

W I N T E R 2 0 2 0

# ASHBROOK ESTATE NEWS

WILYABRUP  
MARGARET RIVER  
WESTERN AUSTRALIA



## Welcome!

To our 3<sup>rd</sup> winter edition!

Time is flying, the vines are off and running and we will be picking grapes again before we know it! With two siblings in Melbourne, I am acutely aware of how fortunate we are here in WA at the moment. Through the endless challenges 2020 keeps presenting there has been a silver lining of Aussie loyalty to small businesses and we are extremely grateful for that patronage.

Hope you enjoy the read!

*Catherine Edwards, winemaker.*



## The Silver Lining

Lockdown and our remaining hard border have facilitated and reinvigorated Ashbrook Estate's relationship with so many wonderful West Australians. I am sure this story would be echoed by most local producers especially in the regional areas of WA. This stunning State offers enormous variety and it is heart-warming to see people who live here, visiting here, buying from here, from the source. We have seen a genuine interest in where and how the grapes are grown and in their transformation from vine to wine. There's a focus on quality, sustainability and value for money. People have discovered just how well, and how affordably, they can eat and drink at home. I imagine wine rack and fridge sales have done very well over the last few months. Our freedom in WA is not taken for granted. Uncertainty and contingency plans are here to stay. With the cancellation of several major wine shows around Australia and the world, we were extremely lucky to have the chance to exhibit our wines in the 2020 Perth Royal Wine Show. Our 2020 Ashbrook Estate Riesling, Verdelho, Rosé and 2018 Chardonnay all received medals. Cath was lucky enough to attend the post wine show luncheon, featuring the Jack Mann Memorial Medal presentation, on our wonderful WA Fine Wine Wholesalers' table. Thank you to Ronnie Lawrence and the FWW team for their hard work and continued support throughout a challenging year for everyone. Our hearts go out to our wine friends and family over east. May the virus be controlled, the borders relaxed and Australia be whole again.

### Also in this issue!

#### Latest wine reviews

2021 Halliday  
Wine Companion &  
CH'NG Poh Tiong

#### Pruning team champions

17.5 hectares of  
hands-on cane and  
arch cane pruning

#### 14 Vintage Vertical Tasting

Ashbrook Cabernet  
2004 to present

## Halliday Wine Companion 2021

Thank you to Australia's pre-eminent wine authority James Halliday AM and tasting team member Steven Creber for their considered reviews of Ashbrook Estate's wines. Great points and comments, indicative of premium quality wines and consistency of style. Top results included:

**Ashbrook Estate 2016 Reserve Chardonnay** Fermented in French barriques for 8 months prior to bottling and cellar maturation. This is a rich, almost luscious wine; exuding aromas and flavours of expensive oak, poached peach and pear with a drizzle of creamed honey - impressive within a certain style. Drinking at its best now while it retains its freshness. **95 points** *Steven Creber*

**Ashbrook Estate 2017 Cabernet Sauvignon** Hand-picked, cold-soaked, and fermented in open stainless steel. Aged in French oak (20% new) for 18 months. Small portions of petit verdot, cabernet franc and merlot in the blend. Distinctively varietal and regional, aromas of blackcurrant, redcurrant and bay leaf are framed by cedary oak, the palate perfectly weighted with beautifully fine and supple tannins. **95 points** *Steven Creber*

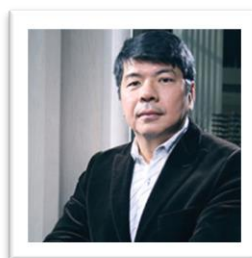
**Ashbrook Estate 2014 Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon** From 40+yo dry-grown vines, destemmed, cold soak, open-fermented, plunged five times daily, matured for 24 months in French barriques (40% new). Bright, clear crimson-purple; an unapologetically full-bodied cabernet, with blackcurrant, black olive and dried herb aromas and flavours. The tannin structure is also unforgiving, the wine not yet open for business, needing a decade to do so. **94 points** *Steven Creber*

