

MARGARET RIVER WINE

MEDIA RELEASE

TUESDAY 5 SEPTEMBER 2023

IWSC results for Margaret River wine strike high!

Last week, for the first time in the International Wine & Spirit Competition's (IWSC) history, they brought in situ judging to Australia and focused on one region, not the whole country. Known as Australia's 'boutique region', Margaret River is famous for its premium wines. The quality of the wines did not disappoint, with 92% of entries awarded a medal.

The IWSC is renowned for assessing wines and spirits and play an essential role in maintaining and elevating industry standards in the world of wines and spirits.

The judges spoke highly of the quality of all entries, noting that the bar had been raised very high. Over 260 wines were tasted, and over 230 wines were awarded with medals – be it gold, silver or bronze, which is an incredible strike rate of over 92%.

The two hero grape varieties of Margaret River, Cabernet Sauvignon and Chardonnay, ruled the tasting in terms of the number and the quality of entries and the most medals. Of the 24 golds, 11 were awarded to Chardonnays and 10 to Cabernet Sauvignons.

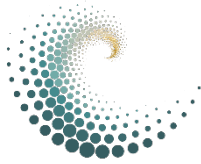
Margaret River Wine Association CEO Amanda Whiteland said, *"We were a bit nervous as we knew the judges were coming with high expectations, but we were so pleased with the whole week. The quality of the wines that the judges tasted both in judging and during the week, and the medal strike rate achieved, even exceed their expectations."*

Master of Wine Alistair Cooper oversaw the judging panels, including international and local experts. The international judges who travelled to Western Australia were Master of Wine Beth Pearce, Freddy Bulmer, Melania Battiston and Libby Brodie. They were joined by the Australian wine professionals and communicators Randall Pollard, Erin Larkin, Chris Crawford and Emma Farrelly.

The IWSC judges were utterly impressed with the calibre of Cabernet Sauvignon wines, which showed a real complexity and great ageing potential. They felt that while the 2022 Cabernets were still young, they would develop beautifully in the bottle. *"There's a range of styles in the Cabernet from 2021 and 2022, with some on the more commercial end of the spectrum, with glossy oak and polished pastille fruit, and some wines where the briny, savoury influence creates delicious complexity,"* said the judges. *"We found high quality and high scores in both camps and a place for both in the global market."* The older vintages, such as 2018 and 2019, showed excellent, firm structure and refined flavours of dry spice and truffles.

One of the gold-winning wines, **Cape Naturaliste Vineyard Torpedo Rocks Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon 2018**, earned a brilliant score of 97 points. The judges described it as *"superb"* and praised its alluring nose *"with a violet and lavender undertone supporting the fruit. This is supple and, polished and poised. The finish is good, with great Margaret River character."*

As for the Margaret River Chardonnays, the 2022 vintage was proclaimed "stellar" by the IWSC judges, who admired the Burgundy-like flinty character and layers of fruit flavours. The experts appreciated a wide range of Chardonnay styles among the entries, with various approaches to



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winemaking and, particularly, the use of oak. According to the judges, the most brilliant wines captured the phenolic character of the local Chardonnay clone and the natural zingy pink grapefruit acidity.

The highest-scoring Chardonnay was **Stella Bella Wines Luminosa Chardonnay 2022** earning 97 points and a gold medal. The judges admired the vibrant fruit, the skilful use of oak, and the wine's mineral profile: *"Oyster shell, delicate nuttiness, perfectly managed reduction. Exactly what you want from Margaret River Chardonnay. This tastes delicious too, with great structure and layers of flavour. It's complex and powerful but refined too."*

Cherubino received an impressive total of 4 gold medals for their Chardonnay wines - **Chardonnay 2022**, **Dijon Chardonnay 2022** and **Gingin Chardonnay** from Margaret River, as well as **Pemberton Chardonnay 2022**.

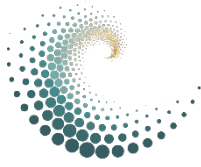
Among other white whites, the Sauvignon Blanc and Semillon blends were the most notable, earning several bronze medals and one strong gold. The gold winner, **Voyager Estate Sauvignon Blanc-Semillon 2023**, displayed a gorgeous aroma profile of *"green pineapple, pine and herbs"* and a *"juicy and succulent palate, still with a distinct pine note. Feels textural, with lots of citrus zest."*

Shiraz received a few silver and bronze medals and one gold. It may not be the most widely cultivated grape in Margaret River, but it definitely has the potential, according to the IWSC judges. The gold-winning wine, **Passel Estate Lot 71 Reserve Syrah 2018**, impressed the judges with its Rhone-like character showing *"a lot of earthy feral development and truffle. Some mint in the background. More pure and black-fruited on the palate, grainy tannins and fresh acidity."*

Overall, the judges were very impressed by the quality of Margaret River wines, which showed complexity and represented a variety of styles while maintaining a distinctive regional character.

