

## Letter from 'down in Tasmania'



Dear friends at CCOVI,

Since graduating I have had the pleasure and fortune to have worked and gained experiences from many places in the wine world. My latest position is at Moorilla, a winery in Hobart, Tasmania, Australia. Moorilla is the oldest winery on the Island and we specialise in cool climate wine styles. We make Riesling, Pinot Gris, Gewurztraminer, Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay, Cabernet Franc, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Pinot Noir. While the majority of our wines are table wines we also do a small amount of sparkling wine each year.

My official title is Head Winemaker but given the boutique nature of Moorilla, I also oversee all production operations including our vineyards and wine sales. My role gives me total control and direction for the future of all wine production from the grape to bottle.

Over the past 3 years, I have been very lucky to have been given the freedom to decide the best course of action for the winery as it has been undergoing a restructuring from commercial to high-end boutique wines. I have been able to restructure and rebrand a winery to my tastes and image of the highest achievable quality.

My experiences at CCOVI have helped in all of my wine roles especially in helping me to effectively time manage and prioritize. Winemaking is a lot of that! CCOVI was a great first step and will always be the start of my career. It formed the basis for my desire to see more of the wine world. However, of all that happened over the four years I was there, I miss my friends the most. They helped me get through all the stress and difficult times. Now that I live overseas and have moved away from everyone I know it would be great if it was easier to stay in touch. The great thing about CCOVI was that friends weren't only just the students—they were also the Profs and the staff.

My job has taken me through Canada and Europe, around Australia and Turkey. I've enjoyed everything about living overseas: speaking and learning new languages and cultures, gaining experiences and seeing other ways of thinking and doing 'wine'. I've been in Australia now for seven years and it's a hot dry version of home. I'm very happy here in Tasmania because it's cooler and I can finally make the cooler styles of wine that I enjoy the most. Lifestyle is very important to me and I look forward to eventually being able to work my way home to Canada. The hardest part of living away has been the 45°C vintages!

I have to say that for anyone wanting to be in any part of the wine industry: everything and anything is possible. Hands-on experiences are extremely important and there is a lot of hard work. However, your studies at CCOVI will always be the basis for every decision you will ever make in your career. A firm knowledge of when and why you're doing things is the most important thing you can ever get for yourself. You can go wherever you want it just takes the will and determination to do it. It's not that it's impossible, it's just not easy.

So, for anyone entering into the wine industry, make sure that your heart is in it and, if you have a goal, go for it.

Cheers,

Conor van der Reest, Class of 2001