



# MOSS WOOD

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## MOSS WOOD 2001 PINOT NOIR

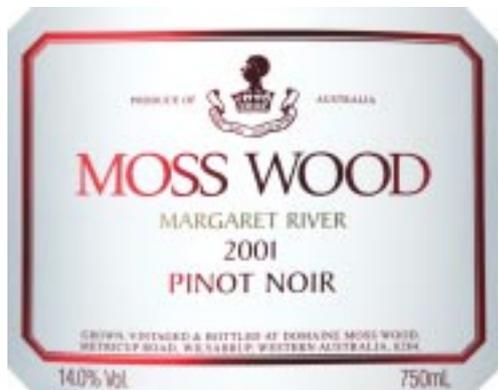
Over the years, the style of this wine has evolved as we made changes to our technique. The 2001 vintage is another step in the process. We have been concerned about alcohol levels in the Pinot Noir, where above 14% they can swamp the delicate fruit characters of the variety. Virtually every wine made since 1993 has an alcohol above this figure.

The reason for this is largely associated with the yeasts used for fermentation, which are very productive. This is fine if the wine is being made in a climate where grape ripeness is barely adequate but of course, this is not the case in Margaret River. Our challenge then is to produce the best flavours in the vineyard at lower levels of ripeness.

In order to achieve this, we have begun an aggressive program in the vineyard, improving fruit exposure right through the season and also setting yields to a maximum of 35 hectolitres per hectare, as per the requirements of the great vineyards of Burgundy.

There are some who ask us why we take so much trouble in making Pinot Noir and wouldn't it be better just to make Cabernet Sauvignon? If the answer were purely economic, of course it would be yes, since the latter is the vineyard flagship and produces

substantially more income. However, we are inspired by the great Pinot Noir wines of the world and believe in the quality of the wine we make ourselves. We derive great satisfaction and amusement from making Pinot Noir - it really is good fun and gives us a chance to hone our red winemaking skills before the Cabernet Sauvignon starts and in fact, our winemaking for all varieties benefits in some way.



So, with all this as background, the 2001 Pinot Noir is the first step in this new direction. It has the additional quality advantage of coming from an excellent year when all varieties performed well.

In contrast to the vineyard, winery production techniques have changed very little. The fruit was hand picked and then 95% was de-stemmed into open fermenters while the remaining 5% was included as whole bunches.

The must was then chilled down to 10 C, cold soaked for 3 days and pumped over twice per day. Each batch was then seeded with a pure yeast culture and allowed to ferment up to 32 C. Plunging was done 4 times per day and the wine was pressed after 14 days on skins. All pressings were included and the wine was racked into barrel for malolactic fermentation. It stayed in French oak barriques for 22 months and was fined, filtered and bottled in March 2003.

The wine has a medium ruby colour. On the nose the fruit aromas are quite floral, showing dark cherry, plum and quince jelly, with spicy and sappy complex notes. These are reminiscent of Thai herbs like coriander and match with linen and linseed characters. The background has toasty oak and some typical earth and mushroom as well.

The palate has initial impact of dark fruits and apricots that fill the mouth and combine with medium weight and lively acid to give good depth and balance. There are firm tannins on the mid and back palate providing good structure and there is soft oak and lingering ripe strawberry fruit on the finish.

For those who are keen to cellar this wine, it should continue to age well for at least 10 years.

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MOSS WOOD PINOT NOIR  
VINTAGE CHART

VINTAGE	HARVEST DATE	BEAUME ( )	YIELD (t/ha)	VINTAGE RATING	OPTIMUM DRINKING
2003	11 Feb	12.7	4.8	9+	Pinot Noir as a variety ages really well in the bottle. In general we would expect our pinot noir wines to start to show their full potential at 7 years from their vintage and be giving their peak performances somewhere between 10 - 15 years.
2002	07 Feb	13.0	4.3	9+	
2001	16 Feb	13.7	10.0	9+	
2000	28 Feb	14.0	11.4	8	
1999	22 Feb	13.6	8.0	9	
1998	13 Feb	13.6	8.1	9	
1997	02 Mar	14.3	6.0	8+	
1996	15 Feb	13.4	9.0	9	
1995	14 Feb	13.6	9.2	9+	
1994	01 Mar	13.5	11.0	9	
1993	03 Mar	13.3	8.2	8	
1992	28 Feb	13.5	8.8	8	
1991	10 Mar	13.3	10.0	9	
1990	16 Mar	13.4	8.5	9	
1989	15 Mar	12.9	6.5	6	
1988	10 Feb	13.1	6.0	8	
1987	24 Feb	12.9	5.8	8	
1986	24 Feb	13.3	5.8	10	
1985	25 Feb	13.3	6.4	10	
1984	16 Feb	12.9	5.7	6	
1983	19 Feb	12.85	6.0	6	

*Please note:*  
These comments are only accurate when the wine has been well cellared. In the interests of accuracy, only where we have reviewed a wine during the year, will we provide optimum drinking years.

