

5 December 2007

Contact: Michele Cozzi 07 4681 0411 or 0417 620571 marketing@granitebeltwinecountry.com.au

Lonely Planet discovers Strange Bird

The quirky nature of Strange Bird – the name for the Granite Belt’s alternative wine trail - has lured the curiosity of renowned travel guide, Lonely Planet.

As part of the publisher’s research for the next edition of its Queensland & Barrier Reef Guide, travel writer Olivia Pozzan spent several days in the Queensland capital, discovering just what makes a Strange Bird.

Believed to be the first of its type in Australia, the new Granite Belt Alternative Wine Trail showcases sixteen alternative grape varieties currently produced by twenty one wineries.

The trail is designed to appeal to those who want something different - something beyond Chardonnay and Shiraz.

Ms Pozzan is one of four writers updating edition five, which is due out in October 2008. She is proposing increased coverage in the guide for the Granite Belt because of the size and scope of the wine industry here.



Although her family has bought wine from the Granite Belt for many years, on this occasion the travelling reporter was intrigued by the Strange Bird because Lonely Planet likes “anything of a quirky nature.”

Granite Belt Wine & Tourism’s Director of Marketing Michele Cozzi confirmed that, since its launch at the Brisbane Good Food & Wine Show last month we’ve had media interest from across Australia.

We’ve believe that although only 40% of our wineries currently have Strange Birds for sale, the interest that the project has generated will benefit all our wine and tourism operators as visitors are drawn to the Granite Belt to learn more.

The trail is an initiative of the Granite Belt Wine & Tourism Inc and jointly funded by the association, by participating wineries and by the Stanthorpe Shire Council.

To learn more about the wines and wineries on the Strange Bird trail visit

www.granitebeltwinecountry.com.au or phone 1800 SO COOL. *Expect to be surprised!*

ENDS

1. The history of the Queensland wine industry dates back to the 1860s - and like all good wines it has developed with age.
2. 35% of Queensland’s 1500 hectares of wine grapes are in the state’s premier wine region - the Granite Belt.
3. 64% of Granite Belt plantings are of Shiraz, Cabernet Sauvignon, Chardonnay and Merlot with an increasing number of plantings of alternative grape varieties proving popular. Verdelho, Viognier, Tempranillo and Durif are rising stars.
4. The Granite Belt is home to approximately 50 wine cellar doors, the state’s most awarded winemakers, plus the Queensland College of Wine Tourism - the first of its type in the world.