



# CRABTREE

WATERVALE | CLARE VALLEY

**.... we are very happy to release the 2012 rieslings and we hope you enjoy them as much as we like making them!**

Vintage 2012 promised to be outstanding and it's with a spring in our step we return to the traditional September release for Crabtree Wines 2012 Watervale rieslings and Rosé. Given time to settle after the bottling process, we allow the wines to be at their best when released.

With lovely, natural high acidity and fresh flavours, our hallmark Watervale rieslings are bursting with lifted aromatics and citrus spice. The 2012 vintage has been noted as one of the best on record due to above average rain in winter and spring and great summer sun for even ripening throughout the vineyard. Canopies were healthy with minimal or no disease due to our care, hard work and attention to detail in the vineyard with our strict spray programs and canopy management.

The summer brought lovely warm days, cool nights and no rain! These conditions are great for growing grapes and we started picking riesling February 17, which is the earliest recorded date for Crabtree Wines. In another record breaker our riesling harvest concluded February 27 and with approximately 47 tonnes of riesling harvested this year from our 11 different blocks surrounding the cellar door, the winery was full of bright and zesty parcels that have been blended to create our new wines.

**..... lovely, natural high acidity and fresh flavours, our hallmark Watervale rieslings are simply bursting with lifted aromatics and citrus spice .....**



## 2012 Watervale riesling Winestate 4 Stars

The 2012 Crabtree Watervale riesling is produced from our estate grown fruit in the very heart of the Watervale sub region of the Clare Valley. The fruit was handpicked and carefully selected to retain the freshness and punchy citrus fruit flavour that Watervale is renowned.

With lifted aromatics of lemon zest and citrus spice, our Estate riesling has mouth filling concentration and is balanced with finely textured, juicy acidity.

Sealed with a screw cap to ensure integrity of product, with careful cellaring this wine should mature gracefully for 10+ years. Serve with fresh Coffin Bay oysters or pan fried garfish fillets.



## 2012 Crabtree Hilltop Vineyard riesling

The 2012 Crabtree Hilltop Vineyard riesling is produced from our estate grown Hilltop block fruit in the very heart of the Watervale sub region of the Clare Valley.

The fruit was handpicked and carefully selected to retain the freshness and punchy citrus fruit flavour that Watervale is renowned.

Our Hilltop Vineyard Riesling shows lifted floral aromatics and a crisp and clean palate with soft acidity. Sealed with a screw cap to ensure integrity of product, with careful cellaring this wine should mature gracefully for 10+ years.

Serve with spicy Thai dishes.



## 2012 Crabtree Bay of Biscay rosé Winestate 3½ Stars

The 2012 Crabtree Bay of Biscay rosé is produced from the Crabtree Estate 1946 planted Grenache vineyard block, a vineyard of heavy, sticky, black clay situated in the heart of the Watervale district in the Clare Valley.

Handpicked fruit, sorted and retained on skins for 48 hours, ensures full flavour and a distinctive blush hue, displaying lifted aromatics of strawberry and floral spice layers of red berry flavour and juicy fresh acidity. The palate is vibrant and refreshing.

The 2012 vintage in the Clare Valley has been noted as producing wines full of flavour and this rosé is no exception. Enjoy slightly chilled with mountains of fresh tapas and a spring in your step!



## ... tasting riesling with Robert Crabtree

It is one of the saddest things to know that there are people out there who will insist, and probably go to their graves insisting, that all rieslings taste the same. They usually then say that they only ever drink red wine. The next supplementary statement may well be, "Yes, I did drink a riesling once, probably about 1975 - it was a bag in the box"

The fact is that riesling is a wonderful wine for differences. It is the most pure, and therefore the most demanding wine-style that I know. As we make it, there is no wood, there is no sugar, there is no varietal blending. It is made at its best from the free-run and lightest-pressed material, it demands fruit and flavour, there has to be structure and length. Good riesling makes all the demands of the winemaker and the grape grower, there is nothing to hide behind, purity and cleanliness are everything, funkiness is out. Both the wine and the winemaker stand, as it were, naked (well, neither Kerri nor I quite literally so).

