

Rouge Homme

Winemaker: Brett Sharpe



Brett Sharpe joined the wine industry after establishing a background in horticulture. He then developed a true affiliation for wine after travelling around Europe in 1990.

Brett worked three vintages in Austria in 1990, 1991 and 1992 before returning to Australia in 1993 to take up a cellar position with Rosemount Estate in the Hunter Valley of New South Wales. While working at Rosemount Estate, Brett arranged to do a second 1993 vintage at Tarra Warra Estate in the Yarra Valley of Victoria.

The 1993 vintage experiences confirmed Brett's belief that he had the ability and the passion required to become a winemaker. On his return to Rosemount Estate in 1993 Brett applied to Charles Sturt University to do the Wine Science Degree and was accepted into the 1994 intake.

Brett took up a winemaking/viticulturist position with GoonaWarra Vineyard in Sunbury Victoria in late 1996 whilst completing his University studies.

Brett targeted Coonawarra as the ideal region in which to make wine and began at Wynns Coonawarra Estate managing the wines in oak in February 1998. He graduated from Charles Sturt University in April of the same year with a degree in Wine Science. Brett was fortunate to be involved with the great 1998 Coonawarra vintage and he says this made him even more passionate about winemaking and Coonawarra.

In December 1998 Brett took over the production winemaking at Rouge Homme where he and then Senior Winemaker Paul Gordon continued to refine and develop the Rouge Homme wine styles.

"Great wine will not make itself! If we start with great fruit then it is the winemakers role to encapsulate and add to the inherent fruit quality to make great wine" says Brett. "We pride ourselves on the close relationship we have between the winery, our own vineyards and the individual growers that supply our fruit. We constantly evaluate the fantastic Limestone Coast resource looking for innovative ways to maximise and improve our wine quality."

"The Winemaker's trade is a blend of science and art and together these dictate the decisions on how we treat individual parcels of fruit to achieve the Rouge Homme style. The vital link between the objectives of a Winemaker and a great wine is the dedication and enthusiasm of our cellar staff."

"My ambition is to build on the reputation that Rouge Homme has established in our 50 years of winemaking and to make wines which are approachable at the time of release whilst also reflecting the terroir of Limestone Coast."