



MEDIA RELEASE

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IWSC finds perfection in Margaret River

Margaret River has made history on the world wine stage, with the International Wine & Spirit Competition (IWSC) awarding the region a remarkable 29 Gold medals and its first ever perfect 100-point score for a wine. The landmark result came as the IWSC returned to Margaret River for the fourth consecutive year, in partnership with the Margaret River Wine Association (MRWA) and Wines of Western Australia.

Margaret River winery House of Cards made history with the **House of Cards 'Ace High' Chardonnay 2025** receiving the perfect score of **100 points** at the **International Wine & Spirit Competition (IWSC)** Global Tasting in Margaret River.

IWSC Co-Chairs Andrew Caillard MW and Freddy Bulmer captured the excitement of the moment they landed on the landmark 100-point score.

"It stood out for its sheer class, its depth, its complexity and its perfect balance," said Bulmer. "When Andrew suggested 100 points, I thought: there's nothing more that this wine could do. We tasted it again, blind, alongside all the Golds and both agreed that 100 points was absolutely justified. It was an absolutely beautiful wine – absolute perfection."

As well as its perfect score, House of Cards was awarded two additional gold medals - the House of Cards 'The Royals' Chardonnay 2025 received 98 points and the House of Cards 'Kings in the Corner' Cabernet Merlot 2024 receiving 95 points. With these three gold medals, House of Cards also scooped the **2026 IWSC Western Australian Wine Producer Trophy** – the second time in three years.

House of Cards Co-owner & Winemaker Travis Wray said the result was a reflection of the vineyard's organic, soil-first approach. *"We are beyond thrilled with this result! For us it's a testament to organic farming and soil health. Our philosophy is simple – healthy soil translates to happy vines, which in turn grows amazing fruit. If we get this right the rest is easy."*

Co-owner Elizabeth Wray, who leads House of Cards' marketing and sales, said the perfect score would open doors for the brand. *"Receiving 100 points for our 2025 Ace High Chardonnay has put us front and centre on the international stage and has allowed our brand exposure we could only dream of."*

Annabel Angland, Viticulturist at **Cape Mentelle** was awarded the inaugural **IWSC Young Wine Producer Award**. Open to those 35 years old or under who had direct responsibility for winemaking or viticulture, this trophy is based on the aggregate points achieved by their wines, which included a gold for Cape Mentelle's Heritage Chardonnay 2025.

A total of **29 Gold medals** were awarded, with the top three wines all Margaret River Chardonnay. Presenting the Gold Medals at the IWSC Awards Sundowner, Andrew Caillard MW praised the unmistakable character and world-class quality of Margaret River Chardonnay, highlighting the powerful expression of the Gingin clone.

“How magnificent the Gingin clone is here, how unique, how wonderful it is, and how diverse it is... this commonality and voice that is so clear cut, I really found it extraordinary... This year, it was really crystal clear you have got something really unique and special.”

2026 Global Judging in Margaret River

This year’s Margaret River judging panel brought together leading international and Australian wine voices, led by **Co-Chairs Andrew Caillard MW** and **Freddy Bulmer**, alongside UK-based judges **Emma Robinson, Isa Bal MS** and **Joanna Nerantzi**, and Australian judges **Nick Ryan, Kayleen Reynolds** and **Loïc Avril**.

Over the week, the IWSC judges were immersed in the Margaret River Wine Region, gaining first-hand insight into the land, culture, people and wines that have helped shape Western Australia’s global wine reputation. Christelle Guibert, IWSC Strategy and Business Development Director, highlighted the importance of spending time in the region for the judges.

“What always stands out in Margaret River is the passion and generosity of its producers. Spending time with them throughout the week gives our international judges a much deeper understanding of the region – not only the quality of the wines, but the people, vineyards and stories behind them.”

The wines were judged blind at the Vasse Felix Art Gallery from 26–28 August, with more than 250 entries assessed through the IWSC’s rigorous judging process across key varieties including Chardonnay, Cabernet Sauvignon, Shiraz and Sauvignon Blanc.

Margaret River Wine Association CEO Penny Dickeson said hosting one of the world’s most respected international wine competitions in the region created value well beyond the official judging.

“Bringing influential judges to Margaret River is an investment in more than medals. It puts our producers in direct conversation with global trade, media and sommeliers, creating relationships, market insight and advocacy that continue long after judging has finished.”

2026 IWSC Gold Medal Highlights

- House of Cards – Ace High Chardonnay 2025, 100 points; The Royals Chardonnay 2025, 98 points; Kings in the Corner Cabernet Merlot 2024, 95 points.
- Credaro Family Estate – 1000 Crowns Chardonnay 2025, 98 points.
- Menzies Vineyard – Wilyabrup Cabernet Sauvignon 2023, 97 points.
- Evans & Tate – Redbrook Reserve Chardonnay 2023, 97 points.
- Xanadu Wines – Reserve Chardonnay 2024, 96 points; Stevens Road Chardonnay 2024, 96 points; Vinework Chenin Blanc 2025, 95 points.
- Nocturne – Single Vineyard Forrest Chardonnay 2025, 96 points; Single Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon 2024, 95 points.
- Stella Bella Wines – Suckfizzle Cabernet Sauvignon 2024 and Luminosa Chardonnay 2025, both 95 points.

