

Fine Wine Club

Independent Wine Reviews

Singlefile Cellar Door Experience

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Singlefile Cellar Door Experience

Barry Weinman: 16th March 2022.

As someone who tastes a lot of wines each week, I rarely take the time to visit cellar doors when I am on holiday. And to be fair, my wife is not as interested in wine, so repeated winery visits have the potential to become a bit tedious.

So over a week in the Great Southern district, I only visited three wineries. And each experience was dramatically different.

The Low

I had the misfortune of visiting one (unnamed) winery in the middle of a 40-degree spell at the end of January. The temperature was at least 30 degrees inside the cellar door, which meant that the red wines were also at this temperature. As you can imagine, the wines did not look great.

To compound this, all wines had been opened between one and five days previously. It is understandable that they did not want to waste half full bottles, but even the whites looked flat and dull.

Rather than having 15 – 20 wines on tasting, perhaps narrowing it down would allow the wines to be served in optimal condition.

The High

I spent an hour with Guy Lyons at Forest Hill chatting about their wines and the direction that the winery is heading in. Given the sheer quality of the range, as well as the welcoming cellar door, I would highly recommend a visit if you are anywhere near Denmark.

I the restaurant (Pepper and Salt) is also highly recommended, but it was not open the day that I visited.

The Sublime

Perhaps the best cellar door experience that I have seen in WA is at Singlefile in Denmark. Rather than line up at a bar to taste the wines, guests are seated at tables overlooking the vineyards and water. It really is quite a spectacular setting.

The knowledgeable cellar door staff then proceed to conduct the tasting at your table, whilst you relax and enjoy the surrounds (and the fine wines). Given the sheer breadth of the range of wines made, they sensibly offer a curated selection from the range as part of the experience.

If you are a member of Singlefile's wine club, then there are extra wines that are available to taste as part of the experience (From the premium ranges).

But for a truly unique experience, I highly recommend their "Sense of Place" tours. We found ourselves walking around the vineyards with a glass of Family Reserve Chardonnay whilst our guide was explaining the approach to viticulture, and how this impacts on the finished wine.

We were then shown to a private tasting room where we were able to try some of the best wines made on the property, whilst learning about the unique geology and geography that gives the different vineyards their character.

Yes, there is a cost to this tasting, but I can assure you that it is \$59 very well spent. Given that my wife was talking about how good the experience (and the wine) was for days afterwards, I may even be able to schedule a couple more winery visits on our next getaway!

The Wines

As part of the experience, I was able to taste a few of the yet-to-be released wines from the premium range, and the wines were outstanding. My notes and points are only first impressions, as the wines were not tasted blind.



Singlefile - *Family Reserve* - Chardonnay - 2021 is one of the most complete young Chardonnays that I can recall tasting. Great purity of fruit, silky textural oak (1/3 new) and subtle winemaking inputs combine in a stunning package. This starts in the stone fruit spectrum, with citrus notes driving the finish. Capable of cellaring, but irresistible now. 95+pts - \$60



Singlefile – *The Vivienne Chardonnay* – 2019. Incredibly intense and powerful, with the winemaker's inputs playing an important role (barrel ferment on solids, wild yeast, lees aging and partial malolactic fermentation). White peach and grapefruit give way to flinty minerality and curry leaf aromas. The sheer intensity of this wine will not be for everyone, but this is a wine that you need to try! 96pts – TBC



Singlefile – *The Philip Adrian* – Cabernet Sauvignon – 2018. This is a magical wine that combines fragrant fruit that is fine and supple, with tremendous depth and intensity. The Houghton-clone fruit was matured in oak (40% new) for thirteen months. 2018 was a great year in Frankland and this wine is absolutely brilliant. 97pts – TBC

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