

# FOR THE LOVE OF THE ART

THE ZITTA STORY







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## DEDICATED TO THE QUIET ACHIEVER



Zitta, the Italian word for “quiet”, is dedicated to the art of traditional, old world-style wine making - using natural techniques with minimal inputs and plenty of time to produce wines with natural flavours and structure, just as they’ve been made by artisans of the past.

The skills and knowledge in the art of traditional wine making have been handed down through our family from generation to generation. These effective techniques have stood the test of time, as they’re underpinned by the simple truth that good wines are made in the vineyard and cared for in the winery.

The principle is the same with great food, and my favourite is mum’s spaghetti sauce. The time, effort and love that she put into making each batch was incredible, collecting only the freshest ingredients from the garden and following a family recipe never written down.

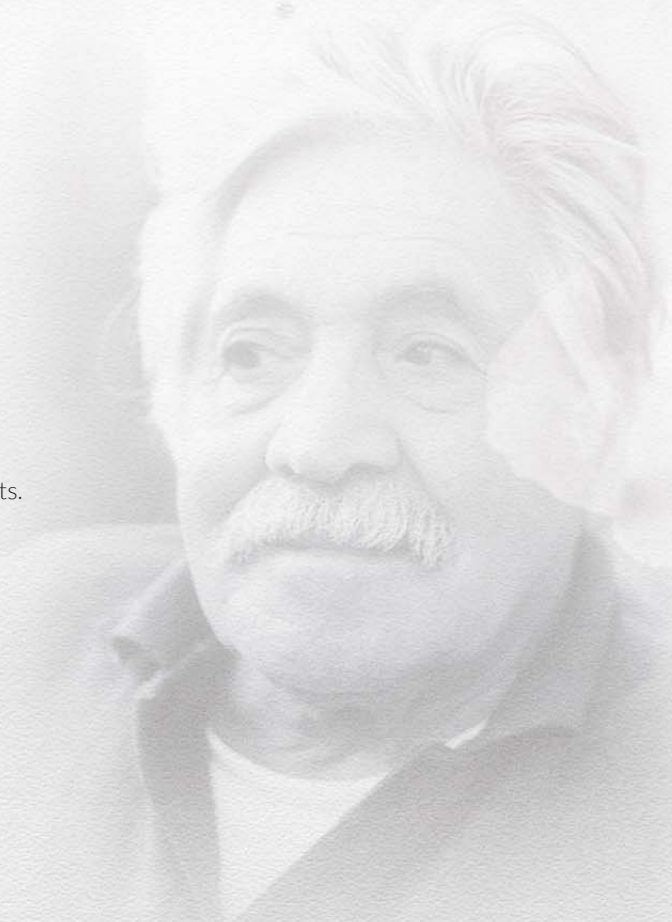
When it was simmering on the stove my brother and sister and I would quietly creep past and take a scoopful with a stolen piece of crusty bread, then hope mum wouldn’t notice when she came back to stir it. I’m sure she did though, as there was always a fresh loaf on the table when she served up. I can’t recall ever leaving the table without eating a second helping, and fighting with my brother and sister for the last piece of crust.

Anyway, I digress. I hope my story - much of it as told to me by my father (*pictured*) - will give you an insight into the old world-style wine making that we De Fazios hold so close to our hearts.

Salute,

Angelo De Fazio *wine maker*

P.S. By the way, those of you with a keen eye may have discovered that what seems to be a reflection of the word Zitta on our labels is in fact the word quiet. Turn a bottle upside down.





## BY WAY OF INTRODUCTION



### De Fazio Vineyard Details

#### Location

De Fazio Vineyard situated in the Greenock District, North-West Barossa Valley, South Australia (approximately 4km, or 2.5mi, from the township of Greenock).

#### Climate

Warm to hot. Dry Summers.

#### Average Seasonal Temperature Range

|        |              |
|--------|--------------|
| Winter | 2 °C - 18 °C |
| Spring | 5 °C - 25 °C |
| Summer | 8 °C - 36 °C |
| Autumn | 7 °C - 22 °C |

#### Rainfall

Average annual rainfall is 508mm (20"), which includes 201mm (8.3") during the growing season.

