



## Texan twins with a taste for Denmark

*The small town of Denmark is a long way from Texas, however that is where identical twin sisters and their respective partners have chosen to settle and make a life. Julia and Brian Fitzgerald paved the way, followed by her twin sister Gwen and husband Paul Hyatt. Julia and Brian followed their dream to brew craft beers in starting Artisan Brewing, and Gwen and Paul purchased a vineyard to produce premium boutique wines under the Rising Star label. Together with their partners, they regularly catch up to toast the good life!*

There were several holiday trips to Denmark before the pull became too strong for Julia and Brian. The couple made the decision to leave their busy corporate expat life in Singapore and settle in their forever home to pursue something that had been a hobby for many years. Brian is Australia's first ever certified Cicerone™. This achievement means he is one of only a handful of expert beer professionals in Australia. Armed with this knowledge and inspiration from living in a beautiful part of the world, Brian and Julia created Artisan Brewing.

After travelling through Belgium, Brian and Julia experienced a unique beer culture that was the equivalent of traditional wine culture. They were truly inspired by the elegance of beer appreciation and this refinement has been integrated into their brewing philosophy: from interesting yeast varieties in their single batches to upmarket glassware. Brian and Julia recommend their exceptional beers be savoured in stemmed glass just like fine wine.

Unique seasonal styles is the point of difference for Artisan. They have a considered approach to their beer styles that will appeal to everyone,

especially women; whom they say have a more acute palette when it comes to bitterness. The delicate Belgian-style beers show complexity on the palette including fruit, spiciness and balanced acidity which pair beautifully with fine food.

Brian and Julia blazed the trail, but it wasn't too long before Gwen and Paul followed.

The cellar door at Rising StarWines has only been open for a few months but there have been years of preparation. Though it's the newest cellar door in Denmark, the vineyard is one of the oldest, dating back to 1989. Gwen and Paul have spent the last 10 years re-energising the vineyard with new trellising and consolidation of grape varieties well suited to this cool climate region.

Rising Star specialises in Australian Sparkling using the French Methode Traditionelle' winemaking style, and all of their wines are produced from their 30 acre estate. A visit to the cellar door and a chat with Gwen or Paul will leave you full bottle on their philosophy – to only release their wines when they are at their optimum. A major factor in their success with Sparkling wine has been the amount of time spent on lees. The award winning 2010 Sparkling Chardonnay was left to develop in bottle for 4+ years before disgorging and finally releasing it. A vintage Sparkling Rose' will soon follow.

The Rosé revolution is also a wine style Paul and Gwen are exploring with winemaker John Wade. They use the expression "Bro-sé" to describe their refreshingly masculine, dry and robust wine made from 27 year old Merlot vines, which is perfectly paired with an Aussie barbeque or spicy Asian dishes.

Now operating complimentary businesses the Texas twins are enjoying kicking up their heels in the Great Southern!

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