MOSS WOOD 2002 "LEFROY BROOK VINEYARD" PINOT NOIR

Pemberton experienced similar conditions to Margaret River during the 2001 / 2002 growing season, with mild temperatures right through spring and summer. In such a cool climate, these conditions can be of concern because the prospect of less-than-complete grape ripeness looms large. Fortunately, as an early-ripening variety, Pinot Noir has as good a chance as any to reach full maturity and such was the case for 2002. This is a credit to the excellent viticulture of Lefroy Brook proprietors, Pat and Barbara Holt. It may also be a product of the vineyard's excellent location, on a very sheltered easterly slope.

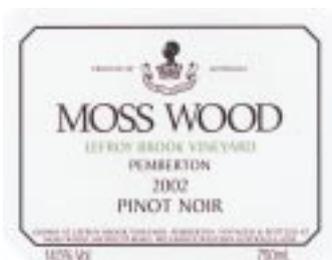
The production techniques for the Lefroy Brook wine are virtually identical to those used for the Moss Wood. It is interesting to note, the differences in style which exist between them are the product of the different regions. This highlights how, more than any other variety, Pinot Noir will change and reflect the environment in which it is grown.

All fruit was hand picked and delivered to Moss Wood winery. It is important that the grapes are processed as soon as they arrive at the winery, despite the fact that it may be late in the day. We are not prepared to allow them to deteriorate by sitting in fruit bins until the following day. The fruit was de-stemmed into open fermenters and 5% added as uncrushed bunches. It was chilled down to

10 C for 3 days and pumped over twice per day during that time. It was warmed to ambient temperature, seeded with pure yeast culture, allowed to ferment at a maximum temperature of 32 C and plunged 4 times per day during the process. After 14 days on skins it was pressed, with all pressings included and then racked into barrel for malolactic fermentation. It spent 12 months in French oak barriques, 30% of which were new and then it was fined, filtered and bottled in August 2003.

The wine has a deep ruby colour. On the nose, it has fruit aromas of strawberry and cherry combined with Pemberton's smoky, spicy notes, reminiscent of tea like Lapsang Souchong. There are also earth and mushroom characters and soft oak, which is not dominant, sitting behind the spicy characters.

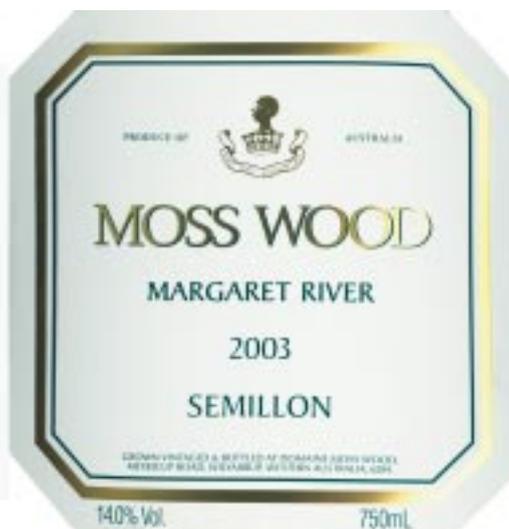
The palate has lively strawberry and cherry fruit flavours combined with smokiness and cinnamon-like spices. The mouth-feel is rich but the structure is firm, with good acidity and firm tannins on the mid and back palate and the finish has soft toasty oak. Overall, there is good balance and depth, which should see the wine cellar well. This is one of the best Pinot Noirs we have seen from Pat and Barbara Holt's Pemberton vineyard and we expect it to continue to improve for at least 5 more years.



# MOSS WOOD 2003 SEMILLON

After a very good growing season, our only disappointment with this wine was the lack of volume, with yields in the “Old Block” down by 36%. Fortunately, this seems to have resulted in greater concentration in the finished product.

Production techniques were typical for the Semillon. The grapes were hand picked and delivered to the winery, where they were destemmed, chilled and pumped into the press. Free run juice and pressings were extracted, then combined and settled for 48 hours. After settling, the clear juice was racked and seeded with pure yeast culture. Once fermentation commenced, it was maintained at 18 C and the lees were stirred once per day. The lees stirring continued for 6 weeks after fermentation



finished and then the wine was fined, filtered and bottled in August 2003. The wine has a medium straw colour, with green tints. On the nose it displays an interesting combination of primary Semillon fruit aromas, with complex notes from lees stirring.

