

HOWARD PARK



FINE WINES
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

HOWARD PARK CHARDONNAY 1999



CHARDONNAY 1999

TECHNICAL NOTES

The early part of the 1999 vintage was difficult. Well organised and informed growers with good viticultural practices enjoyed good yields of sound to very good quality fruit while growers with less well-attuned viticultural management skills suffered losses due to disease, especially Powdery Mildew and Botrytis. The reason for the challenges experienced can be attributed to a difficult March in which there was intermittent light rain and inadequate sunshine hours. Those growers with good canopy management and exposed fruit were able to ripen their early maturing varieties whereas those with heavy crop loads and fruit shading suffered through lack of ripening and disease incidence. Some excellent Chardonnay parcels were picked for Howard Park from the better growers in March.

The cool growing conditions allowed the grapes to ripen slowly and evenly with better flavour development at lower sugar in the grapes and therefore lower alcohol levels in the wines.

Several batches of Chardonnay were marked of special quality. They were fermented in about 60% new and 40% one and two year old French barrels. Some batches were lees stirred for about 10 months to develop textural characters in the wine. The wine was blended in January 2000.

TASTING NOTES

We believe the 1999 Howard Park Chardonnay is the best yet produced. It combines flavour with texture and complexity in a wine that is delicate and subtle. The nose is elegant and inviting with aromas of freshly cut pear and honeydew melon fruits with nuttiness from lees stirring and a hint of smoky savoury barrel ferment characters providing background complexity. The palate is tightly structured but full in flavour with a complete palate profile of considerable length. Fine acids suggest some potential to develop in the bottle.

VARIETY

100% 1999 Chardonnay

REGION

70% Great Southern
30% Margaret River

CELLARING

Should fill out in flavour over the next 5 years, when secondary age characters will emerge.



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Margaret River & Great Southern
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