

When is Reserve not a reserve? *when it's a Sub Regional Series.* After 15 vintages making wine in Margaret River you get a feel for the sub regions that are best suited to specific grape varieties. Rather than go down the traditional Reserve or Single Vineyard path we decided to pursue something a little different, hence the sub regional theme. Although there are no officially defined subregions in Margaret River, producers have adopted the John Gladstone proposal. In 1999 viticultural scientist Dr John Gladstone presented a paper suggesting there should be six sub regions based on climate and soil differences.

The aim with the Flametree Sub Regional Series is to showcase distinctive wine styles from vineyards renowned for growing ultra premium fruit. We've chosen to lead with Margaret River's strongest varieties, Cabernet Sauvignon, Chardonnay and Sauvignon Blanc. The Sub Regional Series represents the very best varietal wines under the Flametree label, these wines will only be made in the best vintages, volumes will be small and availability very limited.

FLAMETREE MARGARET RIVER S.R.S. CHARDONNAY 2012



Grape Variety / Region

100% Margaret River Chardonnay

Winemaking

After overnight cold storage the fruit was whole bunch pressed and sent straight to French oak barrels. Juice lees from machine harvested fruit was then added to get turbidity's up around 400-800 NTU, the wine was then left to undergo wild ferment. The secret to successful wild ferment is high turbidity juices and low alcohols. MLF was blocked; I believe Margaret River Chardonnay has enough texture; MLF often thickens the wines and interferes with the fruit purity. The 2012 S.R.S. Chardonnay was barrel fermented in French oak, 40% new, the remainder being two and three year seasoned wood. The wines were left on lees, however the lees were not stirred, again in warm years the wines have enough texture and flavour.

Tasting Notes

The 2012 is the third vintage produced under the Flametree S.R.S. label. The 2012 S.R.S. Chardonnay is a more powerfully built wine than the previous two vintages and shows the fruit flavour synonymous with the great Margaret River Chardonnays. Plenty of dried pear, citrus and stone fruit flavours are combined with savoury notes from the wild solids ferment. These fruit flavours are supported by subtle French oak. The S.R.S. Chardonnay has some complex sulphides in the struck match or popcorn spectrum. These sulphides give the wine a lovely savoury or saline character that complements modern food flavours particularly well. After 10 months in the finest French oak the wine was fined with milk, filtered and bottled in January 2013.

Alc: 13.0%