



2013 CHARDONNAY



It will come as no surprise to lovers of Pierro Chardonnay that the excellent 2013 vintage has produced another stellar white. The beginnings were scarcely auspicious with wild, windy and cool weather in November interrupting flowering and fruit set and reducing yields considerably – for many to the lowest level in a decade. Summer brought warm to hot days and cool to warm nights, ideal for ripening the whites, and dry conditions so that there was little disease pressure on the vines. The Margaret River Vignerons Association commented that the Chardonnay ‘already is highlighted by an outstanding balanced line of natural acidity with full rich flavours, almost citrus and nectarine with soft and fine phenolics.’ The success of the Pierro Chardonnay owes much to the attention to detail paid by those working in the vineyard. This is informed by a clear philosophy forged by Mike Peterkin during his time studying at Roseworthy, and refined by more than 30 years of experience in Margaret River. The wine is sourced from selected sites on the estate: on the banks of the Willyabrup Brook which flows down the valley to the nearby Indian Ocean. Mike Peterkin believes that this natural watercourse provides a nourishing life-source for the vineyard. The mature vines (16 to 33 years old in 2013) are all high density plantings, 4,000 to 5,500 vines per hectare. It was the deep roots of these mature vines that particularly flourished in the warm dry conditions.

There is also a strong and transparent philosophy underlying the winemaking for the Pierro Chardonnay. Fundamental to this have been the improvements made possible by the building of a new winery in 2000. Mike Peterkin believes that this technology has improved the aging potential of the Chardonnay. Whole bunch pressing has lowered its phenolic content. The temperature of each batch of grapes is now lower than before and this has given more delicacy and greater length to the wine. Paying greater attention to the levels of dissolved oxygen and sulphur dioxide during processing and the use of screwcaps, which offer better protection from oxidation, have also contributed to improved ageing. Needless to say the grapes are hand picked and hand sorted so that every bunch is inspected and checked before pressing. The role of the malolactic fermentation is strongly supported because Mike Peterkin believes that this can play a part in improving the flavour and length of palate of Pierro's flagship wine. Likewise, battonage (regular lees stirring of barrels) is seen as vital to the style because it contributes a seamless character and creamy texture to the wine. Barrel fermentation in new (50%) and one year old French barriques remains a constant. The 2013 Pierro Chardonnay shows a consistency and kinship with the previous two vintages – perhaps less evolved and less primal than the 2011 but with similar purity of flavour and refreshing vibrance when compared to the 2012. Importantly, all three show a character and promise that will be rewarded by cellaring

The 2013 Pierro Chardonnay is subtle, delicate and fine with a tight structure, a hint of cedar on the nose and the palate as well as grapefruit, white peach and nectarine flavours. There's a marvellous intensity to the wine, a densely concentrated opulence and restrained power. The overall impression is of a wine showing harmony and balance that finishes fresh, clean and crisp. Pierro Chardonnay is instantly recognisable amongst any collection due to its strong, individual style, and has a wonderful track record of cellaring performance. This is a wine that can be savoured, treasured and enjoyed and as such makes a memorable gift.