The fruit characters are lemon, grapefruit and green apple combined with fig, and the complex notes are reminiscent of dough and toast, which give the impression the wine has been in oak, even though it hasn't.

The fine to medium weight palate is fresh and crisp, with lively citrus fruit flavours supported by lifted acidity. The flavours are quite long and then the wine finishes with soft tannin.

It is a very attractive drink and most people will choose to consume it while it is still young and fresh. However, those who have the patience and the space to cellar the wine will be rewarded because it should age well in bottle for at least another 15 years.

## MOSS WOOD SEMILLON VINTAGE CHART

VINTAGE	HARVEST DATE	BEAUME (°)	YIELD (t/ha)	VINTAGE RATING	OPTIMUM DRINKING
2003	12 Mar	12.9	9.2	9	<p>In general the Semillon shows fresh, fruity and lively characters up to 3 years of age. It tends to go into a sleepy dull stage between the age 3 - 5 years. Between 5 - 6 years it should start to pick up rich, honey, toasty characters. These characters are usually at their peak between 10 - 15 years and will remain enjoyable until at least 20 years old.</p> <p><i>Please note:</i> These comments are only accurate when the wine has been well cellared. In the interests of accuracy, only where we have reviewed a wine during the year, will we provide optimum drinking years.</p>
2002	15 Mar	13.7	8.3	10	
2001	03 Mar	12.9	12.8	9	
2000	06 Mar	13.5	10.3	9	
1999	16 Mar	13.1	11.2	9	
1998	08 Mar	13.7	12.7	9	
1997	12 Mar	13.9	9.6	9	
1996	07 Mar	12.9	14.9	9	
1995	23 Feb	13.2	10.8	8+	
1994	10 Mar	12.9	11.0	9	
1993	05 Mar	12.7	9.0	10	
1992	03 Mar	12.5	13.9	8	
1991	26 Mar	11.9	19.0	6	
1990	21 Mar	12.4	13.0	8	
1989	15 Mar	12.3	12.5	7	
1988	18 Feb	12.1	9.6	7	
1987	09 Mar	12.0	13.5	8	
1986	28 Feb	12.4	9.1	7	
1985	28 Feb	12.0	10.0	9	
1984	05 Mar	12.2	12.4	7	
1983	05 Mar	12.3	13.6	9	

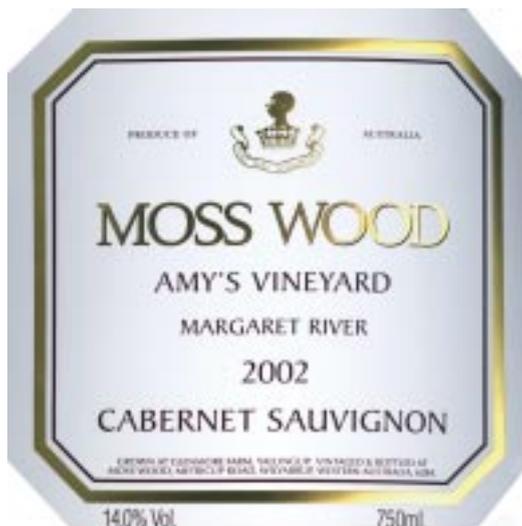
## MOSS WOOD 2002 "AMY'S VINEYARD" CABERNET SAUVIGNON

Customers who have followed Moss Wood wine over the years know this wine by its former name, the "Glenmore Vineyard" Cabernet Sauvignon. The grapes for this wine are sourced from the Glenmore Vineyard at Yallingup, which belongs to Moss Wood Production Manager, Ian Bell.

Ian has been producing wine from his vineyard since the 2000 vintage and this year will release his own "Glenmore" label for the first time.

To avoid confusion between the two wines, the Moss Wood product has a new name - "Amy's Vineyard", in honour of Ian's grandmother, Glenmore farm owner and Yallingup legend, Amy Beers.

Production techniques were as per the normal recipe, with all fruit hand picked and then de-stemmed into open fermenters. Each batch was then seeded with a pure yeast culture and hand plunged four times per day



for extraction. Fermentation temperature was set at a maximum of 30 C. The wine was on skins for an average of 12 days and then it was pressed. All pressings were included and then the wine was racked into barrel for malolactic fermentation. It spent 12 months in French oak barriques, of which 33% were new. Finally, the wine was filtered and then bottled in August 2003.

