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## ESTATE CHARDONNAY 2008

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### Blend:

100% Margaret River Chardonnay

### Tasting Notes:

Bright deep straw in colour. The fruit aromas are upfront and lifted, aromas of passionfruit, pineapple, fig, and ripe melon. Oak and winemaking aromas follow, aromas such as freshly baked bread, roasted pine nuts and marzipan. The palate is clean with a toasty finish and a core of strong tropical fruit flavours. It is quite a big wine, but not broad or cloying, thanks to a fine tight acidity and oak structure keeping the fruit in check.

### Winemaking:

Due to some very poor climatic conditions, including hail, during the growing and flowering stage of 2008, of which Chardonnay was the worst affected, yields were extremely low (1.6 tonnes/hectare or 0.6tonnes/acre). As a result of this, flavour ripeness was intense and advanced and consequently the wine's flavour profile sits more in the riper spectrum than is typical of this wine.

The fruit for this wine was sourced from our L-block Chardonnay (33%) and our South Block Chardonnay (67%), with the clone being mainly gingin. The fruit is hand picked to allow for whole bunch pressing. After a minimal settling, fermentation is carried out in barrel (33% new) using natural occurring (spontaneous) yeasts. Oak subtlety is achieved through the use of high quality French barriques from trusted Burgundian coopers, combined with regular lees stirring (batonnage) and malo-lactic fermentation (MLF). MLF occurs on only select parts of the blend to soften acidity and build complexity and texture.

### Analysis

Sugar Level at Picking: 12.5 to 12.7 Baume

Wine pH: 3.34

Wine Titratable Acidity: 6.9 g/L

Residual Sugar: 0.97 g/L

Alcohol: 13%

Winemaker: Will Shields





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### ACCOLADES

- TOP 100** Sydney International Wine Competition 2010  
**Blue Gold** Sydney International Wine Competition 2010  
**Silver** International Chardonnay Challenge 2009  
**Bronze** Royal Queensland Wine Show 2009  
**Bronze** Perth Royal Wine Show 2009  
**Bronze** Hong Kong International Wine & Spirit Competition 2010

**95 / 100** **Ray Jordan's WA Wine Guide 2011**

This is the most complete Clairault chardonnay produced to date. The vintage was very good and the combination of wild yeast fermentation, lees stirring and some malolactic fermentation has produced a wine of depth, complexity and wonderful palate texture. An exciting step up for these guys. Cellar 5 years.

**95 / 100** **James Halliday Wine Companion 2011 [Red 5 glass rating]**

Bright green-gold; the complex bouquet has 100% barrel ferment and nutty inputs without suffocating the intense fruit that defines both bouquet and palate; partial mlf has added texture to the palate without blurring the acidity that drives the white peach and grapefruit flavours. Screwcap. Drink 2020

**93 / 100** **Lisa Perrotti-Brown MW, eRobertParker.com, Oct 2010**

Clairault's 2008 Estate Chardonnay (Black Label) has moderately pronounced aromas of ripe pineapple, guava, ginger, cashew and toast. The palate is rich and silken textured with a body the full side of medium and an abundance of tropical and warm citrus fruit flavors drizzled with cream, lingering long into the finish. Very good now, it has some capacity to evolve beautifully and should cellar to 2017+.

**91 / 100** **The Gold Book, Rob Geddes MW, Australian Wine Vintages 2011**

Shooting for a modern fresher style, these are tight to smell and bright to taste with finesse to their stone fruit and racy acidity.

**Review** **Winsor Dobbin, Oct 2010, [www.winsorschoice.blogspot.com](http://www.winsorschoice.blogspot.com)**

Clairault ESTATE Chardonnay 2008. The 2007 edition of this classy Margaret River Chardonnay went on a medal rampage and quickly sold out. Hence the 2008 is in the marketplace a little earlier than usual - and in reduced quantities following a difficult vintage that saw yields dramatically down. It's quite a big, bold wine in a chardonnay spectrum that has swung dramatically towards tight, mineral styles but it has more than enough panache to hold its own against more elegant rivals with its assertive stone-fruit characters, nutty and toasty nuances and a tight acid finish. A wine of structure and complexity that's a bit of a throwback but no less worthy for that. \$35.

**Review** **Pick of the Week, Ray Jordan, The West Weekend, Nov 2010**

"AS A HEAVYWEIGHT SLUGFEST THIS HAD IT ALL. The annual Cullen Great International Chardonnay Tasting, featuring wines from the 2006 vintage, once again provided compelling support for the claim that chardonnay is the worlds greatest white wine. The strong skew to wines from Margaret River was perfectly justified. How could you not include Cullen, Leeuwin Estate, Pierro, Cape Mentelle, Vasse Felix and Voyager? Each was, as you would expect, superb, Cullen scored my highest points, with a 19 out of 20 using the standard show judging scale for this event. The refreshing thing however, was the debuts of a couple of newcomers. Clairault was a late inclusion when one of the French wines had to be replaced at the eleventh hour because it was so badly affected by cork taint and random oxidation—and the wine performed brilliantly. With significant attention to vineyard improvement and strong winemaking direction from Will Shields, Clairault's wines have improved dramatically in recent years. The 2006 was excellent in the tasting and the 2008, which I have featured this week, is even better, and is a further endorsement of the direction the guys down there have taken in the past few years."

**88 / 100** **Jeremy Oliver Australian Wine Annual 2011**