

# Les Clefs d'Or

By Michael Anderson, Secretary



Concierge members with Heidi Duckworth at the Hunter Valley.

As a concierge the information that we provide to our guest needs to be relevant and up to date. One of the ways that we achieve this is to attend "famils" (familiarisation tours). Recently a group of Sydney concierge travelled to the Hunter Valley wine region at the invitation of *WHERE Magazine*.

The ground transport for the two-day trip was provided by Boutique Wine Tours, who use 14-seater luxury Mercedes people movers that are designed to spoil. Our first stop was the new and innovative Small Winemakers Centre, which is unique to the region in that it features wines from five local up and coming winemakers.

Robert Molines has been at the forefront of the Hunter Valley cuisine scene for 30 years and we were delighted to have the opportunity to dine at his new restaurant Bistro Molines at Tallavera Grove, located at Mount View. Its stunning vistas over the valley equal a menu that is inspired by seasonal produce. The dinner was enhanced by the presence of local winemakers Andrew Thomas, David Hook and Rhys Eather showcasing the two most popular grape varieties of the Hunter region, Semillon and Shiraz (Syrah).

Our accommodation for the evening highlighted the diversity available in the region. The properties included the Tuscan inspired Tower Lodge, the resort styled Crowne Plaza Hunter Valley, the self-contained apartments of the Grand Mercure The Vintage, the elegant Sebel Kirkton Park and the quaint Hermitage Lodge.

Nestled amongst the vineyards are a number of golf courses, including the Greg Norman-designed, The Vintage. We were transported from The Vintage by helicopter courtesy of Slattery Helicopter Charter to Tower Estate Wines. The Hunter Valley is accessible by a 35-minute flight from Sydney Airport, with the opportunity to land at virtually any location. The late Len Evans created Tower Estate Wines, the wines produced are full of character and you could be forgiven for saying they are not unlike Evans himself.

Monday's lunch was hosted by the Firestick Café, which has wood-fired pizza ovens and is the ideal place for a light lunch and a coffee. However, on Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings it morphs into the relaxed elegance of the Rock Restaurant.

The attending concierge and the members of Les Clefs d'Or would like to thank all of those

involved in the famil, especially the efforts of Heidi Duckworth and the team at Hunter Valley Wine Country Tourism.

## Les Clefs d'Or International

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## Ellerston Gems by Giulians

Gary Coffey was inspired by the intricacies of a watch movement when he began to design his pieces incorporating the Ellerston Sapphires. Tubular tubs of glass encase the sparkling pink stones, giving them freedom to move and dance like falling stars capturing light from all sides, whilst cords of silk challenge, adding a softness of texture. To present the stones in an alternative light, Gary has called on tradition and nestled perfect pink sapphire buds, amongst foliage of white gold and diamonds to create floral delights that would be at home in any beautiful garden.

The marriage between the two entirely different styles only enhances the versatility of these appealing and beautiful stones. Giulians has gained an enviable reputation for one of the most inviting showrooms in Sydney where the atmosphere remains relaxed.

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