

Tamborine Mountain Distillery, Queensland

With Paul Ippolito

Tamborine Mountain Distillery is one of only a few privately owned distilleries in Australia and if you happen to have an hour or so to spare whilst on the Gold Coast of Queensland, you will certainly be treated to a unique and rewarding insight into the world of liqueur making.

Tucked away in the Gold Coast Hinterland lies the Tamborine Mountain Distillery which is one of Australia's smallest but more nationally and internationally recognised "Pot Still" distilleries.

The Gold Coast Hinterland region has lovely rich red volcanic soils as well as pure fresh spring water which forms the basis for the high quality of the "chemical-free" organically grown fruit of the Tamborine Mountain orchards which are to be turned through a process of fermentation and distilling into a range of fascinating liqueurs as well as schapps and vodka.



Not only do you get to sample the liqueurs with flavours such as choc-mint, passionfruit, banana, macadamia, apricot, honey dew melon, limoncello, lemon myrtle and strawberry as well as butterscotch and apple schnapps, you also get the chance to meet the charming Michael and Alla Ward, whom since 1998 have greeted many a visitor to their unique distillery with their intimate knowledge of their craft of making liqueurs, their generosity of spirit in sharing with you their range of unique products as well as an ability to regale you with tales of the wonderful experiences they have had in making and marketing the liqueurs as well as the widespread recognition and success through awards they have received worldwide.

The warm personal touch of Michael and Alla Ward is ultimately as much a part of the cellar door experience as sampling these wonderfully unique liqueurs.

This is indeed a family business where everyone plays a part, picking the fruit, mulching trees, cranking up the still and bottling and blending the liqueurs as well as marketing and selling the wares and the familial personal touch is reflected in all stages of the liqueur making.

Indeed the word of mouth recommendation that has come from many a cellar door visitor has meant a steady flow of visitors from all over Australia, Europe and Asia descending upon the Wards distillery for a touch of this Tamborine Mountain liqueur magic.

My take on why the liqueurs are so good is the purity of mountain fruit that source them. The Tamborine Mountain is an excellent place for pure fresh and ripe succulent fruit which is just perfect for liqueur, brandy, gin and vodka products. This is coupled with the high level of care and pride in presentation of their products, as particularly evidenced by Alla's exquisite hand painting of the beautifully crafted bottles.

So be sure to visit Alla and Michael Ward at the distillery's rustic showroom which is open from 10am to 3pm on Wednesday through to Saturday. It is a virtual must for any day tripper to the Gold Coast Hinterland as they are located only an hour from Brisbane and 30 minutes from Surfers Paradise.

For more information go to www.tamborinemountaindistillery.com

Read more from Paul or contact him at www.paulippolito.com.au for all your wine needs.