

Clairault

SAUVIGNON BLANC SEMILLON 2011

Blend: Sauvignon Blanc 72%, Semillon 28%
Region: Margaret River

Terroir: The Clairault Estate is located 4km inland from the coastal landmark - Cape Clairault. At 120 metres above sea level, the estate sits on a ridge of very old, iron rich, laterite soils that are a feature of the Margaret River Wine Region. Its natural undulations of land are interspersed with pristine remnant native bushland, creating numerous unique vineyard sites on the one property. The fruit for this wine comes from five different blocks of Sauvignon Blanc and three of Semillon, with the first planting of both in 1979. All the blocks are trellised to a single cordon, with the row orientation varying across each site.

The soils are nurtured through the use of biological inputs only; no synthetic fertilizers, no systemic fungicides, no insecticides, and minimal to nil tilling. In Winter, we allow the growth of rye grasses, clovers, and natural swards under the dormant vines. During the heat of Summer, these plants decompose to form a natural mulch layer that suppresses weeds and retains moisture for the vines over the growing season. Plant nutrition is fostered through the use of composts, kelp extracts and fish emulsions. Soil life plays an integral role in breaking down organic matter, releasing nutrients, and aerating the soil. As such, we take an active role in encouraging and protecting this ecosystem.

Vintage: The 2011 Vintage and growing season was fairly typical of most Margaret River vintages. There was a cool to mild Autumn with a regular occurrence of rain up until the Summer Solstice. This was followed by warm, dry conditions with moderate afternoon sea breezes through to early April. The conditions throughout Autumn enabled the vines to grow strong and healthy canopies. With the dry Summer that followed, these healthy canopies were instrumental in supporting good fruit growth. Disease and bird pressure was minimal.

Yields: 8.3 Tonnes/Hectare (3.35 tonnes/acre)

Vinification: Given the different vineyard blocks, picking occurs over several days when each block is at its optimum ripening. Grapes are harvested at night and then chilled prior to pressing. Night harvesting essentially takes advantage of the cooler evening temperatures, thus allowing the grapes to stay cool, which in turn reduces any chance of spontaneous fermentation. Only the free run juice and very light pressings are removed, thereby eliminating the need for corrective finings of extracted press wines. Following settling and racking of the juice, fermentation is carried out in stainless steel tanks with select aromatic yeast strains. Once fermentation is complete, the wine is blended, stabilised and filtered without delay.

Aroma: Blood orange, quince, melon and a hint of citrus rind.

Palate: The palate is smooth and very flavoursome with strong, lingering tropical characteristics and gentle acidity. A very clean wine where the fruit is the primary focus.

Cellaring: 1-5 years optimum
Wine pH: 3.24
Residual Sugar: 4.3 g/L
Bottled: 19 December, 2011
Winemaker: Will Shields

Sugar Level at Picking: Baume
Wine Titratable Acidity: 6.7 g/L
Alcohol: 12.5 %
Released: January 2012