23 Gold Medal-winning wines from Margaret River

- 97 points Cape Naturaliste Vineyard Torpedo Rocks Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon 2018
- 97 points Stella Bella Wines Luminosa Chardonnay 2022
- 96 points Robert Oatley Finisterre Cabernet Sauvignon 2018
- 96 points Churchview Estate The Bartondale Chardonnay 2022
- 95 points Robert Oatley The Pennant Cabernet Sauvignon 2018
- 95 points Robert Oatley The Pennant Chardonnay 2021
- 95 points Cape Mentelle Heritage Cabernet Sauvignon 2020
- 95 points Cherubino Gingin Chardonnay 2022
- 95 points Cherubino Dijon Chardonnay 2022
- 95 points Cherubino Chardonnay 2022
- 95 points Clairault Estate Cabernet Sauvignon 2020
- 95 points Credaro Family Estate 1000 Crowns Cabernet Sauvignon 2021
- 95 points Evans & Tate Redbrook Estate Cabernet Merlot 2020
- 95 points Evans & Tate Redbrook Reserve Chardonnay 2019
- 95 points Fermoy Wilyabrup Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon 2018
- 95 points Fraser Gallop Estate Parterre Chardonnay 2022
- 95 points Nocturne Single Vineyard Forrest Vineyard Chardonnay 2022



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95 points Passel Estate Lot 71 Reserve Syrah 2018
95 points Ringbolt Cabernet Sauvignon 2021
95 points Stella Bella Wines Suckfizzle Chardonnay 2022
95 points Voyager Estate Sauvignon Blanc–Semillon 2023
95 points Voyager Estate Cabernet Sauvignon 2020
95 points Voyager Estate MJW Cabernet Sauvignon 2020

Discover full medal results [here](#).

The Gold medal wines will be judged again in London by the IWSC experts for potential Trophies, awarded at the IWSC Awards on 19 October.

The IWSC judging in Margaret River was organised in partnership with the **Margaret River Wine Association** and supported by WA Wines to the World, an industry-led Export Growth Partnership coordinated by Wines of Western Australia, co-funded by DPIRD.

- ENDS -

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Images:

- [Day 1 – Welcome](#)
- [Day 3 – Judging](#)
- [Day 5 – Celebration Sundowner](#)

Additional Notes:

- Margaret River images [here](#)
- Download IWSC Media Release in [PDF](#)
- Media Kit can be download from <https://margaretriver.wine/media/>

About the IWSC

The IWSC is more than a competition. It is a global wine and spirits community, focused on people and expertise.

Our mission is to champion the best wine and spirits from around the world by taking a personal approach to our partners' needs. We offer comprehensive business support via our network of world-class experts and aim to bring this global community together to share insights and help each other grow.

We don't just champion award winners. We seek out undiscovered talent and help partners – large and small – reach ambitious targets and achieve their goals.

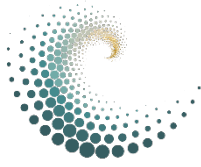
Founded by Austrian wine chemist Anton Massel in 1969, we are proud to have over fifty years' experience rigorously assessing and celebrating the best wine and spirits. Our meticulous standards, attention to detail and world-class expertise sets us apart as the partner of choice for producers, distributors, influencers and experts the world over.

Wine, spirits, knowledge, community. Since 1969

About Margaret River Wine Association

The Margaret River Wine Association (MRWA) is the peak body for Margaret River grape growers and winemakers and represents their interests to promote, protect and enhance Margaret River fine wine.

The Association is an independent, non-profit organisation, financed by its members with additional funding



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sourced through sponsorship and grants. 200 wine producers and over 50 Grape Grower and Commercial organisations are members of MRWA.

MRWA was established in the late 1970s as the Margaret River Grape Growers & Winemakers Association and in 2022 it celebrated its 40th Anniversary since incorporation in 1982.

About Margaret River

Margaret River is one of the Earth's most pristine, geographically secluded, coastal wine regions. This breathtaking destination of ancient landforms, lush forests and distinct Ironstone gravel soils enjoys a 'textbook perfect' climate for fine wines, with its consistent Mediterranean climate and intense maritime influence – here, the Indian and Southern Oceans meet.

Scarce and sought-after worldwide, Margaret River wines represent only 2% of the Australian annual crush. The elegant and powerful Cabernet Sauvignon and Chardonnay expressions are most noteworthy and can be grown with a 'light touch' approach, as the grapes typically ripen with superb balance, refinement and structure. Artisan and family-owned producers dominate, and their preference for handcrafted winemaking and respectful creativity shines through.

A world-renowned wine destination, the region's 100 cellar doors, gourmet culinary experiences, stunning nature and spirited arts scene attracts over 1.5 million overnight visitors per year.