Let us think of the similarities and differences, that is the way the brain and sensory functions seem to work. In these groupings of wines that are presented to you here, there are similarities. They all come from Watervale, and all from the one vineyard. The earlier (up to 2007) wines were all made by me, the later all by Kerri Thompson. Brendan Pudney joined us in 2002. The 2007 is a bit of a hybrid as I did the vintage winemaking, Kerri the finishing and seeing into a bottle. Throughout, we both used the same equipment, and mostly had the same vintage team. The vines are all on their own rootstock - no grafting. The vineyard has not changed, nor, by and large, have the vineyard practices. The vines are always hand-pruned, the fruit hand-picked. Periodic deep-ripping and cover-crops have been the norm.

So - these wines all taste the same? Not so. Leaving the similarities, let's look at the differences. First, there are my wines and Kerri's wines; we agree on many things, but we are not the same person. Moreover, Kerri usually has the game-plan of making two rieslings each year with different stylistic characteristics. I usually tried to make only one.

Then the vineyard is not homogenous. There are different aspects, different soils, different ages of vine, probably different clones. Not a lot is known of the clonal origins of long-established parts of the vineyard (in fact, nothing - the vineyard pre-dates the word). Next there is the weather - both over the season as a whole (and indeed over the previous season) and critically, over the days of vintage, which will have a great effect on vine development and cropping level, winter rains, spring and its gales, summer and its

heat, possible hail, disease-inducing rains and whatever. Never are weather forecasts more closely scrutinised than at vintage time. Rain on ripe fruit can ruin everything. The fruit is hand-picked so the process stretches out over days or weeks. Each batch, each days picking, is different. Which block shall we pick next? Should we leave the riesling for a while and pick some Shiraz? Fruit picked in heat will differ from that picked during the cool of the day.

I often said that I had no need to go to the casino to go gambling - every day was a gamble. Different batches - different fermentations. No two are identical. Then, when it is fermented out, how shall we put the wine together? For me, what should be included? For Kerri - what goes with what?

These are personal decisions, based on taste and experience, and a mind-picture of what the end result should look like - harmony, purity, structure, memory of past years. Looking at these vertical selections - there is the difference of age, another - of closure. The 2000 is under cork (as was the 2001). The rest are under screw-top, mostly Stelvin (a brand name). Under cork, by and large, development is both more rapid and more varied from bottle to bottle. We have some wonderful old wines under cork, however, the screw top is better - especially when purity of aroma and flavour is so important. Clare is known for riesling and the pioneering of screw-tops. The two go together.

Difference of age shows a general rule (and it is not strictly chronological) - that the better years develop more slowly and more gracefully. Perhaps you can only really tell the best years with a couple of decades of hindsight. For most of my winemaking career, the even years have generally been better than the odd. The sun always seemed to shine on the Adelaide Festival of Arts, which always coincided with vintage and was held in the even years. Art + wine - perhaps this is true. I hope I have convinced you that, even with so many similarities, these wines have more differences. They have their own personalities.

I hope, when you taste these wines, I will have made my case - all riesling does NOT taste the same.

Consider the offers here in our newsletter and I hope you will enjoy each varied one, and revel in all the wonderful differences.

Robert





**CRABTREE**

WATERVALE | CLARE VALLEY

## Museum Release - Spring 2012

**Crabtree Limited Edition - 6 pack  
Watervale Estate riesling @ \$210 per pack**  
plus freight - 36 packs only containing ...

### **2006 Watervale Estate riesling**

Distinctly green tinges over light gold, soft floral and fresh fruity nose, primary fruit on the palate with lovely youthfulness, excellent acid, fine long and lovely balance with an excellent tight finish. An outstanding wine with a good future.

Gold - Adelaide Wine Show

Awarded Trophy and Gold at Clare Wine Show

### **2007 Watervale Estate riesling**

Gold with green tinges, nose quite soft with good fruit, nice fruit and acid on the palate, a touch broad and slightly forward, but a very sound wine from a difficult vintage.

