



HAY SHED HILL

MARGARET RIVER

HAY SHED HILL BLOCK 6 CHARDONNAY 2022

Hay Shed Hill is one of a small and prestigious group of pioneer vineyards that have established Margaret River's reputation as a world-class wine producing region. Located in the heart of the Willyabrup Valley, the premier sub-region of Margaret River, The Hay Shed Hill Block Series wines are made from small parcels of fruit from individual blocks on the vineyard to showcase the best of Hay Shed Hill.

Planted in 1975 to Gin Gin (Mendoza) clone Chardonnay, Block 6 has a steep south-facing aspect thereby reducing the sunlight interception by the vines and creating a cool micro climate ideal for quality Chardonnay production. These dry grown vines produce tiny quantities of fruit with distinctive restrained mineral character.

VINTAGE: An extraordinary season is the phrase that best sums up season 2022.

The South-West of Western Australia experienced one of the hottest springs on record with an intensive long stretch of hot days and unseasonal warm nights, including four consecutive days above 40°C over the Christmas period. The timing of this heat wave was at a critical time in the cycle of the early maturing varieties such as Chardonnay and, to a lesser extent, Sauvignon Blanc and Semillon.

Chardonnay yields were severely affected across the region but most seriously at Hay Shed Hill and other dry grown vineyards. We had potentially set a good crop at Hay Shed Hill but this four-day period and the follow up weeks compromised the weight of the bunches so that the end yield was estimated to be less than 30% of expectation. Such is farming.

Red grapes were largely unaffected by the heat wave as they were immature in development at that time. Abruptly in late January the weather changed dramatically with an extreme fall in day and night temperature and with consistent rain events passing through with early Autumnal-like conditions. This cooler weather benefited the red grapes, especially Cabernet Franc, Cabernet Sauvignon and Malbec allowing slower development and therefore greater flavour and colour maturity.

The outcome of 2022 is a high quality low yield harvest out of Margaret River.

WINEMAKING: Only the best 'free run' component of the juice was used resulting in the finest and brightest fruit expression with the least amount of phenolic impact. The juice was fermented in French oak barriques; 30% new with the balance being one, two and three years old, before maturing in barriques for a further 10 months. No lees stirring or malolactic fermentation occurred, preserving and highlighting the purity of fruit expression. The wine expresses the character of this superb vineyard in an elegant and restrained style that is bright, vibrant and fresh in its youth and will benefit from medium-term cellaring.

COLOUR: Brilliant appearance, great clarity and the lightest of green hues.

NOSE: The Block 6 Chardonnay has mineral aromatics with background savoury flinty notes. The fruit is in the fresh white pear spectrum with perhaps some citric elements.

PALATE: The palate is complex with good carryover of fruit expression. Vibrant and with a lightness about it this wine, it is far from the old fashioned Australian Chardonnay of the 1980's. The old vine depth of fruit provides a complexity not seen in most Chardonnay - there is always more to find in the wine without it being overworked or over-blown. This is a beautiful wine with depth of flavour and texture that will stand up in a fine dining situation.

TECHNICAL INFORMATION:

Vintage: 2022

Variety: Chardonnay 100%

Alcohol: 12.5% Alc. Vol.

Growing Region: Margaret River



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