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Media Statement

WINE FROM THE HEART

A top WA cardiologist and medical researcher is popping the cork on whether wine is beneficial to our hearts and overall health.

As Deputy Director of the Western Australian Institute for Medical Research (WAIMR) and a Cardiologist at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital, Dr Peter Thompson has the expertise to give a professional opinion on wine, health and the benefits of both.

When he is not treating patients with heart disease or researching coronary heart disease – Dr Thompson is working at his family owned winery in Margaret River.

Combining these two occupations, Dr Thompson admits it could seem like a potential conflict of interest, but said there was enough medical evidence to support the belief that wine, in moderation, could be beneficial to your health.

“Wine is known to help raise good cholesterol levels and has anti-clotting properties similar to aspirin, and added to this, is an extremely potent antioxidant present in red wine in particular, known as resveratrol, which has five times the antioxidant potency of Vitamin E,” he said.

Outside of cardiology and medical research, Dr Thompson is kept busy by his vineyard – Thompson Estate – which recently opened a new winery including a winemaking cellar, new tasting area and cellar door.

Dr Thompson and his wife Jane planted their first vines at Thompson Estate in 1997 after being inspired by family shareholdings in the Pierro and Fire Gully vineyards and following numerous visits to many of the world’s premium wine regions.

“Jane and I have always had a passion for wine and when we discovered the perfect property to establish a winery in Margaret River – we jumped at the opportunity, planting our first chardonnay and pinot grapes in 1997, followed by cabernet grapes in 1998 and then released our first vintage in 2001,” he said.

“Naturally, we were delighted and encouraged when the first vintage of our chardonnay took out the best white wine award at the 2002 Margaret River Wine Show.”

With two sons and a daughter, who have helped with the project, the couple’s younger son Angus has decided to follow his father’s footsteps and is currently training in cardiology at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital.

The winery has received strong endorsement from wine shows and press reviews including a coveted five star rating from James Halliday.

As well as a major upgrade to bring winemaking on site and direct to the cellar door, Thompson Estate has appointed famed Leeuwin Estate winemaker Bob Cartwright as its exclusive winemaker.

Outside the winery, Dr Thompson continues to investigate trends in coronary heart disease, the impact of new treatments and guideline development, and recently led the Heart Foundation of Australia’s national campaign to reduce pre-hospital delay for chest pain.

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