

Three minutes with Corrina Wright

JG JESSICA
GALLETLY

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The 'queen of fiano' talks all things wine ahead of International Fiano Day on October 16.

[Oliver's Taranga](#) winemaker Corrina Wright is the creative force behind International Fiano Day, which returns on October 16.

As told to Jessica Galletly

JESSICA Tell me a bit about yourself, and how you fit into Oliver's Taranga?

CORRINA I am sixth generation to farm the Taranga property, and the impetus behind our family changing from being strictly grape growers for other brands for over 150 years, to creating our own wine label, Oliver's Taranga, once I became a winemaker. It's been one hell of a ride since the brand's humble beginnings in 1994, to employing many staff and family members. We are still estate grown and a family business (we now have a seventh generation family member working for us), with a lovely cellar door in one of our original workers' cottages on the property.

JESSICA What made you want to become a winemaker?

CORRINA I decided to become a winemaker when I finished my commerce degree at Adelaide Uni. I couldn't see myself wearing a suit to work every day and being stuck in the numbers, and with the support of my family I decided to be brave and start a winemaking degree. Turns out you learn a lot via osmosis when you grow up on a vineyard and your dad manages wineries for a living! We started making wines under the Oliver's Taranga brand in 1994 when Grandpa and my uncles let me have some shiraz from the vineyard and Pam Dunsford from Chapel Hill graciously agreed to help me learn to make wine with her. Grandpa was very keen to see his own name on a wine label for once instead of selling grapes to other wineries only – he wanted to show off to his bowls mates, so was easy to convince.

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JESSICA What's special about wines from the Fleurieu?

CORRINA In McLaren Vale we are incredibly lucky to have some very old vine grenache and shiraz, plus some of the best winemaking and viticultural minds in the country. There is a great mixture of long family grapegrowing knowledge and new blue sky thinking. Plus, it is a very beautiful region, with a patchwork of vines covering the gentle hills close to the magical sea, with a great foodie culture as well.

JESSICA Explain to me your interest in alternative varieties?

CORRINA I just always wondered why we had a relatively small choice of (mainly) French varietals, when there was so much more diversity in the world of wine. I mean Italy has more than 500 varieties alone. Also, I felt that McLaren Vale hadn't really found a white variety that worked really well, like the incredible shiraz and grenache we have in the region. Luckily, fiano is now starting to be recognised as a key variety for our region, with its incredible heat and drought tolerance, low disease pressure and high natural acidity – not to mention deliciousness! I have been involved in the Australian Alternative Varietals Wine Show community for many years, and have loved seeing the growth of diversity in wine varietal offerings all over the country.

JESSICA Why did you want to dedicate a calendar day to fiano?

CORRINA I just wanted to raise the profile of the variety, especially realising that while fiano was starting to be represented on lists and bottle shops in SA, the eastern seaboard and WA still saw it as something new. I wanted to grow the category as a whole and encourage all fiano producers across the country to get involved. You know the old saying, "Grow the pie, not just your slice!"

JESSICA What are your favourite varieties to pair with food?

Grenache always has so many incredible food matching options, from salumi plates to wood oven pizza and duck to seared tuna, mushrooms and root veggies – I could go on. Fiano is also great as the lovely acid line and texture can match so well with spicy Asian salads and is delicious with seafood. Of course, nothing can beat a generous McLaren Vale shiraz with a perfectly cooked steak.

JESSICA What's your cheeky snack and wine pairing?

CORRINA KFC or chicken shop chook with a really textural fiano – especially the chicken skin!

Oliver's Taranga will be at Adelaide Wine Markets' [Fiano Festa](#) at Market Shed on Holland on October 10.