

2004 CHARDONNAY



Cullens have gradually been carefully refining their approach to making Chardonnay, with the result that this latest release is the most elegant of the wines they have made from the great white variety of Burgundy. This elegance has not been achieved, however, at the expense of fruit depth and density. The 2004 Cullens Chardonnay is a great wine from all perspectives.



[Tasting notes]

Biodynamic techniques were used to produce the Chardonnay fruit, which ensures that the wine naturally reflects the vineyard characteristics. The fruit was picked at perfect physiological ripeness at Baumés ranging from 12.4 to 13.7°, producing an average of just over 13° Baumé, which is relatively low for an Australian Chardonnay. Seventy percent of the wine was fermented using wild yeasts, which contributes to the subtle mouth feel of this wine. This component was matured for just five months in new French oak to ensure that, while oak still had an influence, it remained in the background. Thirty percent of the wine was prevented from undergoing malolactic fermentation, which facilitates the retention of both freshness and natural acidity. Furthermore, that acid retention means that no acid is now required to be added to this wine style.

Colour: Bright and youthful green gold

Bouquet: Complex blend of tropical fruit, nougat, lemon citrus and vanillin oak

Palate: The intense fruit characters, so delightfully expressed on the nose, flow through on to the palate where they are beautifully integrated with the subtle oak. Refined, long and silky

Cellaring: At least 5 years

Food: All types of seafood, pasta, chicken and veal

[Reviews]

JAMES HALLIDAY

One of the pioneers of Margaret River which has always produced long-lived wines of highly individual style from the substantial and mature estate vineyards. Winemaking is now in the hands of Vanya Cullen; she is possessed of an extraordinarily good palate. The Chardonnay is superb, while I would rate the Cabernet Merlot as Australia's best.