



OUR VITICULTURIST

Andy Ferreira is the owner and operator of Riverace Contractors. Back in 2000 Andy's company took on the challenge of planting our vineyard. He is very much the energy and brains of the great vines we are growing today.

We continue to improve and adjust what we do in the vineyard and Andy is the guy we rely on for the advice when making these decisions and then he also makes them happen with his team of very talented staff.

'Hats off' to Andy and his team; we couldn't do it without you.

Andy giving Anne and Chris a lesson on cane pruning techniques



Mitsey is approaching her first birthday and continues to bring joy, and challenges, to us all on the vineyard.



The Brash family has increased again - Sammy has accepted Stuart's proposal - wedding bells are in the air. Congratulations to you both.

BRASH VINEYARD HOLIDAY STAY

If you would like to experience a 'vineyard' stay, the Brash Vineyard original farmhouse home is now available to holiday let. Situated in the middle of our vineyard, this family style home offers you an opportunity to share the magical surroundings of vines, the valley views surrounded by towering jarrah and marri trees, and when you are relaxing after a busy day touring the area, some wonderful sunsets and tranquil evenings. *A 9.5 Booking.com rating.*

Call Anne on 0427 042 767, or visit our website to find out more.

BRASH VINEYARD REGISTERED MEMBER ORDER FORM

2014 Sauvignon Blanc

Case (12 bottles) \$150.00
(Normal retail price \$270.00)

Quantity

Total \$

2013 Cabernet Sauvignon

Case (12 bottles) \$300.00
(Normal retail price \$480.00)

Quantity

Total \$

TOTAL COST \$

PAYMENT EFT

Credit card Visa Mastercard

EFT DETAILS Account Name: Brash Vineyard BSB: 086-131 Account: 42406805

Name on card

Card number Expiry

Name

Address

Suburb Postcode



Views over the sauvignon blanc and chardonnay blocks

Brash Vineyard member news

BRASH VINEYARD

Welcome to our second Brash Vineyard newsletter. There has been a lot happening in the vineyard and on the wine front in the past six months and we hope you have been enjoying Brash Vineyard wines over that time.

TO OUR MEMBERS

We again thank each and every one of you for your support. We delivered your first en primeur case of cabernet sauvignon over the past few months and have nothing but glowing reports back from many of you. We were always confident we could deliver an excellent Margaret River cabernet and it is wonderful to receive confirmation from many of you.

2015 VINTAGE

2015 has concluded in the past few months. From a wine quality perspective the results have been fantastic as you will read below. From a yield and a grape growers perspective there was a significant drop in productivity across the region which has created a shortage of grapes for the first time in many years.

The reduced quantity was caused by a collection of natural occurrences over the vintage period which are simply matters that farmers have to accept and work with the best they can. It started in August last year when—at what is the height of winter—we had a three-week period of what can only be described as perfect spring weather conditions. This effectively tricked the vines into waking from their dormancy with a very early bud burst. Winter returned with rain consistently until the end of spring. All of this resulted in imperfect vine development, flowering and fruit setting, causing yield reduction of around 30% on average across the region.

In addition to these challenges, nature had still more to throw at us later in the vintage. In January every year the red gums begin to flower and the forest becomes a picture of flowering gums for as far as you can see. In the Perth Hills they report the flowering was the heaviest in memory. However, in Margaret River we had no flowers until late February and March and even then on a limited scale. For us this created major problems. The small silver eye birds normally feed actively on these flowers as they are their preferred food. Without the flowers they looked to other food sources, the most easily accessible being 'ripe grapes'. And eat they did. Most vineyards took a significant hit and lost a lot of fruit to birds. Yes, we net, but it is impossible to net everything and the hungry birds were taking big risks flying to areas we would not normally expect them to head. Hunger fuels bravery!

Fortunately for Brash wines, we were able to harvest our vintage with what is looking very much like exceptional quality fruit.

In brief, our **sauvignon blanc** was perhaps the most perfect canopy and fruit set in our memory and we harvested before the birds; we harvested **chardonnay** for the first time this year and reports from the winery have us very excited; **shiraz** yields were dismal, but we took off some excellent fruit; and the **cabernet** was fully netted and we managed to harvest before the cyclone effect took hold of the region.

So, challenging is definitely the word, although we did at times use a little more colourful language. But grape growing is all about accepting what nature delivers and we are very happy with the quality of fruit we delivered to the winery.



DID YOU KNOW?

A regular section of our newsletter where we will highlight an aspect of the vineyard and wine-making journey that could help you understand more about what happens before you drink that glass of wine and hopefully explain why the Brash wine you select is so pleasing to your palate.

VINE LOAD MANAGEMENT

One of the strange aspects of growing wine grapes, and in particular red wine grapes, is managing the canopy load – or how many bunches of grapes are on each vine. Many people find it strange that we would spend time and money growing red wine grapes and then head into the vineyard and cut grape bunches off and leave them on the ground. We certainly found it a hard process when we first did it.

But it is all about wine quality. At Brash we are always aiming to make the best possible wine we can from our single vineyard sites. And part of that is ensuring that the grape vine is in balance and not trying to produce too much fruit and in that process giving way to quality. There will be many other vineyards throughout Australia looking to produce a more mass-market budget wine that would not go through this process, largely because they need the highest

volume of fruit and do not need the extra cost of dropping fruit.

