



MAHANA

PINOT NOIR CARBONIQUE 2016

>> Notes from the winemaker

Originally this was called Pinot Noir Rosé but the feedback from the market both domestically and internationally was that the term rosé limited or 'categorised' the wine. In other words, people have been saying that it was too bloody good for a rosé!

I did a wine dinner at the Melbourne restaurant Bacash and much to my horror, the 2015 was partnered with a duck dish. I thought to myself that the duck was going to totally dominate the rosé and overpower the berry perfume lift. To my delight and astonishment the wine more than coped and handled the duck with ease. This wine is quite a bit more than a simple rosé!

Most rosé is made using either the saignée method whereby some free run juice is bled from a red ferment very early on giving a light colour to the free run and also concentrating the serious red that the saignée has been drained from. There is also the simple method of just giving a red a small amount of skin contact before pressing....a bit like making a white wine out of red grapes approach.

Here at Mahana we do things quite differently to most. First of all we identify particular blocks of pinot noir in our Mahana vineyard early on and earmark them for rosé. This means that they are both organic and dry grown. If you want to make a serious rosé then you are going to need to start with some serious fruit! The fruit is picked by hand and then placed in our large Bucher tank press where I quite literally seal it up and leave it for at least 4 days. This allows for some carbonic maceration to occur on the inside of the berry. This can only be achieved if the berry is intact and sealed meaning yeasts are unable to access the sugars inside the berry. The process is carried out enzymatically and results in the degradation of malic acid. This process is used by the great producers of the Beaujolais region in France to give great perfume and lift to the Gamay variety. After 4 or 5 days I press the grapes and then transfer the juice for wild fermentation in old barriques.

The resulting wine is ruby coloured, perfumed and structured enough to handle food...even duck! It can be chilled to behave like a powerful white wine or warmed to behave like a lighter red wine. It is versatile, interesting, serious and most importantly...utterly yummy!

The lesson here is that I believe that if you are going to go to the effort of doing something then do it well. Rosé is not an excuse to make sweet confectioned wine that betrays the style.

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