

W I N T E R 2 0 2 1

ASHBROOK ESTATE NEWS

WILYABRUP
MARGARET RIVER
WESTERN AUSTRALIA



Welcome!

To our dormancy edition!

If budburst is anything to go by, even the Chardonnay has had a proper sleep this winter! As our pruning team battled the elements throughout what seemed a very long winter, in the winery the bottling line has been running flat out.

Ashbrook is honoured to once again be included in Australia's top-rated wineries in the latest Halliday Wine Companion and we continue to receive wonderful reviews across our range of wines.

Hope you enjoy the read!

Catherine Edwards, winemaker.



The Big Sleep

Even though it may have felt like one of the wettest winters we've ever had, especially for our pruners, 411.7mm from June to August is in fact, not even close. In 1996, our records indicate 723.4mm fell over the three-month winter period, with Margaret River recording 219.2mm in August alone, 41% higher than average (Busselton-Margaret River Times, 12.09.1996, p10). That said, we have actually had the wettest first seven months of the year since we began recording in 1978, with 1108mm to date according to the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) weather station situated on Ashbrook Estate (figures 1 & 2).

So what does it all mean? Firstly, it is well documented that grapevine production relies on stored soil moisture and we are heading into the growing season in a superbly hydrated position. In addition to this, our average minimum daily temperatures for June, July and August have been well under 10 degrees Celsius (Figure 3) providing solid conditions for proper grapevine dormancy. As a result, we have a well-rested vineyard with the potential for wonderfully healthy growth!

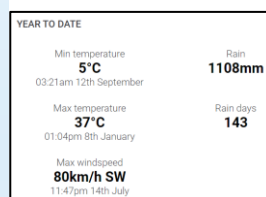


Figure 1. Year (2021) to date summary of climatic data from Wilyabrup (MR001) DPIRD Weather Station

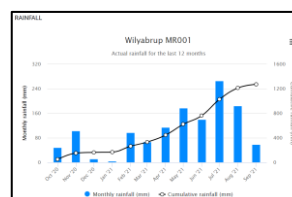


Figure 2. Actual rainfall for the last 12 months from Wilyabrup (MR001) DPIRD Weather Station

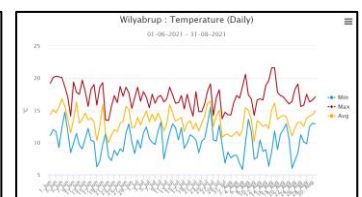


Figure 3. Daily maximum, minimum and average temperatures for June, July and August from the Wilyabrup (MR001) DPIRD Weather Station

Data from The Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development website, updated Wednesday September 15th 2021, Wilyabrup (MR001) DPIRD Station, viewed 15/09/2021, <https://weather.agric.wa.gov.au/station/MR001>

Also in this issue!

2022 Halliday Wine Companion

Reviews and points from Erin Larkin

Latest Wine Reviews

Ray Jordan, Huon Hooke, T3WM

New Releases

2021 Rosé, whites, 2020 Chardonnay

Halliday Wine Companion 2022

Thank you to WA-based Halliday team wine writer Erin Larkin, Chief Editor Tyson Stelzer and James Halliday AM for the considered reviews and wonderful recognition of Ashbrook wines in the latest Halliday Wine Companion.

Ashbrook Estate



Ashbrook Estate Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon 2018



“

40th consecutive vintage in 2018. With petit verdot, cabernet franc and merlot, from a single vineyard of 40yo vines in Wilyabrup. The nose here is reticent to open at this early stage in its life, although it does sing a song of pure cassis and blackberry, the oak resting in there as well. The palate has mellifluous density and very good length of flavour. This is medium-bodied elegance, and a perfect example of how 2018 produced wines of ripeness and clarity.

Erin Larkin

Published 04 January 2021



Ashbrook Estate Verdelho 2020



“

Hand picked over an 8-day period, fermented entirely in stainless steel to preserve freshness. Crunchy acidity and a salivating plump mid palate which is crammed to bursting with nashi pear, green apple, soft talc floral and gentle suggestions of citrus pith. Incredibly pretty, almost dusty, very satisfying and has great length of flavour.

Erin Larkin

Published 13 August 2021



Ashbrook Estate Cabernet Sauvignon 2018



“

40th consecutive vintage in 2018. Single vineyard of 40yo vines in Wilyabrup. Petit verdot, cabernet franc and merlot. The nose is spicy and lifted cassis, lashings of blackberry, redcurrant and red licorice. The palate is silky and fine – the tannins are lacey and supportive but not intrusive. Elegant and juicy with class to boot.

