

A U T U M N 2 0 1 9

ASHBROOK ESTATE NEWS

WILYABRUP
MARGARET RIVER
WESTERN AUSTRALIA



Did you know....

Ashbrook's vertically integrated operation at 379 Tom Cullity Drive, Wilyabrup has been managed by family members since 1975.

For 41 consecutive vintages we have organised our own in-house picking team.

Every bunch of grapes at Ashbrook is hand harvested and every single red grape berry is put over our sorting table.

We grow 11 classical grape varieties with the oldest being 44 years and the youngest 21 years.

The Ashbrook Winery Bell is rung only for family births, deaths, marriages and the start and end of vintage.

Also in this issue

Vintage 2019 in pictures

From Chardonnay to Petit Verdot

How's the weather

Our take on Vintage 2019

2019 Rosé

Looking gorgeous already

Welcome!

To Ashbrook's 2019 vintage edition newsletter! After a long, cool growing season our first grapes (Chardonnay) were hand-harvested on February 26th and our last (Petit Verdot) on the 12th April. In a year of negligible red gum blossom, clever juggling of vineyard netting was crucial to avoid bird damage. Once again, our unique lyre trellis system and vigilant vineyard management avoided any disease issues. With 110 tonnes of top quality grapes (all hand-harvested) safely in the winery by Easter, we are a happy team at Ashbrook. It is often said that pictures speak a thousand words, so in this newsletter we will let our vintage photographs do the talking. Enjoy!



2019 Vintage

Seven weeks of early mornings and long days – we love it!

White varieties

Right: Clean, green-golden, gorgeous, hand picked Chardonnay. The first bin of 2019 fruit tipped gently down the shoot, sexy legs cleaning the press and two of our little “helpers”.



In the vineyard....

Left: Working hard or hardly working? Our bucket girl Carmen and boys, Robbie and Rod during a reflective moment. Below right; Bringing in the top row of 2019 Riesling.



Above middle: Pushing buckets up in the old Chardonnay block before school.

Left: Picking the Verdelho over the creek. Insert: sunlight into wine, our Sauvignon Blanc trellis.

Rosé

Small batch, whole bunch pressed, Shiraz Rosé morphing from electric pomegranate to pale terracotta. Delicate aromas and flavours of strawberry, cherry and watermelon with a subtle rhubarb twist. Elegant, lightly textured and refreshing- the perfect lunch time wine going commercial in 2019!



Red varieties

Right: A spectacular Wilyabrup Valley sunrise picking Shiraz.

Below: Cabernet Sauvignon harvest and a bit of hand plunging!



Family vintage pick

As is tradition, the last pick of the year is a family affair



Five minutes with.....

Farm, vineyard and winery team member, Mark Evans.

Mark is a highly valued member of the team here at Ashbrook. He began his tenure in 1992 and has never missed a vintage. A true local, Mark grew up on a farm in Yallingup Siding and has extensive experience with livestock, fencing, farm vehicle maintenance, gardening and of course, vineyards and wineries.



Mark, what's the most enjoyable part of your job? Being outdoors and the variety of tasks that need doing.

Favourite cultivar? Cabernet Sauvignon- it doesn't throw up many viticultural problems if grown correctly.

Most memorable vintage? 2016 due to the consistency of ripening.

You love a glass of...? Chardonnay- most multilayered on the palate.

Favourite food and wine combo? Seafood curry and Verdelho.
When you're not at work you're...? Tinkering on mum's farm, repairing old machinery and chopping wood!

Finally, who will win the 2019 AFL Premiership?
 The West Coast Eagles

So. How's the weather?

We didn't include this article because we've run out of things to say. The weather in Margaret River has actually been a *trending* topic this vintage!

The Margaret River wine growing region stretches almost 100km from Cape Naturalist to Cape Leeuwin and currently has 5000 hectares under vine. Many unique microclimates exist within the region making for an interesting mix of vintage experiences from top to bottom.

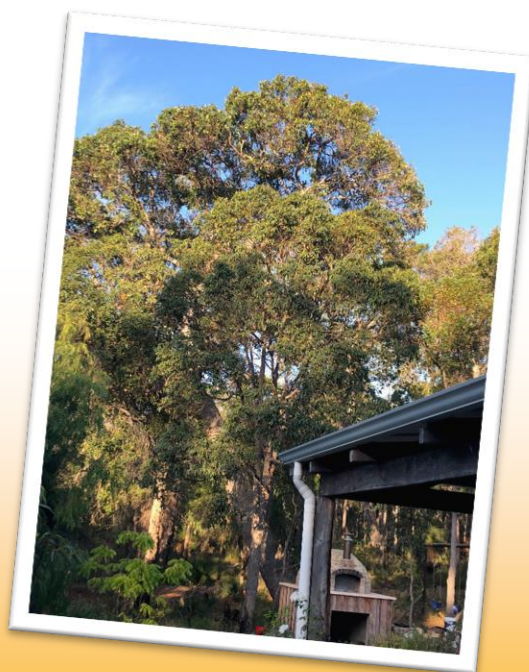
Our vintage report is very positive. Wilyabrup, is situated in the heart of the Margaret River region on the gravelly valley uplands of the Leeuwin-Naturaliste Ridge and Ashbrook is smack-bang in the middle of it. We have just under 50 acres (17.5 hectares) of mature vines which are predominantly grown on a lyre trellis, all hand-harvested. Our location and cultural methods have without a doubt

softened any challenges this vintage.

We estimated between five and ten percent of our Chardonnay crop was affected by an early spring frost, which created variations in ripening. Managing our own hand-picking team allowed us to harvest as and when each section of the vineyard was ready.

This year's red gum blossom was a very different story to last year's record flowering (as seen in the photographs below). Continual juggling of vineyard netting was required to combat bird damage. This made for long days, picking in the morning and netting in the afternoon but essential for unblemished fruit.

Finally, the long, cool growing season was perfect for flavor development (at modest sugar levels) but we were very mindful of the vines tiring and worked hard to have all the fruit safely in the winery before Easter.



Comparison of Red Gum blossom in 2018 (left) and 2019 (right).

Signing off.....

As the Ashbrook Bell rings throughout the Wilyabrup Valley we celebrate the hard work of our bucket heads, hose kids, drain boys, tank monkeys, tally girls, bin tippers, tractor drivers, sorting angels, morning tea mums, child minders and family for helping us complete a successful 2019 vintage!

With the vine leaves now senescing and falling in spectacular colour we carry on without pause and wish all our business partners and supporters a prosperous 2019.



Best wishes from
the team at
Ashbrook Estate!