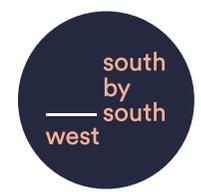


the meandering négociant



2020 'FIELDIE'

SEMILLON, SAUVIGNON BLANC, CHENIN BLANC, ARNEIS, RIESLING



Our inspiration for this wine flowed on from our 2019 Fieldie which was styled under the banner of a White Bordeaux Blend of Semillon and Sauvignon Blanc fruit, both hand harvested from our naturally grown vineyard in the Wallcliffe subregion, and co-fermented together with a little bit of skin contact. Our 2020 is again just that, but with a few additional 'friends' – some Chenin Blanc, a couple of barrels of Arneis and a touch of Riesling to make a wine with perfumed aromatics, textural phenolics and a fresh finish.

We are lucky enough to have a vineyard with 45-year-old Semillon and Sauvignon Blanc vines. This may not seem old in comparison to other regions within Australia (or even Western Australia), but for Margaret River some of the oldest commercial vines are around 52 years old. That being said we wanted to respect the fruit and create a wine that is farmed naturally, speaks a value of traditional wine making, yet has a contemporary edge to keep it relevant with today's more experimental consumers.

VINTAGE & VITICULTURE

2020 was an unusual vintage for Margaret River. Harvest started almost a month earlier than normal years, yields were significantly lower, ripening conditions were near on perfect, the marri blossomed, and the last half of vintage was conducted in COVID-19 lockdown! Although 2020 was a challenging year around the globe, in Margaret River we have been very fortunate with exceptional fruit quality – albeit with lower yields. The lower yields were due to the smaller berries and bunch sets which were a factor from the 2018 conditions on the preparation of the fruitful nodes, as well as some wet weather impact during flowering and fruit set. Although production volumes were down due, the small berries have provided exceptional fruit due to the concentration.

Apart from rain during flowering, the rest of the ripening conditions were ideal with warmer than average conditions and no rainfall, bird, or disease pressure. All varietal components of this Field Blend were harvested in early February – which was very early (five weeks earlier than the previous harvest), due to the lower yields and ideal warm, dry weather ripening the fruit more rapidly. During this period, the Marri trees blossomed extensively, which kept bird pressure off the vines and left us wondering why we even bothered to net the vines!

The main component (40%) of the 2020 Fieldie is sourced from our naturally farmed vineyard located in the Wallcliffe sub region. The hand harvested fruit used in the Fieldie comes from 45 year old vines in north to south facing rows, that have been spur pruned to deliberately return lower but more concentrated yields.

The Chenin Blanc component comes from the Treeton subregion, the Arneis comes from the Karridale subregion and the touch of Riesling comes from the Geographe region. The stylistic choice to combine these varietals to the Sem/Sauv blend was to add different layers of aromatics and bring a slightly different, more focused acid line to the wine.

The Sauvignon Blanc, Chenin Blanc, and Arneis were picked at a slightly lower Baumé to help restrain the phenolic nature of the varietals and complement the slightly riper Semillon and Riesling fruit whilst creating a more finely structured wine. This in turn presented safer pH levels to allow for minimal molecular sulphur to be used within the winemaking process.

WINEMAKING

Once harvested, the fruit was gently destemmed and crushed into a stainless-steel tank where it was kept on skins and cooled for 10 days. After this skin contact period, the fruit was pressed to barrels and stainless steel (50/50) where it completed ferment. Malolactic Fermentation wasn't encouraged, but wasn't discouraged in the barrel component, with about half the barrels undergoing natural secondary fermentation. Secondary fermentation was not encouraged in the tank portion to maintain the fresh and flinty nature post ferment. The wine remained in oak and tank for six months of maturation prior to bottling.

APPEARANCE, NOSE & PALATE

In a glass the wine presents with a vibrant straw tinged yellow fruit. This is a perfumed and very aromatically focussed wine with a gentle hint of natural reductive tones. The palate expresses a freshness and brightness of fruit, which is on the savoury spectrum with some highlighted phenolics. Careful older oak integration and some gentle stirring on yeast lees have resulted in a textured component to this wine, which, together with the overall leanness of this wine brings structure.

Region	Margaret River
Alcohol	12.7%
Drinking Best	2020 – 2022