### **2009 Watervale Estate riesling**

Light colour with green tinges, subtle varietal and fresh nose, tight acid and lovely citrus on the initial palate with fine structure, harmony and long future. An excellent wine.

James Halliday 96 points

Gold - Clare Wine Show



## **Hilltop Exclusive - 6 pack Hilltop riesling @ \$150 per pack**

plus freight

### **2008 Hilltop riesling**

Green tinges over gold, apple fruit nose, fresh youthful and restrained palate and good balance of fruit and acid.

### **2009 Hilltop riesling**

Light colour, subtle gold with green hints, simple fruity riesling nose, good mid length palate with hint of complexity and marmalade on the finish.

James Halliday 94 points

Awarded Four Trophies and Gold at Clare Wine Show

Trophy winning wine at Sydney Wine Show

### **2010 Hilltop riesling**

Light, faint gold colour, a soft nose, nice fruit, soft fruity palate with good riesling character, a very satisfying wine

James Halliday 94 points

Gold - Adelaide Wine Show

Hot100 SA Wines Adelaide Review

Bronze - Canberra International riesling Challenge

Bronze - Perth Wine Show

## 2011 Watervale tempranillo

This classic northern Spanish variety is grown on the north west side of the Crabtree Watervale estate. The vines were planted in 1999 and 2003 in conjunction with the Clare Valley vine improvement society as a trial seeking suitable varieties that would flourish in drier and warmer conditions. The clone was sourced from California's Davis University and to date has proven to be extremely successful and is now propagated across SE Australia nurseries.

Made using traditional winemaking techniques, this tempranillo has ruby red hues with brilliant clarity. The hand picked fruit was open fermented and basket pressed using traditional methods, matured in French and American oak barriques and hogsheads for ten months. With dark berry flavours and earthy spice, this tempranillo shows savoury tannins and bold structure. Perfect with tapas style plates, including jamon and wood fired pizza. Best served decanted. With careful cellaring this wine will continue to reward you for 5 - 10 years.

## James Halliday Australian Wine Companion 2013 Edition

In a year of unexpected change it was gratifying to retain a 5 stars rating. We were equally delighted to be awarded 94 points for Watervale Riesling 2011 and 90 points for Hilltop Riesling 2011. This certainly set the benchmark to move forward with a full representation of new releases already submitted, well in advance, for the 2014 Edition!

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

## 2010 Watervale Shiraz Awarded Winestate 5 Stars 'Equal Top of Category'

as published in Winestate 250th Edition - Out Now

"Great purple hues with beautiful earthy, spicy black fruit characters and great oak on the nose, which follows through to the palate. Still very fresh."

"A class act!" [www.winestate.com.au](http://www.winestate.com.au)

Not only were we thrilled to receive 5 stars for this upfront rich dark berry Shiraz, we were positively jumping through hoops to hear that it is in the running for Winestate Wine of The Year!

.....arrivederci Zibibbo

## we must have Muscat!

Fans of Zibibbo, our 2010 will be the final vintage, with less than 40 cases remaining it is the very last chance to enjoy this delicious aromatic wine of musk, rose and turkish delight.

A first for Australia this semi dry white proved a gourmets delight served with seafood and spicy cuisine, a popular year round white alternative.

Our Zibibbo and Muscat are produced from a combination of estate grown and ancient Muscat of Alexandria vines. Today whilst they continue to yield outstanding fruit, it is in lesser quantity.

For all our "Muscateers" (and you know who you are) rest assured, our exceptional trophy winning Grand Liqueur Muscat will continue for many a vintage to come in carefully preserved limited edition.



## Special Offer Cleanskins

Thanks to a tremendous response we sold out of our first parcel of cleanskin riesling in record time. Now with a second run prepared our 2011 riesling is ready to roll. Stock up for the warmer months with riesling, dry white or grenache rosé at just \$80 a case. Delicious ... Buy 4 cases and freight is free.

## Cellar Door Range

We are very proud of our handcrafted great value cellar door range. Handcrafted 2010 Riesling @ \$120 per case or try the locals favorite BBQ red, a 2008 Shiraz @ \$150 per case.

Perfect for that everyday glass of wine we all enjoy.



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