#### Topography

Undulating north-west facing slopes, ranging from 250m to 307m (820.2 to 1,007.2 ft) above sea level.

#### Soils

Shallow red clay and sandy loams over red clays. Mixture of sub-soils containing ironstone, sandstone, limestone, bluestone, slate and schistic gravels.

#### Viticulture

Original Shiraz planted circa 1864. A succession of replanting and re-trellising has followed. Bush vines average height 600mm (2ft). Single-wire trellising 1.2m (4ft) is used. Rows are spaced 3.7m (12ft) apart, with vines planted every 2.4m (8ft). All blocks are hand-pruned. Bush vines and select blocks are hand-picked.

#### Grape Varieties

Predominantly Shiraz - various select old clones. Grenache old bush vine, Mataro (Mourvedre) bush vines and patch of old Chardonnay vines.

#### Irrigation

Supplementary drip irrigation is available for use.

#### Environmental Aspect

Sustainable land management practices.







## ELEGANCE AND POWER

### True Single-Vineyard Wines

Zitta wines are true single-vineyard wines, made from our De Fazio Vineyard. Each vintage reflects the unique characteristics of the sub-appellation of the North-West Barossa Valley and the growing season in which the wine was produced.

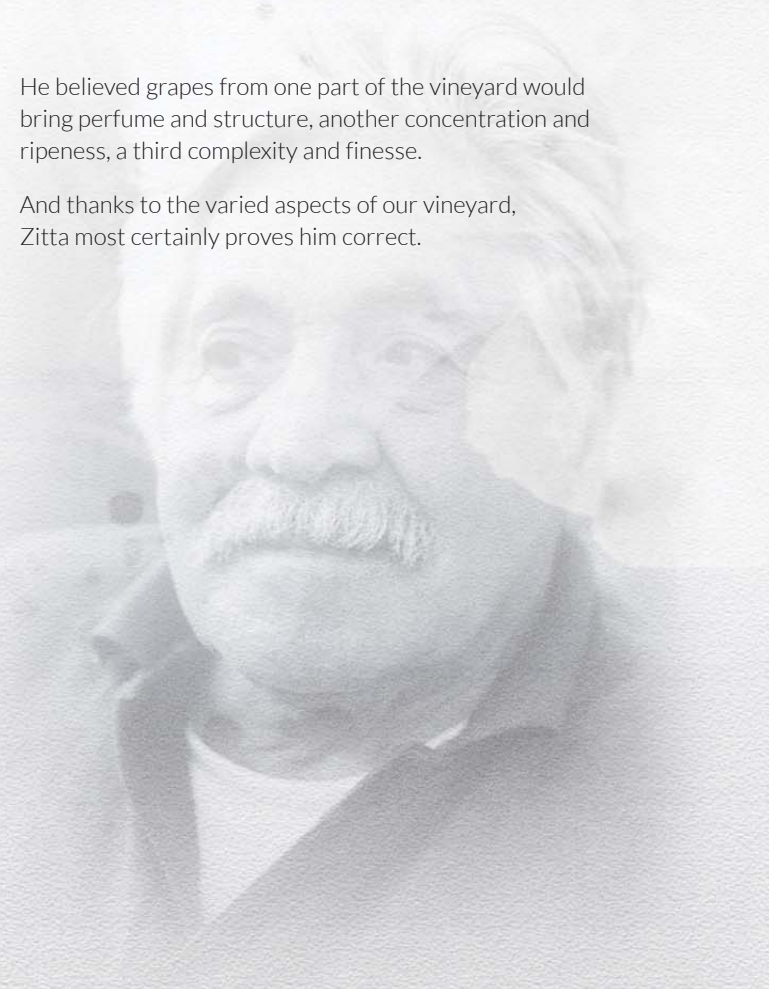
Our wines are made by hand in the natural, traditional way, with minimal intervention and plenty of time to fully develop prior to release. They are powerful, yet elegant wines, displaying the characteristic finesse and complexity of the vineyard site.

Zitta wines undergo a natural fermentation process in the winery and are an expression of the vineyard. This allows you to identify seasonal vintage characteristics and make comparisons between Zitta vintages, just as wine-lovers have done with highly sought after European single-vineyard wines for centuries.

