

HOWARD PARK

Cellar Collection

2017 CABERNET SAUVIGNON SHIRAZ

The Howard Park Cellar Collection reflects a desire to create some special wines for the enjoyment of loyal and valued customers who are following and supporting us on our journey. Small batch offerings from distinctive vineyards or considered barrel selections to create innovative blends of variety or region will give each release its point of difference from the wines in our established range.

THE SEASON

As the never-ending vintage of 2017 came to a close in early May, we reflect on a most unusual season. After a cold, wet winter/spring and annual rainfall above recent averages, the stage was set for a late start to vintage. Early spring growth was slow, and anecdotes of the very cool 2006 vintage began to circulate as summer progressed in the same, mild fashion. The one bright light was the comparative data of heat summation between 2006 and 2017, with 2017 still warmer. But were we heading for the perfect calamity of high yields in a cool, wet season?

Fungal diseases began to thrive in the humid, cool conditions as the white harvest began. Careful fruit selection and early harvesting was necessary to retain quality. By late March the tone of the vintage was less than upbeat as the heavens opened. As the mud dried, April delivered an Indian summer, of unseasonably dry and warm conditions until the end of harvest. This prolonged, ripening phase allowed flavours to develop fully, and the tannins to soften. With vintage now a distant memory and wines bottled, the outcomes are surprising and fantastic. The whites have a retained purity and vibrancy, and the reds stunning concentration, beautifully soft tannins and silky mouthfeel. It was worth the tension.

THE VINEYARDS

Our Leston vineyard, located in the temperate, maritime climes of the Wilyabrup subregion in Margaret River grows Cabernet characterised by a sweet core of berry fruits, supple guiding tannins and a distinctive perfume. In the contrastingly cooler climate of the Great Southern, two subregions contribute barrels to bring added complexity to the Shiraz component, with Frankland River offering a greater intensity of dark fruits, with traces of spice and earth and soft tannins, while Mount Barker brings subtler red fruits and hints of white pepper.

THE WINEMAKING

Years of experience has taught our winemakers that Cabernet and Shiraz must be respected for their unique attributes as each variety evolves through the winemaking process. The primary winemaking objective is to preserve varietal fruit notes and extract balancing tannin from both varieties.

The Cabernet - Vinification occurs in closed stainless steel fermenters with diligent cap management to extract fine fruit tannin and strong varietal notes from this small berry, thick skin variety. Some parcels remain on skins after fermentation to enhance the tannin profile while others are pressed immediately to capture fruit vibrancy. Barrel maturation for 18 months in new and older French oak barriques ensures the thorough integration of oak and grape tannins.

The Shiraz - Vinification occurs in open 4 tonne stainless steel vats. Gentle cap management via hand plunging at warm temperatures facilitates the extraction of vibrant fruity notes and soft tannins from this larger, ovoid shaped, thin skin variety. Select parcels are run to barrel between 2 & 3 degrees Baume to capture new barrel characters from the final few degrees of fermentation. Maturation in a mix of 30% new and 70% older 300 litre hogsheads, both French and American oak, contribute an open knit, mocha note to the wine.

THE WINE

Is a study in complementary flavour and supporting texture. Aromas of blackberry, mulberry, cassis, cocoa and green olive lead into a juicy palate. Classic cabernet flavours of blackcurrant and choc mint mingle attractively with plummy, spicy Shiraz. This mid-palate harmony delays the eventual grip of fine yet pliable tannins which help the flavours linger and further resolve. Cellaring between 3 to 5 years will provide additional richness and complexity, although the wine is thoroughly satisfying in its youth



Variety	75 % Cabernet Sauvignon 25% Shiraz
Region	75% Margaret River 17% Frankland River 8% Mount Barker up to 5 years
Cellaring	
Analysis	
Alcohol:	14%v/v
pH:	3.63
Acidity:	6.0 g/l
Residual Sugar:	0.9g/l