

My Vintage Year:

An interview series : Where we interview wine people. They may be your fellow guild members or significant others in the Wine Industry. Was this their vintage year: by Dave Chambers

Today it is Jodi Vermaas.

Jodi is another interviewee that has very kindly completed her interview within a day. Which I am ever so grateful for. Jodi is not only a very skilled Wine Maker. She is a good time manager as well. You don't enter three



wines only to the FAWG Wine Show and get a Gold and two Silver Medals at your first event. Not even when you name is David Hart are you getting such success. Remarkable. But as you will read further on Jodi is remarkable. She is the first to pitch in to help at a FAWG function. She likes animals, is great at preserving and tells a great story as you will see below. Looks like she will have to make available quite a bit of room in her home winery to display all the medals from Wine Show awards in the future.

Dave: Could it ever have been beer and not wine. funds.

Jodi: Yes, I was a co-brewer with my now husband for years before being a wine maker.

Dave: How did Wine Making as a hobby unfold. Has this been an easy path for you. What came first the Wine Guild or Wine Making.

Jodi: I had been brewing beer, then cider and then made an apple wine with a recipe from a

very old country wine making book and then a grape wine with a recipe from the internet. All of these attempts ended up drinkable, so I came to the guild to learn more.

Dave: What is your first experience that you remember that led to an interest in wine.

Jodi: Travelling in Europe and experiencing the wines of the various regions made me take an interest in wine.

Dave: Did that immediately lead to your hobby of making wine.

Jodi: No, a bumper crop of apples on my mother in law's tree followed by the same of grapes on a vine of unknown origin in my garden lead to my first wine making endeavours.

Dave: What is an interesting unknown fact about you that members of Frankston Guild may or may not find interesting.

Jodi: I could be a crazy cat lady if only my cat Hugo would let me bring more cats home.

Dave: If money was no object tell us what wine or beverage would you purchase with unlimited



Jodi: Pol Roger Sir Winston Churchill

Dave: What are you making now or have recently that you are most proud.

Jodi: I was obviously delighted to win a gold medal for my Riesling that I made with the guild's focus group this year.

Glen Fortune has a Presidents Question for you:

Question: After picking up 3 medals from 3 entries at this year's Eltham show and your first time entering a show what would you say to people thinking about entering next year's show?

Jodi: Just enter! You might also be surprised and delighted!

Dave: Does technical astuteness give you an edge in your wine making skills. Wine making is skill that unfolds with experience. Are you finding this to be true for you in your wine making.

Jodi: I have very limited equipment and like to keep it simple. I do have a science background and good knowledge of sterile procedure and I think that helps.

Dave: Are you into the intellectual part of the discussion about wine. Wine can be so many things to so many people. But what does it bring to you.

Jodi: I do like thinking about and discussing what it is that makes a wine taste good or bad, but mostly I enjoy the social side of sharing a nice wine with friends.

Dave: Are you a pedantic fussy wine maker or do you prefer to feel your way along steady as she goes. It will work out in the end.

Jodi: I have never made an amendment other than an acid adjustment. I have just followed what I thought I should do from reading and basic testing (pH and specific gravity) and so far it has worked out okay with the fruit and techniques that I have used.

Dave: What is wine making to you. I suspect it is not just a hobby. But a consuming passion that excites you. Is this true.

Jodi: Wine making to me is an extension of my passion for preserving harvests, especially those I have grown or taken part in growing.

Dave: What are you excited about for the future of home wine making. Where do you see it unfolding over the next ten years.

Jodi: For me, in the next 10 years I am looking forward to my apple orchard maturing, and getting my wine and cider making processes practiced enough so that it doesn't always seem like a

scramble against time. However, I think maybe that isn't realistic given the nature of dealing with fruit ripening all at once and on it's own time schedule.

Dave: What inspires you to make better wine. Is it the Gold medals or the knowledge that you are ever improving on your skill.

Jodi: I just want to be able to enjoy drinking the stuff I make and share it with friends without them spitting it out or making "a face".

Dave: Who or what has been your biggest influence in wine making.

Jodi: David Wood and Robert Lee have both been so helpful in my wine making journey.

Dave: Can you describe where you make your wine. Is it in your kitchen or do you have a dedicated area for wine making.



Jodi: Initially I made my wine in the laundry but now I have a large shed that is still a work in progress to get it where I want i.e. there is still no sink in there, but it's coming.

Dave: What have been the positive surprises of your membership of FAWG.

Jodi: I was surprised when I was encouraged and supported to participate in the judging which I have very much enjoyed. Also when David Hart called me during COVID to check I was okay and what was I up to, that was a really lovely surprise and totally unexpected.

Dave: What were you drinking in your twenties.

Jodi: Stongbow and vodka and raspberry.

Dave: If you could tell the young Jodi about life, what advice would you give.

Jodi: Ironically Don't drink so much, especially all at once. I used to get quite messy at times.

Dave: What wine do you particularly enjoy making. Has the Guild turned out to be an ideal group either socially, or for ideas for wine making.

Jodi: I enjoy making different types to keep learning. I loved being part of the Riesling focus group for all of the reasons above.

Dave: Enlighten us with a couple of your favourite wine tweaks.

Jodi: I only tweak the acid, so I have none. Though my husband made a temperature regula-



tor from a Jaycar kit for the fridge I fermented my Riesling in to keep it consistently at the desired temperature.

Dave: I have heard in my short time with the guild some complete disasters while making wine. What is your biggest disaster you can share with us.

Jodi: I put some baby's bottle sterilising tablets into a batch of cider thinking they were campden tablets. They weren't, the ferment didn't happen and there was an awful smell and taste, so down the drain it went.

Dave: I have asked this question of everyone. So far, a hundred percent have said making wine was never a financial consideration. What was the motivation and still is for you after so many years.

Jodi: Making wine is part of my passion to produce most things I eat and drink as part of trying to live sustainably and self-sufficiently.

And Finally

Dave: You are visiting a desert island to spend some chill time. You are taking with you one piece of music, one bottle of wine, a book and food. To be clear, that is a choice of one bottle of wine, one meal and so on. What will be placed in your suitcase and declared at immigration when you enter the Republic of Maldives on your way to the Baa Atoll.

Jodi: Billecart - Salmon brut de bruts, the soundtrack to the movie "Into the Wild" by Eddie Ved-



der, The Lord of the Rings trilogy and a salad chèvre chaud.