The process is not as simple as dropping fruit on the ground. It is more about assessing each vine, ensuring that canes have correct number of bunches, removing 'immature bunches' that will bring green unripe flavours if left on the vine and ensuring that the vine is 'in balance'.

When producing 'fine wine' it comes down to cropping your vineyard at a level that allows each vine to be providing energy and nutrition that will allow grapes to develop full flavours and characteristics. At Brash we look to crop in the range of 6–8 tonnes per hectare. This provides the balance of quality fruit with the commercial need to produce a predetermined amount of fruit.

As with most things to do with 'fine wine' it is a labour intensive process and often a task that falls to Chris and Anne. But it's one of those things that brings the quality edge to what we put into the bottle.

OUR WINES

Remember back to 2012 when we said we would only produce one wine – a cabernet sauvignon? How things have changed since then. As you may

remember, we first added a sauvignon blanc, which has continued to shine. Then last year we added a shiraz, which has yet to leave the winery and this year, after a lot of pressure from many of you (as well as our own hopes), we are making a chardonnay. The range is complete and we are now making what we see as the four wines that best represent everything Margaret River has to offer. And we can't wait to get them to you!

2013 CABERNET SAUVIGNON

Our first red wine release. In the words of Ray Jordan, 'An impressive Debut wine', and we have been really excited about the great feedback we have received which includes:

94 points Campbell Mattinson

94 points James Halliday

Featured in James Halliday 2015 Cellaring Selection

DWWA commended

Not a lot of this wine left and we expect it to disappear very quickly when these reviews hit the press. Members can still access this wine at your rates for a short period of time.



Decanter World Wine Awards 2015



2013 Cabernet Sauvignon



2014 Sauvignon Blanc



FACTS FROM DWWA JUDGING WEEK

22 COUNTRIES • 16 000 ENTRIES

240 JUDGES • 85 MASTERS OF WINE • 23 SOMMELIERS

40 000 RIEDEL CHIANTI GLASSES



2015 handpicking our first Brash Vineyard chardonnay

You can see more of what Ray Jordan has to say in his YouTube clip from 'The Bottom Drawer' with Ray Jordan.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MWYoc70Pj2o>

2014 SAUVIGNON BLANC

Well this one had big shoes to fill and it has handled this pressure well, developing a great reputation of its own.

We have presented the 2014 to a few shows that tell us that we are making one of Margaret River's finest sauvignon blanc. Still some cases left and the 2015 will be released later this year.

Ray Jordan's 'Wine of the week'

Gold at Mount Barker Wine Show

Silver at Sydney Royal, and

Bronze at 2015 Decanter International Wine Awards



WINES IN THE WINERY

2014 Cabernet Sauvignon

2015 Cabernet Sauvignon

2014 Shiraz

2015 Shiraz

2015 Sauvignon Blanc

2015 Chardonnay

2014 CABERNET SAUVIGNON

We are very excited about this wine. We made some small changes to how this wine was created which are showing exceptionally well in barrel tasting. The 2015 comes from our Houghtons clone cabernet block and we believe will be a notch up on the quality we delivered in 2013.

Bottling in August 2015, delivery to members in March 2016.

2015 CABERNET SAUVIGNON

As we have mentioned, 2015 was a challenging vintage; however the quality of what we harvested for this wine was excellent. In barrel, tucked away in the winery, this wine is showing all the 'Brash characteristics' and we are looking forward to its development over the next two years.

2014 SHIRAZ

Excitement is mounting around here. Our first shiraz goes into bottle in August this year and will be ready

for release in the first half of 2016. As we mentioned in the last newsletter, Margaret River shiraz flies well under the radar and is a well-kept secret. We tasted this wine recently and everyone was singularly impressed with the quality we will deliver. As members you will have first access and we will let you know as soon as it is available.

2015 SHIRAZ

They say that low-yielding vines produce fruit with great flavours and intensity. Well, we can guarantee the low yield on this one. Our shiraz was 50% down on yield this vintage and we have taken the best fruit from this block to create this wine. In barrel now, we are looking forward to a great wine developing.

2015 SAUVIGNON BLANC

The fruit grown this year was one of the highlights of our vintage. The canopy and fruit set and presentation were textbook and drew many comments from people visiting the vineyard. We bottle in July and at a recent tasting see the style of this vintage lining up a little more closely to the 2013. We know there isn't a huge difference between the vintages but this one 'looks like another cracker'!

2015 CHARDONNAY

Leaving the best for last? Perhaps!

This will be the first Brash Vineyard Chardonnay and we are excited, Bruce Dukes is excited. In February we hand-picked some outstanding fruit (the rest went to Howard Park) and in the winery the reports have been glowing. The word is that 'everything was in perfect balance'. So, now approximately 10 months in new French oak, bottles in early 2016 and available to you a little after that. We believe that the block this wine grows on alongside the sauvignon blanc is a site with some very special characteristics, including soil profiles, wind protection, temperature and sun. It ticks all the boxes and the fruit it is producing does likewise.