Erin Larkin

Published 01 March 2021



Ashbrook Estate Semillon 2020



“

Hand picked over 5 days, fermented in stainless steel. Ashbrook has long made a varietal semillon of very good quality and this vintage is no exception. Grassy, tense and decidedly nervy, combining spring snow pea, jasmine tea and green pineapple. It has a distinct white-pepper character that laces through the fruit and lingers on the finish.

Erin Larkin

Published 13 August 2021



Ashbrook Estate Riesling 2020



“

There is very little riesling planted in Margaret River, which puts this wine in a very small class of peers. Brilliant acidity is cushioned by an array of lime, Thai basil, lychee, blossom and a sprinkle of coriander. It's all shaped by fine phenolics that steer it over the tongue and through into the finish. Quite something.

Erin Larkin

Published 13 August 2021



Ashbrook Estate Reserve Chardonnay 2017



“

This is rich and toasty – a shrinking violet by no means. On the nose it has salted/grilled yellow peach and macadamia nuts; the palate follows suit. Dense and powerful fruit is at its core, encased in a structured shell of chalky phenolics and briny acid. Overall it is a rawly powerful wine, without much finesse, but with many layers of flavour and textural complexity.

Erin Larkin

Published 13 August 2021



Ashbrook Estate Chardonnay 2019



“

Predominantly Gingin clone, with some Clone 3 & 5, all planted in '76. 12 months in a blend of new and seasoned French oak, mlf blocked to preserve acidity. The aromas are of young tropical fruits – green pineapple, hints of guava, white peach and nectarine. The palate follows suit, with taut acidity that provides backbone and a refreshing flick of brine through the finish.

Erin Larkin

Published 25 August 2021



Pictures courtesy of Halliday Wine Companion 2021, *Halliday Wine Companion Tasting Team*, accessed 21 September 2021, <https://cd2.winecompanion.com.au/about-us/tasting-team>

Latest Wine Reviews

Many thanks to WA wine writer Ray Jordan at The West Australian for his wonderful article (below) on Margaret River Shiraz featuring a review of the Ashbrook Estate 2018 vintage. Hand-picked, berry-sorted, open-fermented and aged traditionally, this delicious, Northern Rhone-style red is flying out of the cellar door.

Ray Jordan: WA Shiraz terroir

The West Australian, 14 August 2021

With some justification, there has been plenty of recent hype about the shiraz being produced in the Great Southern, particularly Frankland River. No question, these wines are going through a metamorphosis into a new era that is stylistically more pleasing.

But with all this hype, we can momentarily overlook the shiraz being produced in other areas of the State. Now, not that Margaret River needs any help with all the gushing surrounding its chardonnay and cabernets, but I thought it worthwhile to remind ourselves that this area can produce some mighty fine shiraz. Shiraz has a slightly curious history in Margaret River, because in the early days it was dismissed by many who considered it inferior and a waste of space that could be better given to cabernet.

This position was given further credibility by shiraz being planted in the wrong places or being made into big heavily oaked wines that, while initially popular, gradually lost favour. These days, winemakers are approaching it differently, making wines of balance and poise with less of the over-the-top use of extract and oak to mask the essential fruit characters. These wines will always be different from those in Frankland, in character and style, enhanced by the significant differences as you move from north to south in the region.

These are differences to celebrate and enjoy.



Ashbrook Estate Shiraz 2018 (\$32)

A beautiful example of the purity and almost faultless vintage that was 2018. This is more medium than full-bodied. Delicious, rich and succulent fruit flavours. Spices with dark chocolate coating the primary plummy flavours. A vibrant and lively wine that ranks with any shiraz yet from these guys. **95/100**

(Best drinking: Now to 2030)



A big shout out to [The3Winesmen](#) for their fantastic review of our 2019 Ashbrook Estate Chardonnay (now SOLD OUT). Recognition that our wines reflect our philosophy of letting the fruit shine always makes us smile!

[The3Winesmen](#)

1 September at 00:26 ·

2019 [@ashbrookestate](#) Chardonnay

How refreshing (literally) to taste a Margaret River Chardonnay that has not gone through, or had a parcel of go through MLF.

Yes a little Malo can help some wines get to a different place but when you start with fruit this good you really need to let it be the hero and shine through with its classic flavours.

The stone fruit is present, lemon too. But what I love the most is the lingering lemonade notes (combination of lemon and minerality) and the oak that plays the role of balancing everything out perfectly.