My father (*pictured*), who taught me how important the aspects of the vineyard are to good wine making, intuitively sensed that fruit power and concentration, along with ripe tannins, were key components of optimum red wine quality.

He believed grapes from one part of the vineyard would bring perfume and structure, another concentration and ripeness, a third complexity and finesse.

And thanks to the varied aspects of our vineyard, Zitta most certainly proves him correct.





## Vineyard Location

Ever wondered why the French make such a fuss about their vineyard locations? It's all to do with the favourable characteristics inherent in particular topography. In the Northern hemisphere, where my father learned his craft, vineyards located on gentle hill slopes with South East facing aspects typically enjoy a perfect amount of sunlight and excellent drainage. Consequently, most of the famous vineyards in France and other European countries are located on such slopes

The De Fazio Vineyard is blessed with this ideal topography. It's situated on the North West facing slopes of a hillside valley in the Moppa Hills, about 4km (2.5 miles) out of the historic township of Greenock in the North Western corner of the world-renowned Barossa Valley. The entire vineyard has gentle slopes, with its highest point being 307m (1,007ft) above sea level.

This location provides varied ripening temperatures, which in summer can range from 35 °C in the day to 8 °C at night (95 °F – 46.4 °F). There are also cooling gully breezes in the late afternoon and early morning, which are said to give grapes grown in this intra-region their own distinct characteristics, highly sought after by Barossan wine makers.

## GOOD WINE BEGINS IN THE VINEYARD

In Australia, however, everything's the other way around. The ideal vineyard site should have North West facing aspects to ensure the grapes ripen to perfection. After migrating from the South of Italy just after the Second World War, my father must have found this place pretty strange for a while!

Of course, it's more than just sunlight and good drainage that these vineyards benefit from. Being located on hill slopes also makes vineyards less prone to frost and disease, as the increased air circulation helps prevent frost and keep vine canopies dry, thus minimising the onset of disease.

And a final, unique feature of the De Fazio Vineyard is that it has two branches of the Greenock Creek running through it - one in the North Western corner and the other in the South Eastern.





## BLESSED WITH THE SPICE OF LIFE



### Vineyard Soils

Soil profiles on the De Fazio Vineyard are quite varied, ranging from shallow rock at the high points to deep red clays near the creek banks.

All top soils are free draining, allowing water to soak deep down and encouraging our vine roots to travel just as far. Under the sandy red clays the vineyard has a combination of ironstone, limestone, sandstone, bluestone, slate and a bed of rounded alluvial gravel which runs through the centre of the vineyard. This gravel is the remains of an ancient riverbed that ran through the valleys of the Moppa Hills.

The variety of soil profiles reflects the fascinating history of the region. In the mid 1880s Greenock Creek was panned for alluvial gold and the Moppa Hills were mined for both copper and gold, with many abandoned shafts still visible on nearby properties.

In our case, several quartz rifts were found to traverse the vineyard when the vines were first planted – a sure sign of gold, according to prospectors. But whether or not the precious metal's really down there we'll never know. We'd much prefer to leave the soils alone, as they're doing such a good job of producing our precious grapes.

The planting and layout of the De Fazio Vineyard has taken full advantage of the varying soil profiles. Individual blocks have been planted in each distinct area, with every block producing grapes with their own distinctly individual characteristics.

This allows for the production of intense and complex single- vineyard wines, *without* the need for regional or inter-regional blending, which would of course render them unreflective of our vineyard.



## PASSING THE TEST OF TIME

### Vineyard History

The history of the De Fazio Vineyard dates back to 1864 when the first Shiraz vines were planted in the deep red clays of the North Western corner of the property, near the banks of the Greenock Creek.

The vineyard was owned by the original Colonial pioneer family for over a century, with a majority of it planted to Shiraz, Grenache and Mataro (Mourvedre) grapes. These were used mainly for the production of fortified wines and brandy spirit, as in the mid 1800s in Australia only a small proportion of grapes were used for the production of table wines. Most of the fortified wines produced back then were exported back to England, where Sherries and Ports were in high demand.

