



MARGARET RIVER WINE INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

2013 Margaret River Wine Region – Vintage Report as at 30th January

Weather conditions up until Christmas have been generally cooler and fresher than usual. Since then temperatures have risen gradually apart from a 3 day period around New Years which saw summer come in with a rush. To date the climate recordings are very similar to that leading up to the 2012 vintage which should prove an ideal platform leading into harvest mid February with soil moisture excellent.

With the current return to a more 'standard' climatic pattern in Margaret River with warm to hot conditions during the day and cool to warm nights have been the norm and accompanying this disease and pest pressure is low and should remain so with lower than normal January rainfall recorded and a forecast for a dry February. Marri blossom throughout the region is slowly advancing and there are buds on trees still yet to flower therefore the potential for bird, primarily silver eye, damage in most vineyards will be similar to 2012 and therefore is not expected to be a significant problem in 2013.

Veraison (colour change, berry softening and increasing sugar content of berries) is presently taking place in whites and is about to begin in reds. Bunch counts indicate a slight reduction, most likely because of the cooler weather spring weather conditions throughout the flowering period. This will lead to a reduction in yields in vineyards throughout the Margaret River region but is difficult to estimate final tonnage for 2013 when compared to 2012's 35,000 tonnes.

With red varieties bunches appear to be much looser than normal and this will provide improved airflow characteristics throughout and even up physiologic ripeness.

Most vineyards will be completing their final management arrangements for vintage with a solid focus on maintaining vine health as good wine can only come from good grapes.

Future weather conditions over the next 6 weeks will be determine the actual date of vintage but the general consensus is that it will start in the northern end of the region sometime around the 12th to 20th February 2013 commencing as it always does with Chardonnay.

There is much that can happen between now and when the last bucket has been picked but if the medium to longer range weather forecast holds true Margaret River is on the way to another strong quality vintage in 2013 across all varieties.

MEDIA RELEASE

ENDS – Dated 30th January 2013

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