



HOWARD PARK
MARGARET RIVER & GREAT SOUTHERN

2023 HOWARD PARK FLINT ROCK CHARDONNAY

REGIONAL RANGE

The name *Flint Rock* epitomises the fine mineral structure and savoury elegance of wines grown in the wildly remote and awesomely beautiful Great Southern region of Western Australia. This Howard Park regional selection draws upon the varietal heroes of three primary subregions - Mount Barker, Porongurup and Frankland River - to make wines that showcase regional typicity.

TASTING NOTES

A bright, green-gold in the glass. Enticing floral perfumes of verbena and jasmine invite you to dive deeper with further aromas of white grapefruit, Granny Smith apple and nectarine. The lightest whiff of vanilla spiced oak mingles with lifted minerality notes alluding to a fresh alpine spring and crushed oyster shell. The palate is focused with tightly woven texture and acidity. Flavours of lemon pith, honey dew melon, green pear and salted lime provide a lithe and lean profile, complemented by the use of well-integrated, seasoned French oak. A fresh-as-can-be style, best consumed in its prime over the next three years.

VINTAGE

Cooler-than-usual temperatures paired with optimal, dry weather set the scene for an extended, yet exceptional vintage in both Margaret River and Great Southern. A moderate season, it was perfect for gentle, even ripening across all grape varieties.

Heavy winter rains recharged soil moisture levels and refilled vineyard dams paving the way for a promising start to the growing season. Cool temperatures lingered making for a mild spring with a lovely, yet late budburst. The weather warmed and rain ceased providing the ideal conditions for flowering, canopy growth and fruit set in Margaret River. Great Southern was cooler and wetter which led to poor fruit set and small bunches reducing yield. However, these lower yields would later lead to fuller fruit ripeness at harvest.

Dry, sunny, and warm weather free from any extreme heat continued throughout summer creating an idyllic atmosphere for steady, prolonged ripening with harvest commencing on the 16 February and not finishing until 22 April. Minimal rain fell during this period allowing the fruit to stay out on the vine until full ripeness and flavour development were achieved while cooling winds ensured good acid retention and freshness.

Some late summer/early autumn rain events delayed the red harvest slightly, however, the rainfall did not lead to any disease pressure, instead, it refreshed canopies and invigorated the vines. Altogether another high-quality, graceful year much like 2022.

VINEYARDS

The Flint Rock Chardonnay is a selection from individual vineyard blocks and clones that grow on our Mount Barrow vineyard in Mount Barker. These blocks are located on a south facing ridge-top with elevations of between 285m to 370m. The landforms of the region are some of the oldest in the world with shallow, low fertility soils which provide a natural limit to yield potential.

WINEMAKING

The individual vineyard blocks that comprise Flint Rock Chardonnay are vinified separately. Each batch is hand-picked, cooled and sorted before pressing to extract the free run juice. Fermentation and malolactic occurs in a combination of older French oak and stainless steel tank. The temperature of fermentation is between 18°C to 22°C and the lees are stirred from the end of fermentation and throughout the malolactic. After 9 months on lees, the wine is blended to tank and held for 2 months prior to fining, filtration and bottling.



Variety:
Chardonnay

Region:
Great Southern

Cellaring:
Drink now and over the next few years

Analysis:
Alcohol: 13% v/v
pH: 3.14
Acidity: 6.58 g/l
Residual Sugar: 0.91 g/l