



MOSS WOOD

Wilyabrup
MARGARET RIVER
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

*Est'd
1969*



MOSS WOOD 2023 SEMILLON

VINTAGE NOTES

Regular readers of this august journal, patient souls that they are, have seen all sorts of stories about vintage conditions and the challenges we faced. Hopefully they've all been interesting and helped explain the style of wine we produced in any given year. Yet, every now and then, a season comes around where we just have to take our hat off to Mother Nature and look on in awe. The 2023 is one of those and she did the right thing by us, no doubt.

Why was it so good? Where do we begin? Let's look at the rainfall. It could be the 10% above average rainfall of 1114mm we received during calendar year 2022, ensuring plenty of soil moisture for the vines. Or it might be that the rain eased off when we needed it to. During flowering, we received only 8 days and 21mm of rain, while only 19mm fell during January, February and March, so there was no threat of dilution or disease.

Or, perhaps it was the temperatures? During flowering there were only 8 days when it dropped below 8°C and only for a total of 25 hours, so just what we need. Yet, through the summer, the temperatures were consistently warm but not hot, with our hottest day being 37.9°C. All the vines revelled in these conditions and the semillon was no exception. It received 1018 hours in the preferred temperature range of 18-28°C and a total of 49 hours above 33°, more than enough to ensure easy progress to full flavour ripeness. The average temperature across the season was a very pleasant 20.1°.

MEDIAN HARVEST DATE

16th March, 2023

HARVEST RIPENESS

13.5°Be

YIELD

8.58 t/ha

RIPENING TIME FROM FLOWERING TO HARVEST

110 days

BOTTLING

3rd July, 2023

RELEASED

1st September, 2023

ALCOHOL

14.5%



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So, what does all this mean? It's quite simple, really – we had a classic Margaret River summer and a classic year resulted. The 2023 combined good crops and high quality and we suspect it's one of the great “all round” vintages, when all our varieties produce classic wines, which will get very special mention in the future and sit comfortably with its famous siblings like 2018, 2014, 2005, 2001, 1995, 1994, 1985, 1980 and possibly even the revered 1975.

When we have years like this, the outcomes can seem quite boring and we often say that anyone could have made wine in this sort of a year. Here are the key facts for semillon. The crop level was a very respectable, for a 50 year old, dry-farmed vineyard, of 8.58 tonnes per hectare, although still down 11%. Hand harvesting was done on 16th March, 5 days later than average and the ripeness was 13.5° Baume, a little above the normal 12.8°.

PRODUCTION NOTES

The fruit was delivered to the winery where it was sorted and then whole-bunch pressed. The must was clarified and fermented in stainless steel. We make this point because Moss Wood Semillon is the only wine we make that does not spend time in oak. It was seeded with multiple yeast strains for primary fermentation and once this was completed, the wine was racked and adjusted with SO₂ and fining trials were carried out. None improved the tannin balance so the wine is unfinned. It was then sterile filtered and bottled on 3rd July.



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TASTING NOTES

Colour and condition: Pale to medium straw hue, with green tints; bright condition.

Nose: Lifted fruit aromas and distinctly fragrant, more so than usual. It certainly shows traditional Semillon characters of fig, apple and lemon but has added dimensions of quince, pear and peach. There is a complexity of lanolin, mushroom and malt biscuits, although this sits in the background for the moment, behind a wall of fruit.

Palate: This continues the fruit depth theme of the '23 vintage, with bright fig, pear, granny smith apple and citrus flavours, combining with fresh acidity and full body to give length and generosity. The other feature of 2023 is well balanced tannins, giving the wine a firm but smooth finish.

CELLARING

We suspect the 2023 Moss Wood Semillon will represent a challenge. It's such a gorgeous young wine, it can be enjoyed immediately and we are happy to encourage those who like bright young wines to do so. However, for those with patience, it will last decades in the cellar and we recommend at least 10 years to allow the wine to develop some bottle bouquet. Even then it will still be an awkward teenager and will need at least a further 10 years to show its true class.