**INNOCENT BYSTANDER**
Yarra Valley, Victoria

“Produced by Phil Sexton at his Giant Steps winery, Innocent Bystander isn’t a second label but a different philosophy of wine. It involves the blending of individual Victorian (Yarra) vineyards….Phil is not one to do things by halves and it shows in his wines.” Robert Parker’s The Wine Advocate (June 2010)

**OWNER:** The Sexton Family

**FOUNDED:** 1997 by Phil Sexton

**WINEMAKER:** Steve Flamsteed and Phil Sexton

**HARVEST:** Early March to early May

**WEBSITE:** www.innocentbystander.com.au

**CLIMATE:** Varied: cold at elevation in the Alpine Valley, cool in the King Valley and Strathbogie Ranges and warm and continental in Heathcote

**VINEYARD LOCATIONS:** Central, North East and Southern Victoria; specifically Yarra Valley, King Valley, Strathbogie Ranges, Alpine Valleys, Heathcote

**PROFILE:** An experienced vigneron counting more than 20 years in the Australian wine industry, Phil Sexton relocated from the warm, coastal region of Margaret River to the gravelly slopes of Victoria’s Yarra Valley in the late 1990s to pursue cool climate viticulture. Beyond the pristine Chardonnay and Pinot Noir he was able to produce in the Valley, Phil discovered a number of vineyards in far flung corners of Victoria that inspired him to explore regional diversity in this small state. Thus the Innocent Bystander label was created, and his talented winemaking team tasked with delivering a range of wines with a personality all their own: distinctly regional, varietally expressive and definitely not your run of the mill blends.

**VITICULTURE:** The Sextons firmly believe that great wine at its best is like a fingerprint, inextricably linking the personality and mood of the land from which it has sprung. Managing a total of 17 vineyards spread throughout Victoria’s diverse landscape, the team draws on an array of distinctly regional fruit and is able to showcase the inherent personalities of each area. Shiraz from the warm, continental Heathcote region complements that of the elevated Strathbogie Ranges, a much cooler area than the traditional planting grounds for Australian Shiraz. The gently sloping vineyards of the King Valley provide aromatic Viognier while vineyards at the foothills of the Victorian Alps offer crisp, mineral-driven Pinot Gris fruit. Finally, pristine Pinot Noir, Chardonnay and Merlot are grown on the steep, gravelly hillsides of the Yarra Valley.
In the seconds before death, your life is supposed to flash before your eyes. The last photo album of an innocent bystander. Some of us will be here for a long time. Others, for just a good time. Like our wines. We’ve spent our lives striving to grow and make great wines. Still working at it. Meanwhile, what really counts? A great impression...fond memories...was it fun? We hope, that like the bystander, these wines tread gently, judge nobody and most of all, leave a lasting impression.

**Moscato:** Dressed to impress with a floral label, convenient crown seal and mouth tingling fizz. Flavors of red apples, strawberries and hints of sherbet ice cream backed by a clean acid zing.

**Pinot Gris:** Hand picked and whole bunch pressed prior to a long, cool ferment with a tad of French oak. Shows pear, apple and lemon zest with honeysuckle and cashew notes on a bone dry finish.

**Chardonnay:** Whole bunch pressed and aged in just the right amount of oak. Soft, juicy and balanced with citrus, apple and lime characters backed by pretty cinnamon oak and zippy acidity.

**Pinot Noir:** A fruit-forward, contemporary example offering vibrance and intensity. Sweet maraschino cherry and lifted floral notes with a savory dried herb and rosewater finish.

**Shiraz:** Cool-climate fruit exposed to a long, slow ripening period. Showing varietal pepper, blueberries and lifted violet aromatics on a firm, yet luscious palate with a chewy, textured finish.

**WINEMAKING:** Winemaking is carried out in the Sexton’s artisanal winery, a facility designed for hand-crafting small, individual batches of wine. Taking advantage of the broad palate of flavors available to them, the Innocent Bystander team uses a combination of winemaking skill and intuition to blend a consistent range of wines offering unique personality and definitive regional expression. Co-fermentation and hand-plunging aid integration in the Shiraz Viognier blend, while the Chardonnay fruit is whole bunch pressed and fermented with wild yeast. Pinot Noir fruit is treated to a three-day cold soak and open vessel fermentation to deliver lifted aromatics, while the Pinot Gris is whole bunch pressed to retain delicacy, meanwhile oak maturation and lees stirring contributes complexity. These are wines from somewhere rather than anywhere - and they’re determined not to take a back seat.

The modern winemaking facility in Yarra Valley

Innocent Bystander’s tasting room in Healesville

Steep vineyards are hand-picked by local workers