



MOSS WOOD
Wilyabrup
MARGARET RIVER
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

*Est'd
1969*



MEDIAN HARVEST DATE

24th/03/2021

HARVEST RIPENESS

13.4° Baume

YIELD

4.89 t/ha

**GROWING SEASON AVE
TEMPERATURE**

18.6°C

**NUMBER OF HOURS ACCRUED
BETWEEN 18 AND 28°C**

1206

**NUMBER OF HOURS ABOVE
33°C**

21

**DAYS ELAPSED BETWEEN
FLOWERING AND HARVEST**

137 days

MOSS WOOD
2021 CHARDONNAY

VINTAGE NOTES

In some ways, it's really quite easy to describe the 2020/21 growing season – long and cool. With an average temperature of 18.6°C, the Chardonnay vines ripened at a very leisurely pace indeed, taking 137 days to progress from flowering to harvest, basically 3 weeks longer than usual. When the fruit came off on the 24th March, it had the very pleasing ripeness of 13.4° Baume, slightly above average, despite the mild conditions. All up, a very satisfying result. It must have been a pretty straightforward season, surely? Well, actually, no, not quite.

The fun started way back in October, 2019, when on the 24th, hail cut a swathe across the Moss Wood vineyard. That was almost 17 months prior to the 2021 vintage, so how can that have affected it? The answer can be seen in the yield, which at 4.89 tonnes per hectare, is down by 27%. More specifically, the bunch numbers were down by around 40%, because the hail damaged both the wood and the buds that we had available for pruning in 2020 and which gave us the 2021 crop. It's another reminder that a good hailstorm harms the crops for at least 2 years – the current season and the one following.

The vines can make up a yield deficit if they enjoy good flowering conditions. However, spring 2020 was fairly damp, with 13 of 40 days delivering 97mm of rain, not to mention 8 days when the temperature dropped below 8°C. As a result, those fewer bunches also weighed 20% less than usual.

Mother Nature settled down a bit through December and January, giving mild but benign conditions and we waited patiently for the vines to progress. At the end of the first week of February she changed her mind and gave us her “don't get too comfortable” warning, delivering 88mm of rain and then a further 40mm at the beginning of March. No wonder farmers complain!

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Despite all of the above, our spray program worked well, so we had no disease. In the end, we just needed to be patient and let the fruit reach full ripeness, which it did with ease.

PRODUCTION NOTES

As always at Moss Wood, the fruit was harvested by hand although when we sent our Afghani pickers into the vineyard they weren't too happy with the quantity on offer and there was much grumbling in the Hazari patois. Reassurance about the excellent quality didn't seem to offer much solace.

The fruit was then delivered to the winery, sorted by hand and whole-bunch pressed. The must was settled and then seeded with multiple yeast strains for primary fermentation. On 3rd April 2021, at the halfway stage, the fermenting juice was racked to oak. All the barrels were 225 litre French oak and 50% were new.

Malolactic fermentation then took place and once completed, all the barrels were racked and blended in stainless steel, adjusted with SO₂ and then the finished wine was returned to oak.

There it stayed until 18th July 2022 when all the barrels were again racked and blended in stainless steel. Fining trials were carried out but none improved the wine's balance and so it was fined only with bentonite for protein stability. It was then cold stabilized and sterile filtered into bottle on 3rd August.

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TASTING NOTES

Colour and condition: Medium straw hue with green tints. Bright condition.

Nose: An absolutely typical Moss Wood Chardonnay showing all the vineyard's classical features but with the added intensity from the mild season. There are bright fruit aromas of melon, peach and lime, with a complex background of roast cashews and almonds, crème caramel and honey. The final note is a soft, lightly toasty oak.

Palate: The influence of the cool season also shows up nicely on the palate, where the wine displays full body but crisp acidity. This amplifies the bright peach and melon flavours, followed by caramel and a touch of oak. There is some tannin on the finish but they are nicely balanced by the fruit generosity.

Cellaring: Given the very high quality of the year, we strongly recommend the 2021 for cellaring and suggest a minimum of 10 years for some bottle development but it can be aged well beyond 20 years to reach full maturity. However, there is one proviso, it is very enjoyable now and will tempt even the most dedicated cellaring person.

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