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Lillypilly Estate adds chardonnay to its palette of botrytis options

- Lillypilly Estate 2006 Noble Blend (\$23.50/375ml)
- Lillypilly Estate 2006 Moscato (\$14.00)

The latest botrytised dessert wine from Lillypilly Estate is the Leeton winery's first to include chardonnay.

"I've always enjoyed going beyond the standard semillon and riesling in our botrytised wines and experimenting with other varieties such as sauvignon blanc, traminer and muscat of alexandria," said Lillypilly's chief winemaker, Robert Fiumara.

"Most winemakers would be horrified at the thought of botrytis in their chardonnay fruit but I was quite excited when it developed in a small block of chardonnay last year.

"I think it definitely adds to the complexity of the wine, even at just 10 per cent of the blend, adding stonefruit characters to the bouquet and an extra dimension to the palate texture."

The make-up of the Lillypilly Estate 2006 Noble Blend is 35 per cent semillon, 30 per cent riesling, 25 per cent sauvignon blanc and 10 per cent chardonnay.

Chardonnay won't, however, be making a regular appearance in Lillypilly's botrytis line-up.

"Chardonnay ripens quite early, and the berries are small and tend to break down easily, so the conditions have to be absolutely perfect for the fruit to last through the prolonged ripening period," said Robert.

"This year, for instance, we lost that block of chardonnay but I guess that's just part of the risk associated with pursuing botrytised styles."

Robert sees the 2006 Noble Blend as a worthy successor to the 2002 vintage, which won a string of show awards over the past few years.

"The inclusion of aromatic varieties gives a real lift to the bouquet of the wine, and I'm sure there's also more zestiness and freshness on the palate" he said.

“It’s a sweet white wine I see as being ideally suited to the Australian lifestyle and the move away from overly rich desserts.”

Lillypilly has also released its first Moscato, a late-harvest, non-botrytised sweet white made from 78 per cent muscat of alexandria and 22 per cent semillon and carrying about 60g/L residual sweetness.

“My aim with this wine was to capture all the hallmark muscat aromatics and produce a wine that’s soft and easy drinking, and that has sufficient acidity to balance the sweetness,” said Robert.

“I think it goes well with most lighter desserts, and especially with platters of fresh fruit and soft cheeses. When really well chilled, it’s also an attractive aperitif.”

If you have any questions or would like any further information please contact Robert Fiumara on (02) 6953 4069. Further information is also available from Lillypilly’s website (www.lillypilly.com). High-resolution images can be downloaded from WineMedia’s website (www.winemedia.com.au).