actually, from the evidence we have, it seems like they threw fruit and grain and other good stuff into their mead, which would have done much the same thing). And, I dunno, I’m conservative, but I was a little worried about getting dissolved gemstones in my mead (which Rothfuss did), or for that matter involving hallucinogenic moonflower seeds (yup, he did that too).

But the silly metheglyn idea rolled around in my mind for ages. I kept on wondering where it could go. And then everything came together in the middle of a Dungeons and Dragons game.

I was going to make my own potion: a potion for adventurers. A potion for the brave.



In D&D, the 'potion of heroism' makes you incredibly lucky and hard to hurt: you're all fired up and ready to fight a dragon. For that I wanted a few things. An awesome colour (got it thanks to butterfly pea blossoms). A sweet, rich, spicy base (sweet mead with a whole shop o' spices). And a real challenge for the drinker. In D&D lore, the potion sizzles and smokes. I didn't actually want to hurt my friends, but in the same spirit, I did want the potion to present a challenge. I mean, you can't just have a cup of chamomile tea and go off stronger to smash orcs, that seems unfair. I went with scorpion chilli.

Butterfly pea blossoms (*clitoria ternatea*) turn acidic drinks a lovely shade of blue or purple, depending on the PH. The dried flowers can be purchased in small packages online. If you're in no hurry, grow them at home. They are very pretty in the garden and easy to cultivate. They really don't taste like much at all.

## POTION OF HEROISM MEAD

Makes approximately 6.5L of mead must, which I fermented in a bucket, then racked to a 5L jug with one spare 750ml bottle, then finally to a final 5L jug. You could halve the amount and just throw it into one gallon jug and leave it for six months, as Rothfuss did. It wouldn't be its best possible self, but it'd be totally fine. If you do that, add the infusion of spices last, when you bottle the mead. If you've never made mead before, the [Reddit community sidebar](#) has some great pointers.

OG 1.123, semisweet when finished at 14%. The finished gravity and ABV will depend on your yeast.

Ingredients:

First day:

- 2.8kg of the lightest coloured honey you can find, such as clover or a very light orange blossom
- Water, to 6.5L
- 1/4 tspn potassium metabisulphite

Second day (24 hours after the potassium metabisulphite is added):

- Yeast, 5g, rehydrated in Go-Ferm, 7g. I used 71B

Third day and into fermentation:

- Yeast nutrient, divided into four portions

In a jar, and strained into the jug at the final racking:

- 1 cup of vodka
- About 20 dried butterfly pea blossoms
- 20 black pepper seeds
- 3 cardamom pods
- 3 slices fresh ginger
- A pinch of dried wormwood (or use gentian or hyssop: this is to add a little bitterness, but you could leave it out)
- 1 stick of cinnamon, broken up
- 1 clove
- 1/4 tspn grains of paradise, crushed
- Zest of half a lemon and half an orange
- One hot chilli, sliced in half (I used a scorpion, left in for one day only, because I like to make my adventurers work for their potions).

These final ingredients only take a week or so to work their flavours into the vodka, but I wanted to make everything up all at once. You can strain the vodka into a new jar after a week, then just set it aside somewhere dark until your mead is ready to rack.

## How to prevent the spread of phylloxera – home gardeners and home winemakers

Grape phylloxera can spread on used equipment, on planting material and in harvested grapes. Based on your phylloxera zone location, below are some tips for reducing the risk of spread of phylloxera.

If you are in a [Phylloxera Risk Zone](#) (PRZ):

- Source grapes from the PRZ or Phylloxera Exclusion Zone PEZ. Do not source them from a PIZ if you intend to remove them from the Phylloxera Infested Zone (PIZ) before they are made into wine.
- Source vines or cuttings from the PRZ or a PEZ.
- If you have people visiting who have grapevines in a PIZ, ensure they are wearing clean clothing and footwear if they are to visit your vines.
- If purchasing second hand equipment, request for it to be cleaned and disinfested by heat treatment (such as steam, hot water dip or heat room). If the equipment is leaving a PIZ, ensure the movement is covered by a permit and a Plant Health Declaration.
- If using a contractor who services other vineyards, request that their used equipment and tools be cleaned and disinfested before attending your property.

If you are in a [Phylloxera Exclusion Zone](#) (PEZ):

- Do not source wine grapes from outside a PEZ, unless the grapes originate from another PEZ, or come from a property in a Phylloxera Risk Zone (PRZ) that has the correct certification for movement.
- Source cuttings or vines from within a PEZ.
- If you have people visiting who have grapevines outside the PEZ, ensure they are wearing clean clothing and footwear if they are to visit your vines.
- If purchasing second hand equipment, request for it to be cleaned and disinfested by heat treatment (such as steam, hot water dip or heat room). If the equipment is from outside the PEZ, ensure it has a permit and a Plant Health Declaration for entering a PEZ.
- If using a contractor who services other vineyards, request that their used equipment and tools be cleaned and disinfested before attending your property. Ideally, utilise a contractor who operates only on vineyards within the PEZ.



