



## **Peter Fraser, Winemaker**

Peter Fraser oversees all vineyards and winemaking at Yangarra Estate and has been making our wines since 2000.

Peter is NOT an artisanal winemaker. In the original sense of this much-abused word, an artisan was an artificer, a craftsman skilled in the art of reproducing or copying a more valuable original; a maker of artificial copies; one occupied in any industrial art.

Peter does not copy, or mindlessly reproduce any wine. He is not an industrial winemaker. Instead, like the true Grape Whisperer he is, he first reads his terroir. He tastes the dirt. He sniffs the air, watches the breezes. He picks on flavour, not statistics. He keeps his wine batches separate according to their source terroir. He uses wild, native, indigenous yeast from the vineyard and cellar rather than anything in an industrial packet. He sets the perfect conditions for the prehistoric transformation called ferment to occur with absolutely minimal interference. He chooses his barrels for the subtlety of flavour and lack of leaks, not their intrusive flavouring capacity. He applies an uncommon sensitivity and intelligence on the blending bench. He recognises the texture, complexity, concentration and ageing potential of his batches more than their simple primary fruitiness. Then he bottles his wines under screw cap, to seal all that wholesome effort in as clinically perfect a manner as possible.

He's adamant that his main vinous squeeze is the 1946 plantings of bush vine Grenache up there on what his Yangarra mob laughingly call The Beach.

"When I walk through those sixty year old bush vines, they look like pieces of prehistoric sculpture in the sand," he says. "I'm in awe of them. How could you not respect something like that? The notion that I'm in charge of making a drink from them is overwhelming."

While Peter's grandparents had vineyards, he didn't show much interest until his university days, when he'd have "wine in a sock" tastings with his mates. That enticed him enough to send him to more formal tastings.

"Then I started buying," he says, "and I was hooked. I couldn't learn enough fast enough. When the guest winemaker arrived half an hour late at one of our dinners, still in shorts and a tee-shirt, covered in wine, I knew there was more to this than met the eye. I was a bit overwhelmed, but my girlfriend introduced us, and we all ended up back at his winery at 6AM helping with red pumpovers. After that, the decision to change my university course from agriculture to oenology was fairly simple."

After graduating, Peter dragged hoses at St Hallett wines in the Barossa Valley. Then he took a jump to chief winemaker at Normans Wines at Clarendon. This was just up the hill from Yangarra Estate.

Somehow, he fits in numerous boisterous sports and hobbies. Peter's a beach nut, a fair weather surfer, he tries to keep fit whether it be running, cycling or swimming, loves riding his cutting horses, and raises healthy beef cattle. In the gaps, he plays touch football and runs miles with his fiancée, Tara, who's also a horse lover.

"And I love to cook," he says. "Hearty beef stews in winter...local seafood in summer...and I drive a pretty mean Aussie barbeque. It's like winemaking. Stick to the best local, fresh ingredients, don't mess 'em up, and you can't go wrong."