The "Amy's Vineyard" 2002 has a style typical of the vintage with vibrant fruit aromas, something which is a feature of Yallingup wines but really comes to the fore in such a mild year. The nose shows dark fruits of redcurrants and blueberries as well as some complex earthy notes not seen before, which we attribute to the inclusion of Merlot (about 5%) in the blend for the first time. There is also soft, toasty oak.

On the palate, the wine also displays its "regionality" with clear blueberry flavours filling the front and mid-palate. The structure is firm with high acidity and assertive tannins, although both are balanced by excellent length of flavour.

With such bright fruit characters, the wine appeals for early drinking but it has excellent cellaring potential and can be kept for at least five more years. The earliest of these wines, the 1997, is still sound and continues to improve in bottle.

## "SISTERS ARE DOING IT FOR THEMSELVES"

With apologies to the Eurythmics, but another area of wine production that our female staff will tell you that they do better and faster than the rest, is labelling. Now they have the tools to take control of these outcomes for themselves.

In July, Moss Wood took delivery of a new Gaitec bottle

washer & STS Labeller from Italy, with the capacity to run at up to 1,500 bottles per hour. After ten years of using contract labelling, we have returned to using our own equipment. It is a far cry from the wooden roller/glue labelling device we loved to hate in the 80's! The new machine returns to us flexibility and control of the process.

## Introducing Emma Amos

In August, Emma joined us in our office. She has a many and varied job and takes on the major challenge of reception as well as hosting visitors and relief of just about anyone who is on holidays or sick! Roles to which she has taken like a duck to water.

Emma last worked at the Margaret River Wine Industry Association, where she was Administrative Officer. In her previous life as a Melbournian (for which we have

forgiven her), she gained qualifications in Art and Design and a wealth of experience working in the advertising industry. Her first job in Western Australia was at Brookland Valley, so many of our customers may recognise her from their Cellar Door.



We look forward to revamping our website very soon and we are sure that Emma's expertise will be invaluable.

Born to our hardworking Cellarman Eddie and his lovely wife Lisa  
**JEREMY EDWARD BUGDEN**



2.8 kg  
6lbs 3 ozs  
at 11.45 am

17<sup>th</sup> September 2003

St. John's Hospital, Bunbury

Two weeks early, impatient to join the wine industry, we are reliably informed that Jeremy is a content little baby, much like his Father!!?



# VINTAGE 2003

The 2002 / 2003 growing season was an interesting one, to say the least. During the early part of winter, temperatures were quite warm and promoted an early and uneven budburst. This was especially true with the early-ripening varieties like our old favourite, Chardonnay, but even ever-reliable Semillon was affected. Pinot Noir and Merlot had fewer problems, as did Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc, or so we thought. However, when the Cabernet harvests were in, they were down by 11% and 50% respectively.

Overall, the combined crop from both vineyards was down by 17%, although some of this was the result of deliberate crop reduction in Moss Wood Pinot Noir and Ribbon Vale Semillon and Merlot. The explanation lies with the season. Since the budburst was uneven, shoot numbers per vine were lower, resulting in fewer bunches per vine. While this may lead to lower yields, the vines can make up some lost ground if flowering is good and lots of berries set in the bunch. We were hopeful that this would be the case but wetter than normal conditions during October prevented it and in fact, bunch sizes were average only.

Quality, however, is another matter. The temperatures right through spring and summer were warm, encouraging consistent ripening. When combined with good spring rainfall, the result was well-nourished vines ripening the crop with no evidence of stress. The vintage started with the harvest of

Pinot Noir on 11<sup>th</sup> February, which was about 12 days earlier than normal.

The first real winemaking complication occurred when 26 millimetres of rain fell at the end of February. Luckily, all the Chardonnay and Pinot Noir had been picked by then but Sauvignon Blanc was just starting. The quality of the first batch was excellent but the second and third were diluted somewhat by the rain. It remains the biggest disappointment of the vintage after showing such early promise. All the other varieties coped well and ripened as though the rain hadn't happened.

Since the season was quite warm, the whites do not have the aromatics and finesse of 2002 but are still of a very high standard, especially Chardonnay and Semillon which are similar in style to 1983. On the other

hand, the red wines are very exciting, with quality to match some of the best vintages of the last 10 years. The comparison with 1983 can also be made, especially for Cabernet Sauvignon, although the earlier vintage showed riper, more chocolate-like fruit flavours.

The final quality of the Cabernet Sauvignon was a close-run thing because it was picked by the end of March, just beating the 40 millimetres of rain that fell during April. Combined with the resulting lower temperatures, this caused some difficulty with the "Amy's Vineyard" from Glenmore, which saw the last third of the crop still unpicked when the rain came and it struggled to ripen further.