The vineyard also had several acres of apricot trees planted in the South Western corner of the property, which have since been replaced by a block of Shiraz we've called the "Apricot Block". A single apricot tree has been left standing on the fence line and several wine maker colleagues claim the fruit that comes from this block has a stone-fruit, apricot influence. To be honest, I can't pick it myself, but I do enjoy eating the apricots! (And so do the parrots.)

In the early 1980s, the De Fazio Vineyard – like many others in the Barossa Valley – fell victim to the government-driven "vine pull", which saw hundreds of acres of old vines pulled out by growers in return for government incentives.

Fortunately, however, a small section of bush vines did survive, and these are still producing high quality grapes today. In fact, a majority of the vineyard has been re-established from cuttings of these old vines, together with those from neighbouring vineyards that are among the oldest Shiraz vines in the valley.

A small block consisting of 13 rows has been planted with these old vine cuttings at the highest point of the vineyard in memory of my father, who always claimed that cuttings taken from the strongest old vines are the most adaptable, as they've stood the test of time.





## PATIENCE AND SIMPLICITY

### Our Wine Making Philosophy

My family has been making wine in the traditional way for hundreds of years, passing the knowledge of craftsmanship down from generation to generation.

I (*that's me pictured*) learned most of the techniques of good wine making from listening to, and watching, my father as he went quietly about turning the gift of each vintage into fine wine. "A good wine starts in the vineyard," he always used to say. "There are no short-cuts. Be patient, look after the land and take care of your vines."

The wine making process can't be rushed. It's simple and natural and takes care of itself, as long as you understand the stages it goes through. "You only need to nurture it," he'd say. "Don't over-work it – the wine needs time to rest in order to develop."

The key is understanding the different characteristics that each section of the vineyard will impart to the grapes growing on it and knowing how to bring these together to achieve a desired result. Acid, tannin and fruit characters such as blackberry, black cherry, raspberry, black currant and mulberry are just some of the flavours which can be found in grapes grown in different sections of the vineyard.

Differences in elevation, soil types, clone variety and micro-climates will all influence the characteristics of each vine and therefore the wine. In fact, absolutely everything that happens in the vineyard can ultimately enhance the quality of the wine. Consequently, that's where most of the work in the creation of Zitta wines occurs.

#### When to pick?

Assessing whether grapes are at their optimum is not a scientific process, but simply a matter of tasting to pick out flavours. Squeezing grapes in the palm of your hand can also instantly reveal colour, sugar, tannin and weight, which gives a good indication of the likely structure of the wine well before it's made.

By varying the time of picking and the selection of grapes used from different sections of the vineyard, you can achieve the complexity, characteristics and finesse of the wines made – a must when producing single-vineyard wines.

#### Barrel selection

Barrels are selected to ensure the characteristics of each parcel of fruit are complemented, not influenced. We use a combination of new and old French and American oak barrels, with varied degrees of toasting and grain texture to add another layer of complexity to our wines.

#### Ageing

Zitta premium red wines are allowed to mature in the barrel for a full two years prior to bottling, then cellared for at least a further 18 months or more prior to release. Each vintage is different and we will not release our wines until we're happy with them.

This is the traditional process for the creation of premium wine. It does take a lot of patience and discipline, particularly when we know how good the wine is even after a relatively short period, but ensuring every drop has the time it needs to fully develop its individual character pays off handsomely when that first sip is finally savoured.

#### When to drink?

My father always said a wine has two stages in its life. The first is spent slowly developing until it reaches its peak. The second is its graceful decline, as fruit characteristics and flavours subside. The exact timing of these stages can vary depending on the vintage and personal taste, so it's very much up to the individual as to when a wine should be drunk.

Premium wines improve with bottle ageing. As wines age, they develop changing characteristics and acquired flavours. For those who do enjoy cellaring and aged wines, Zitta will reward your patience. In keeping with wine making tradition, all our wines are bottled without fining or filtration, which allows the wine to further develop in the bottle and maximise its cellaring potential. We also recommend proper decanting of the wine before a glass is poured.

*Still confused? Well, as my father would say, "just drink it when you'll enjoy it!"*



## SPIDERS AND LADYBIRDS

### Vineyard Management

The vineyard management practices in the De Fazio Vineyard are very environmentally friendly and have been practised for generations.