(See full list attached)

Western Australia Varietal Highlights

Across the 29 Gold Medals awarded:

- Chardonnay led the charge with 13 Margaret River Gold Medals, underscoring the region's international reputation for exceptional, world-class expressions.
- Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Sauvignon blends followed strongly with 9 Gold Medals, reinforcing Margaret River's standing as one of Australia's great Cabernet regions.
- Mount Barker and Pemberton also shone, each earning Gold recognition for Chardonnay and sparkling wine respectively.
- The results also highlighted Margaret River's breadth of excellence, with Gold Medals awarded to Chenin Blanc, Sauvignon Blanc Semillon, Semillon, Cabernet Franc and sparkling wines.

This initiative was proudly delivered by Margaret River Wine Association in partnership with Wines of Western Australia through support from the Western Australian Wine Industry Partnership, an industry-led initiative supported by the WA Government.

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Appendix 1 – Western Australia Trophy winners

2026 IWSC Western Australian Wine Producer Trophy – **House of Cards**

2026 IWSC Young Wine Producer Award – **Annabel England**, Viticulturist, **Cape Mentelle**

Appendix 2 – Full List of IWSC 2026 Gold Medal Winners (Margaret River Judging)

Producer	Wine	Medal / Score	Region
House of Cards	Ace High Chardonnay 2025	Gold - 100	Margaret River
Credaro Family Estate	1000 Crowns Chardonnay 2025	Gold - 98	Margaret River
House of Cards	The Royals Chardonnay 2025	Gold - 98	Margaret River
Menzies Vineyard	Wilyabrup Cabernet Sauvignon 2023	Gold - 97	Margaret River
Evans & Tate	Redbrook Reserve Chardonnay 2023	Gold - 97	Margaret River
Idée Fixe	Premier Brut 2023	Gold - 96	Margaret River
Byron & Harold	The Protocol Cabernet Sauvignon 2024	Gold - 96	Margaret River
Deep Woods Estate	Single Vineyard Septimus Cabernet Malbec 2023	Gold - 96	Margaret River
Domaine Naturaliste	Morus Cabernet Sauvignon 2023	Gold - 96	Margaret River
Cape Mentelle	Heritage Chardonnay 2025	Gold - 96	Margaret River
Cherubino	Chardonnay 2025	Gold - 96	Margaret River
Marchand & Burch	Mount Barrow Chardonnay 2024	Gold - 96	Mount Barker
Nocturne	Single Vineyard Forrest Chardonnay 2025	Gold - 96	Margaret River
Xanadu Wines	Reserve Chardonnay 2024	Gold - 96	Margaret River
Xanadu Wines	Stevens Road Chardonnay 2024	Gold - 96	Margaret River
Howard Park Wines	Petit Jete, Blanc de Blancs NV	Gold - 95	Pemberton
A. G. Oatley Wines	Nicole Oatley Wines Cabernet Franc 2023	Gold - 95	Margaret River
Clairault	Wilyabrup Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon 2023	Gold - 95	Margaret River
House of Cards	Kings In The Corner Cabernet Merlot 2024	Gold - 95	Margaret River

Producer	Wine	Medal / Score	Region
Lenton Brae	Cabernet Sauvignon 2024	Gold - 95	Margaret River
Nocturne	Single Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon 2024	Gold - 95	Margaret River
Stella Bella Wines	Suckfizzle Cabernet Sauvignon 2024	Gold - 95	Margaret River
Churchview Estate	The Bartondale Chardonnay 2025	Gold - 95	Margaret River
Lenton Brae	Southside Chardonnay 2025	Gold - 95	Margaret River
Passel Estate	Lot 71 Reserve Chardonnay 2024	Gold - 95	Margaret River
Stella Bella Wines	Luminosa Chardonnay 2025	Gold - 95	Margaret River
Xanadu Wines	Vinework Chenin Blanc 2025	Gold - 95	Margaret River
Greenpiper Wines	Miles From Nowhere Sauvignon Blanc Semillon 2025	Gold - 95	Margaret River
Willespie Estate	Wilyabrup Reserve Semillon 2025	Gold - 95	Margaret River

Additional Information:

- The full results are published [HERE](#).
- Images available [here](#) . Photo Credit: Ovis Creative / Bianca Kate Photography as noted.
- The MRWA Media Kit can be downloaded from <https://margaretriver.wine/media/>

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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 sourced through sponsorship and grants. Over 175 wine producers and 50 grape grower and commercial organisations are members of MRWA.

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.