



HOWARD PARK
MARGARET RIVER & GREAT SOUTHERN

2023 HOWARD PARK CHARDONNAY

The Howard Park Chardonnay grows on our Allingham vineyard, in the Karridale locale, at the southern end of the Margaret River region. Here the higher degree of cloud cover and prevailing southerly breezes facilitate a long, gentle ripening and the full evolution of flavour and structure that define the region's finest Chardonnay.

TASTING NOTES

This edition of Howard Park Chardonnay is both vivacious and elegant, a wine that reflects the excellence of a long and moderate growing season, and the ability of considered application of technique to promote varietal expression and supreme drinking pleasure. The complex nose will conjure an array of emotional responses, with signature scents of white grapefruit and nectarine wrapped up with nutmeal, vanilla, musk, Earl Grey tea leaves and struck match. The palate is expressive and sinuous, delivering richness counterbalanced by clean citrus acidity. The playful unwinding of fresh ripe fruits against a background of melding bakery, spice, nut and mineral accents conjures images of the great still-life paintings, and the length and persistence of flavours allows for the time for considered reflection that inspired creations deserve.

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

Allingham Vineyard, Karridale, Margaret River

Vine age: 6 to 20 years

Elevation: 40 - 80 M.

Aspect: south east to south west.

Soils: gravel and sandy clay loam over ironstone with variable water holding capacity.

Clones: Gin Gin and Dijon 95, 96

WINEMAKING

After harvesting the bunches are pressed directly to barrel and undergo fermentation with indigenous yeast. Barrels of various volumes are used ranging up to 600 litres - new oak makes up around 20% of the selection. The approach for Howard Park Chardonnay includes a more conscious intent to express some beneficial winemaking artefact in the finished wine with an emphasis on the impact of juice and solids handling, bâtonnage and the controlled expression of the entirety of the grape on the development of flavour and texture - with the evolution of each barrel carefully monitored to achieve these aims. The 2023 vintage was bottled in January 2024 after 8 months in oak and a further 2 months in tank to harmonise the blend.



Variety:
Chardonnay

Region:
Margaret River

Cellaring:
Drink now or cellar for
up to 15 years.

Bottled:
December 2022

Analysis:
Alcohol: 12.5% v/v
Acidity: 7.48 g/l
pH 3.11
Residual Sugar: 0.71 g/l