**Ashbrook Estate 2018 Chardonnay** Five blocks harvested progressively to maximise individual flavour profiles. 50% fermented in new French barriques, 50% in stainless steel. No mlf. Very much in the 'house style', with its generosity of flavour and freshness. The oak provides aromas of grilled nuts and vanilla, the fruit characters in the ripe stone fruit and citrus spectrum. **93 points** *Steven Creber*

**Ashbrook Estate 2017 Shiraz** Hand-picked, cold-soaked and fermented in open stainless steel, transferred to French barriques (22% new) for 12 months. A fragrant bouquet, with various spices, cedary oak and berry fruit characters in the mix. Only just medium-bodied; sails elegantly along the palate with flavours of cherry and red currant supported by gently astringent acidity. **93 points** *Steven Creber*

## CH'NG Poh Tiong on Ashbrook Estate

Ch'ng Poh Tiong, a lawyer by training and highly respected wine publisher, writer, consultant, lecturer, and judge. His impressive resume includes being Wine Consultant to NTUC FairPrice/Finest, Singapore's largest supermarket chain and Ashbrook's long time distributor, for 20 years now. Ch'ng Poh Tiong is also writer and publisher for [www.chngpohtiong.com](http://www.chngpohtiong.com) and [www.100chineserestaurants.com](http://www.100chineserestaurants.com) and we were delighted to read his article on Ashbrook's 2017 Riesling and 2016 Shiraz wines and their best Chinese cuisine pairings.



**Ashbrook Margaret River Riesling 2017** Light bright straw. Intensely lime/lemon citrus with a whiff of mineral and petrol so often detected in riesling. Very long line of pristine fruit full of energy and verve. The palate is razor crisp. A great thirst quencher and excellent pairing with tempura, Cantonese dim sum, samosas, and pakoras.

**Ashbrook Wilyabrup Margaret River Shiraz 2016** This single-vineyard Northern Rhone variety shows ripe raspberry/dark cherry/blackberry fruit. There's also smokiness and liquorice notes. The soft sweetness of ripe fruit is complemented by smooth, ripe tannins. Although Margaret River is more renowned for cabernet sauvignon, shiraz grows well and is more restrained than examples from the Barossa where the fruit tends to be in-your-face. No need to decant. Enjoyable on its own and a very good pairing with duck, lamb and beef.



CH'NG Poh Tiong <http://www.chngpohtiong.com/wines-of-the-day-1-july-2020/>



## Pruning time!

Our vineyard manager Richard Devitt (left) organizes the hand pruning of our 17.5 hectares of predominantly lyre-trellised grapevines. That means two fruiting zones per vine row. We have 11 different varieties, either arch cane- or cane-pruned over three months and are lucky to have such a lovely, specialized team of pruners with us for winter 2020. Great work Rich, Mark, Flo, Tracy, Ben, Sophie, Marco and Thetis come rain, hail or shine!

The presence of Spiderman confirms, we have the healthiest vineyard in the world!



## 14 Vintages of Ashbrook Estate Cabernet

In 1993, Allan Wilkerson enrolled in his first ever, wine appreciation course. Tony Devitt (one of Ashbrook's founders along with his brother Brian) was one of the presenters on this course and peaked Allan's interest enough for him to visit the winery. He has been a loyal customer and collector ever since. "Although Ashbrook Estate makes fastidiously fruit-pure unwooded whites (including a fabulous Margaret River Riesling, not an oxymoron), my tastes lean towards Chardonnay and reds, and this is where my regular buying has been for probably 20 years." Allan's passion and impressive wine cellar see him conduct regular private tastings for a select group of wine lovers, the details of which are posted on Australia's first wine discussion board and group, The Auswine Forum. We are honoured and privileged to have loyal patrons like Allan and we thank him for his interest in our wines and for sharing such comprehensive reviews with the wider wine-appreciating community.

<http://forum.auswine.com.au/viewtopic.php?f=1&t=16694&p=162721#p162721>





## Signing off!

As the vines burst with beautiful brand new growth, Brian reminds us that you're never too old to have fun! Even at this early stage our eyes are seriously turned to vintage 2021. Perhaps our most challenging year ever for putting together a picking team. We wish all our wine industry friends a bountiful spring and hope that conditions in Australia continue to improve as the weather warms up.



Best wishes,

The team at  
Ashbrook Estate