## Bottle of \$20 Aussie shiraz beats hundreds to take global crown

By Adam Vidler 12:27pm Oct 31, 2023 [9news.com.au](https://www.9news.com.au)

A \$20 bottle of Aussie [wine](#) has been named the best in the world at a major international competition.

South Australian family winery Taylors, based in the Clare Valley, was awarded the International Champion trophy at the 20th annual VINUS International Wines and Spirits Competition in Argentina.

The \$20 Taylors Heritage Label Shiraz, which received a perfect 100-point rating from the judges.



Aussie winery Taylors has won a major international award. (Taylors)

It beat a field of more than 580 entrants from 15 different countries.

Judges include recognised wine experts, sommeliers and journalists.

It's a remarkable success story for Aussie wine - but it isn't new.

Taylors won the same award last year for its Estate Shiraz 2020. It's the first time a winery has won the prize back to back.

"This is such exciting news for our winery - not only have we taken out a major trophy for our wine, but the judges deemed it to be worthy of 100 points. It's phenomenal," Taylors managing director Mitchell Taylor said.

"The Heritage Shiraz is a special wine that celebrates the heritage of our family winery and takes inspiration from our very first vintage release in 1973."

Taylors took out multiple awards in the competition, which came as a welcome boost for the winery, which like the rest of the Australian wine industry, has faced a tough few years.

In July, Wine Australia claimed the value of Australia's wine exports had declined by 10 per cent in the past financial year.

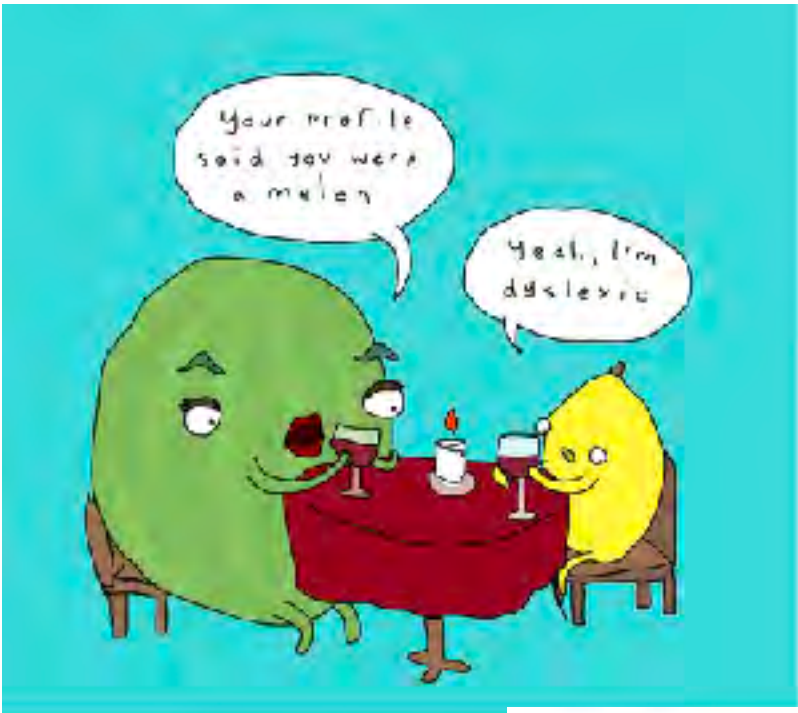
This has been exacerbated by the 200 per cent-plus tariffs placed on Australian wine imports by the Chinese government in late 2020.

Wine makers are growing more hopeful though after the recent announcement that Beijing would review the tariffs.

"We're optimistic about the future of our industry, particularly now as China is reviewing its tariffs on Australian wine exports," Taylor said.

"I've spent most of my life working in the wine industry, and the biggest lesson I've learned is that not every year can be rosy. In fact this is the hardest I've seen over my last three decades working in the wine industry."

FUNNIES





## Italian Night



A number of celebrities attended our recent Italian wine night including (and in no particular order):- The Pope, Julius Ceasar, Leonardo da Vinci, Super Mario, Nonna, Sofia Loren and Don Corleone.

We enjoyed 5 wines including a Prosecco, Fiano, Brunello di Montalcino, Amarone and a Barolo, which were matched to individual antipasto boxes prepared by Salt Box Cafe in Mornington. The evening finished with a Montenegro Amaro which was perfectly matched to a cheesecake which was made by Vanessa Enness. As predicted, it was an offer that no one could refuse.



## MAJOR SPONSORS

[www.homemakeit.com.au](http://www.homemakeit.com.au)

