



## HOWARD PARK

MARGARET RIVER & GREAT SOUTHERN

# 2016 HOWARD PARK CHARDONNAY

## VINTAGE

Vintage at Burch Family Wines is a protracted event which commences each February and concludes in April. It is a time of frenetic activity, excitement and lots of weather watching, the closer one gets to harvest. During this annual progression of the seasons, the quality and style of each vintage evolves.

The 2016 vintage in the Great Southern commenced on 6<sup>th</sup> February and concluded on 10<sup>th</sup> April and in Margaret River, vintage commenced on 15<sup>th</sup> February and finished on 12<sup>th</sup> April. It was the first year that all of the Great Southern harvest was made at the Margaret River winery.

In both the temperate and cool regions of the south west, the winter of 2015 was mild with sufficient rains to replenish catchments. The spring, less blustery than preceding years gave way to a hot start to summer. When veraison began, in late January, the native marri blossom was abundant in Margaret River yet curiously absent in the Great Southern, a complete about – turn to 2015. The “bird pressure” as we call it, does have a significant impact on quality, quantity and stress levels. As summer progressed, the weather conditions between our two premium grape growing regions began to diverge.

The Great Southern spent the vintage period in and out of humid on- shore streams with the resultant rainfall to April, twice the average. Margaret River did experience a significant and unprecedented deluge in late January, which in hindsight, was more blessing than curse, due to the dryness of the soil profile and the timing of the event. The remainder of the vintage period throughout Margaret River progressed with ease and little weather distractions whereas the Great Southern was peppered with annoying rains, humidity and birds.

In review, the quality of the 2016 vintage ranges from good to great across all varieties, thanks to the diligent efforts of our vineyard team to select only the best grapes under sometimes, challenging circumstances.

## THE SITES

The Howard Park Chardonnay is selected from two vineyards, our Mount Barrow vineyard in Mount Barker and our Allingham vineyard in Margaret River.

Mount Barrow is dedicated to growing Chardonnay for still and sparkling wine. The unique attributes of this site include an elevation of 380M and a panorama of vineyard aspects from north to south facing. It is planted to the Chardonnay clones of Dijon origin.

The Allingham vineyard is located in the cooler, southern sub region of Karridale, where a great degree of cloud cover and cooler breezes prevail over the ripening period. The aspect is south and the original plantings are Gin Gin clone.

## TECHNICAL NOTES

Each batch is handpicked around 12<sup>0</sup> Be. The individual parcels of grapes are cooled, hand sorted then whole bunch pressed to extract the finest free run juice. After minimal settling, the juices are allowed to ferment naturally in French oak, of which 20% is new and composed of barriques, hogsheads and puncheons. Fermentation temperature is between 18<sup>0</sup>C to 22<sup>0</sup>C and the lees are stirred weekly from later in the fermentation until dry. The separate parcels are matured on lees in barrel for 9 months and a portion of each batch undergoes malolactic conversion. The wine was blended to tank and received minimal fining and filtration prior to bottling in November 2016.

## TASTING NOTES

Crystalline bright with a lemon skin colour. Laced with aromas of honeysuckle and citrus blossom, peach skin, pear essence, vanilla and nougat. The palate is rich in summer and citrus fruits, yet restrained by a chalky/mineral thread that provides texture and drive. Subtle support from fine grain French oak adds further complexity. A bright lemon acidity gives length and finish to the wine.

## CELLARING

A wine with boundless subtleties of flavour, complexity and style that will age elegantly over the next 5 to 7 years.

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**Variety:**  
CHARDONNAY

**Region:**  
WESTERN AUSTRALIA  
46% MOUNT BARKER  
54% MARGARET RIVER

**Cellaring:**  
OVER THE NEXT 5 YEARS

**Analyses:**  
ALCOHOL: 13% V/V  
PH: 3.25  
ACIDITY: 6.5 G.LT  
RESIDUAL SUGAR: 0.6 G.LT

Margaret River & Great Southern  
Western Australia