In summary, 2003 was a good season and our major concern was not wine quality, only the quantity.



# NON-CORK CLOSURES



Our program of using Stelvin screw top closures for Moss Wood wine continues and so far, we are very pleased with the results. Some readers may have been fortunate enough to attend tastings in Sydney and Melbourne, where we compared the same wine under cork and under stelvin but for those who haven't, a brief explanation follows. Please note that these were not blind tastings.

In comparing Moss Wood Cabernet Sauvignon and the Ribbon Vale Vineyard Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon Merlot, we found that the stelvin-closed bottles are very consistent and taste virtually identical. On the other hand, cork-closed bottles vary enormously. This excludes bottles that were directly tainted by cork, which were rejected before each tasting. Bottle variation has been noted in the past but put down to causes other than cork taint. However, we are now very suspicious that many corks do not seal well at all and the wine under those corks is ageing far more quickly than it should.

Another interesting point is that after having tasted approximately 150 bottles of both closures, cork and stelvin, there was only one cork bottle which was better than the stelvin. In every other instance, the stelvin was preferred. Occasionally, the cork bottles nearly matched the stelvin but mostly they were significantly lower in quality.

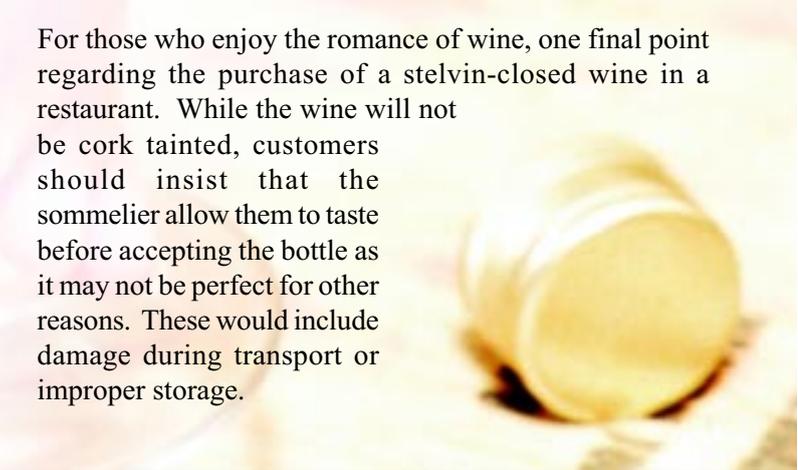
Research from the Australian Wine Research Institute suggests if a wine has "reduced" i.e. it has hydrogen sulphide characters before bottling, it will become worse under stelvin. We are confident that our wines are unaffected by this.

Consumers are also supporting the new closure, to the point where only 30% of our wines will now be sealed using corks and these will be primarily destined for the more conservative export markets. Australian customers can still order cork-sealed wine if that is preferred but unless specified, all orders will be filled with stelvins. In the event of a customer specifically choosing cork-sealed bottles, we will not accept returns for leakers or tainted bottles.

For all their benefits, Stelvin closures are not perfect and can leak if not applied correctly. If any of our products are found to have this problem, please contact the winery and we will exchange them.

Customers should also be aware that the stelvin capsule is not pilfer or tamper-proof. Please ensure that the seal has not been broken before purchasing a bottle. In addition, when buying a wine in a restaurant, the customer must insist that it be opened at the table. This guards against receiving a damaged bottle.

For those who enjoy the romance of wine, one final point regarding the purchase of a stelvin-closed wine in a restaurant. While the wine will not be cork tainted, customers should insist that the sommelier allow them to taste before accepting the bottle as it may not be perfect for other reasons. These would include damage during transport or improper storage.



## *Great Wine Estates Auction # 4*

The fourth **Langton's Great Wine Estates of Western Australia Auction** will be held at Cape Mentelle Winery in Margaret River on Saturday, the 22nd November 2003.

The sale will be conducted in two parts - a 'live' sale, consisting of barrels, vertical lots and large format bottles, and an 'on-line' sale. At the end of the live auction, twelve

6L Imperial bottles, labelled with original artworks from leading WA artists will be auctioned, with all proceeds donated to the Busselton Population Medical Research Foundation. We are delighted that our Moss Wood 2000 Cabernet Sauvignon Imperial displays a wonderful creation by Jenni Doherty, who is most renowned for her highly decorative, richly patterned and colourful designs.

For further details, please visit [www.langtons.com.au](http://www.langtons.com.au)