Of the Ashbrook Estate wines I've tried I think that this may be my fav, so far.

[#ashbrookestate](#) [#margaretriver](#) [#margaretriverwine](#) [#wilyabrup](#) [#chardonnay](#) [#wine](#) [#whitewine](#)



The
Real
Review 2021
**TOP WINERIES
AUSTRALIA**

Ashbrook has had a presence on the east coast of Australia for 40 years now courtesy of our loyal wholesalers and customers. Thank you to Huon Hooke and his team at The Real Review for their detailed write-ups of our wines, they are valuable and much appreciated.

Ashbrook
Estate
Reserve
Cabernet
Sauvignon
2018

94/100

★★★★

Huon Hooke



Deep, bright red/purple colour, with notes of coconut and red fruits on the nose and the slightest hint of desiccated fruits. In the mouth, it's elegant yet intense, full-bodied but with an effortless flow across the palate. The wine responds to extended aeration, revealing elegant red fruit aromas intertwined with savoury oak notes, the palate full-bodied but suavely-framed and finely-textured. (Made from dry-grown vines over 40 years old. Includes small quantities of petit verdot, cabernet franc and merlot) 25 NOV 2020

📅 2020–2038

\$ AUD 65.00 BOTTLE (STORE)

Ashbrook
Estate
Chardonnay
2019

93/100

★★★★

Amanda Yallop



Pale yellow colour with gold flecks. Aromatic and full-flavoured, plenty of luscious tropical fruit, almond meal and sweet spices from time spent in oak. A big example of a young chardonnay, that delivers balance between fruit purity, bracing acidity and solid structure to the wine 28 NOV 2020

📅 2020–2030

\$ AUD 35.00 BOTTLE (STORE)

Ashbrook
Estate
Cabernet
Sauvignon
2018

92/100

★★★★

Huon Hooke



Deep red/purple colour, with a smoky, sump oil, soy sauce cluster of aromas, the palate very savoury and drying, elegantly-weighted and nicely textured, with a savoury dryness and good length but no astringency. The tannins are ample but soft and properly ripe. Very smart. 25 NOV 2020

📅 2020–2032

\$ AUD 35.00 BOTTLE (STORE)

Ashbrook
Estate Shiraz
2018

91/100

★★★★

Stuart Knox



Deep ruby core. Graphite and crushed raspberries on the nose. Medium-bodied and slippery on the palate. Pencil shavings and bright fruit fill the middle, with a crunch of acidity giving light and lift before a fine tannic push carries it into the finish. 28 NOV 2020

📅 2020–2031

\$ AUD 32.00 BOTTLE (STORE)

New Releases

Pre-release tastings of our 2021 unwooded white varietal wines have shown remarkable fruit characters and beautiful natural acidity. This gives us a confidence that our vineyard and staff handled the challenges presented by 90mm of mid-harvest rainfall exceptionally well.

In response to demand, the 2021 Rosé and 2020 Chardonnay have already been released to our wholesalers.

We look forward to showing you our latest creations and celebrating our magical place in the world.



Pruning done

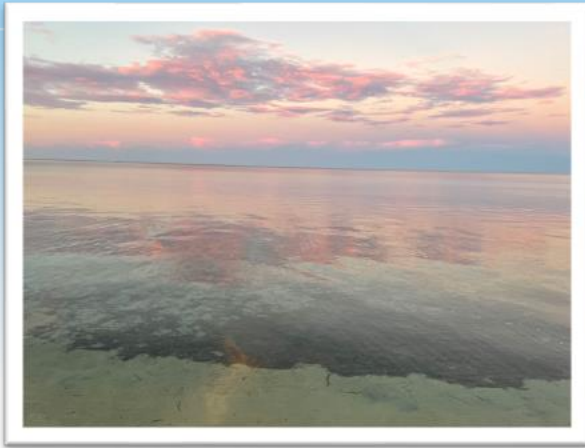
Sometimes pruning, like a bottling run, seems like it will never end. But it always does, and then you have a work of art, whether it's in a bottle or growing on a trellis. Well done to our pruning team, led by Rich, for battling the elements to give our 17.5 hectares of hand-pruned grapevines the best possible start to a growing season. After a properly cold winter our fingers are crossed for mild weather at flowering and fruit set.





Signing off!

We hope all our friends and partners around the world are safe and well. As the challenges keep on coming, we hope our wine and pictures from Wilyabrup give some positivity and solace....and the (Ashbrook) gates are open for anyone who would like to pick grapes in February-April 2022!



Best wishes,

**The team at
Ashbrook Estate**