My father believed you should never put anything in the ground that nature hadn't intended. Counting spiders and ladybirds on the vines was always his way of ensuring nature's balance was being maintained, and it's still ours.

Only minimal spraying is undertaken in the vineyard, using the basic organic sprays that have been used for decades. No pesticides are used, with weeds controlled by tilling.



### Watering

Have you ever driven around after a big storm and noticed trees blown down in front lawns, but native bushland still standing?

You may already know the reason for this – it has to do with root depth. Trees grown in lawns typically have relatively shallow root systems, as they've grown accustomed to regular, shallow watering. Trees grown in bushland, however, have had to send roots deep down to find natural water sources in order to survive.

Vines grown with minimal water from planting behave in the same way, so this is our practice. We also leave new vines to sprawl for the first two years before being trained.

While my father was no expert in this area, he believed vines grown in this way would take up particularly intense flavours from the minerals and trace elements found deep in the ground, that shallow-rooted vines could never reach. And judging from the delightfully long palates of Zitta wines, he was right!

It's all about letting the vines find their own state of balance, so that they're perfectly suited to their environment, and should not be confused with the potentially damaging process of deliberately stressing the vines.

Of course, there are times when additional watering simply must be provided, such as in times of drought, and a drip irrigation system has been installed in the De Fazio Vineyard for this purpose.

### Pruning

Pruning is another essential element in our efforts to help the vines maintain a state of natural balance. Every De Fazio vine is hand-pruned to suit its individual requirements, and this is done in exactly the same way each year.

All pruning off-cuts, of course, together with grass clippings, find their way back into the soils – a great way of building top-soil nutrients (with the help of our friendly earthworms).

### Native flora and fauna

Native grasses play an important part in our vineyard practice, and are allowed to grow down the middle of all vine rows. This reduces the growth of weeds and provides a home for many beneficial insects that prey on unwanted ones.

The native trees that surround the vineyard also provide homes to many native birds, which are extremely territorial and chase out grape-eating non-native birds.



## MARK OF RESPECT



### The De Fazio Vineyard Crest

In the De Fazio Vineyard crest we've proudly used traditional Italian symbology to illustrate the essential qualities embodied in our wines.

The crest is our dedication to the art of natural, traditional wine making that acknowledges that great wines begin in the vineyard. It's also your guarantee of genuine, quality, hand-made Estate wines, proudly displayed on every Zitta bottle.

The single old-style goblet at the top of the crest represents the single vineyard where the wine making process begins. The three intersecting swords indicate the three key elements that the vineyard brings to its wines:

1. Perfume and structure.
2. Concentration and ripeness.
3. Complexity and finesse.

### Honouring Carlopoli

The De Fazio family has been growing grapes and making wine for generations. Our heritage can be traced back to Castagna, a small village in the town of Carlopoli within the Southern Italian province of Catanzaro, a region known since ancient times for its vine cultivation and rich, full-bodied wine varieties.

In fact, wines from the Carlopoli area, known as *Enotria*, or "Land of Wine", were used to celebrate athletes' victories in the early Olympic Games.

My father, Gaspere, migrated to South Australia to start a new life shortly after the second world war. He continued working with vines and was particularly drawn to the Greenock/Moppa region in the North Western Barossa Valley, noticing a striking similarity between its topography and that of his homeland in Southern Italy.

Although the opportunity to purchase his own vineyard here unfortunately never presented itself, he was careful to pass on his priceless knowledge and observations to me, and I'm very proud to have made the De Fazio Vineyard a reality.

The two Denaris (gold coins) represent the simple, but effective, environmentally friendly vineyard management practice that we've used for generations, and the ecological balance that we aim to maintain.

And the lady pouring wine from the urn symbolises handcrafted, natural, traditional wine making.



## Enquiries Welcome

If you'd like more information about Zitta wines, or are interested in purchasing wines or becoming a distributor, I'd be delighted to hear from you.

For members of the media, you'll also find Vintage Notes, print-ready logos and label files to download in the "Wines" section of our website.

In the meantime, thank you for taking the time to learn more about Zitta.

## A PLEASURE TO SHARE

### Contact Details

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