



Tasting Notes 2009 Wallis Vineyard Chardonnay



Vintage	Ironically, for a season that will be remembered for the devastation caused by the February 2009 bushfires, it was cool weather that defined the vintage "up the hill". Budburst was excellent but in mid November, just as flowering commenced, through into December, cool wet weather meant flowering and fruit set was poor resulting in very low yields. Main Ridge was less effected by the intense heat from mid January to early February; the rolling hills tend to hide the vines from afternoon heat loads and our predominately east-west running rows were less exposed to the extreme afternoon heat which caused most damage. The end result was low yields, great balanced acidity and intense flavours.
Vineyards :: Clones	Wallis :: P58 [Tree Block]
Harvest date :: Yield	Hand picked 8 April 2009 :: 6.1 tonnes/ha (2.5 t/acre, ~36.6hl/ha)
Brix :: pH :: TA	23.2° (12.9° Baumé) :: 3.25 :: 10.1 g/l
Winemaking	The grapes were hand harvested and whole bunch pressed and the unsettled juice was transferred to a mixture of new and old French oak barriques. Wild yeast fermented in 29% new oak. 100% MLF. Lees aged and stirred for 9 months. Bottled after fining and filtration.
Winemakers	Richard McIntyre & Martin Spedding
Aging :: Oak	9 months :: 29% new French oak (medium toast Allier & Chatillon from Sirugue)
Malolactic	Complete (94%)
Residual sugar	Dry (0.59 g/l)
Finished pH :: TA	3.30 :: 5.5 g/l
Alcohol	14.0% (8.3 standard drinks/750ml bottle)
Production	164 cases :: bottled 3 February 2010 :: screwcap
Release date	1 June 2011

TASTING NOTES

Precise single vineyard work is exciting. Over time, the drinker is rewarded with the sort of deep insight into site that one normally associates with Burgundy. The Wallis vineyard typically yields the most restrained Chardonnay in the portfolio, and so it is again for 2009.

The nose is high toned, positively etched with complexity, a blinding white light of an aroma profile that might be difficult to decipher for those accustomed to more accessible styles. But persevere and you will be rewarded with a delicate platter of white peach, minerals, thyme, and the sort of underlying caramel notes that seem to come so easily to this portfolio of Chardonnays. What's really impressive here is how the aromas occupy every inch of one's senses, from base notes through to the highest of top notes and everything in between. No matter where you look, there's a detail, more complexity, something you hadn't noticed before. The palate is equally compelling, and one of its most interesting dimensions is how the mouthfeel modulates in a way that seems to echo the push-pull of the flavour profile. Just as the flavours move between almost-luscious stonefruit and caramel to edgy minerals and general savouriness, so too does the texture go from silky to tingly, mouthfilling to lithe.

It's quite a performance, and one that transports this from being merely great Chardonnay to something very special and exciting. In its own quiet way, this is an absolute statement wine, one that shouts about subtlety and strongly proves bombast doesn't equal quality.

Food :: Temperature	Your very finest roasted organic chicken. Serve at 10–13°C.
Best drinking	2013-2018

REVIEWS

Looking back through my files, I see I have now reviewed four consecutive vintages of this standout single-vineyard wine from the Mornington Peninsula. It's a cliché to say the wines are Burgundian, but it's a cliché I can live with. The Wallis vineyard traditionally produces the most restrained, elegant chardonnay in the Ten Minutes by Tractor portfolio, offering panoply of flavours, but all with subtlety and charm. Note the beguiling aromas, the white stone-fruit, herb and mineral notes on the palate, all beautifully knit together. Lithe and lovely.

Winsor Dobbin :: 6 January 2012 :: www.thegrapehunter.com.au

With a more composed and restrained nose than the McCutcheon chardonnay from the same stable, this has plenty of lemon curd and spiced-peach brûlée custard, gentle nutty oak and attractive freshness with good concentration. The palate has a savoury thread of biscuits, grilled nuts and peach fruit, and leaves a concentrated, composed impression. Great wine.

95 :: Nick Stock :: 1 October 2011 :: Good Wine Guide 2012