



Tasting Notes 2012 Wallis Chardonnay



Vintage A much more favourable season than 2011 though not without several interesting periods. Spring conditions were ideal for budburst and early season growth. With small bunches from the previous season's cool, wet summer and a moderate to cool spell during flowering we saw moderate to low yields with highly concentrated flavours. An average overall hang time but our longest ever veraison-harvest interval (70 days v 57 day average) resulting in intensified flavour and colour development. A record difference between harvest in the lower north and the higher south (31 days v 17 day average).

Vineyards :: Clones Wallis :: P58 [Tree Block]
Harvest date :: Yield Hand picked 20 March 2012 :: 3.4 tonnes/ha (1.4 t/acre, ~20.4hl/ha)
Brix :: pH :: TA 22.7° (12.6° Baumé) :: 3.34 :: 9.7 g/l
Winemaking The grapes were hand-harvested on 20 March, whole bunch pressed and the unsettled juice was transferred to 22% new French oak barriques. Fermentation by indigenous yeasts preceded a complete (89%) malolactic fermentation in spring and regular stirring of lees was carried out over a 10 month barrel maturation. Bottled unfinned and lightly filtered.
Winemakers Jeremy Magyar, Richard McIntyre, Martin Spedding
Aging :: Oak 10 months :: 22% new French oak barriques (elegant/medium toast; hand select grain; Sirugue [Allier], François Frères)
Malolactic Complete (89%)
Residual sugar Dry (0.96 g/l)
Finished pH :: TA 3.44 :: 6.5 g/l
Alcohol 13.5% (8.0 standard drinks/750ml bottle)
Production 136 dozen :: bottled 20 February 2013 :: screwcap
Release date June 2014

TASTING NOTES Wallis vineyard continues to powerfully imprint this Chardonnay. Each year, despite vintage variation, it is always a wine of finesse and delicacy, a wonderful foil to McCutcheon's muscularity and impact. Ten Minutes by Tractor's rigorously designed winemaking draws out the differences between these sites with admirable clarity, always careful to allow fruit character to shine while providing sensitive oak and other winemaking inputs.

The nose is immediately complex, with delicious aromas of apple, ripe stonefruit and spice that, together, add up to something approaching the smell of a fresh fruit pie. Yet it's taut too, with citrus and cumquat alongside more prickly, smoky notes. This wine can sometimes be forbiddingly taut in its youth, but the 2012 vintage has given us an aroma that beckons with freshness and vibrancy.

A wine of considerable impact in the mouth, this steps up all aspects of its structure and flavour intensity compared to the Estate wine (as well it should) while remaining true to vineyard type. In particular, the wine's acid line is ultra-fine and firm, providing a shapely spine to the wine's movement and granting each flavour, of which there are many, the cleanest of articulations. Indeed, this seems positively gymnastic in its precision and elegance in the mouth, pausing at each turn to express a cleanly struck pose. Fine oatmeal and spice flavours bring the wine to a close.

Julian Coldrey [January 2014, commissioned by TMBT]

Food :: Temperature A wine that cries out for classic, sauced food, for example poulet poché sauce suprême. Serve at 10–13°C.
Best drinking 2014-2022

REVIEWS As always, the Wallis Vineyard exhibits the more refined character of the two Chardonnays. All the delicacy, detail and definition we have come to expect from the site are on display. The fruit intensity feels at an all-time high here and the oak seems to sit slightly lower in the mix than usual...although it is still significant. Flavours are so precise. There's a lot going on – white stonefruit, honeysuckle, smoked almonds, pear, grapefruit etc – but each element is given space to breathe. Super-fine acidity carries the wine towards an emphatic wet pebble finish. With air, a slight waxiness develops in the mouth. Simply superb.

95 :: Jeremy Pringle :: January 2014 :: www.winewillbeatitself.com