

MENTELLE NOTES

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Sunset over Cape Mentelle's Wallcliffe Vineyard, Margaret River.

Making Marri

It's time to talk trees, origins and inspirations.

Since its inception in 1970 most all Cape Mentelle wine labels have featured the iconic marri tree line that borders the original Wallcliffe Vineyard, a majestic stand of *Corymbia calophylla* often referred to in south-west Western Australia as 'marri gums.' These trees have over time become the brand's signature, a statement of place and terroir.

The original Cape Mentelle label rendered the characteristic marri trees as a black slightly spindly silhouette on a cream background, inspired by a then prominent Californian label. The dual Jimmy Watson 1982 and 1983 Cabernets both bore this livery. By the early 2000's the trees had softened to a wistful watercolour leafier look created by Turner Design in Perth.

At the time designer Neil Turner commented, 'That tree line is timeless and recognisable, especially in the West.' And he noted that 'In the 80's there were very few illustrative landscape wine labels and its subtlety and texture captured attention.'

He created a muted olive tinted green version for the whites in the portfolio and a mauve expression for the reds.

A decade or so later these marris, forest giants that can grow to more than 40 metres in rich soils with spreading stout rambling branches, had been enlarged and reverted to a darker more photographic silhouette with golden embellishments, a treatment echoing the original label. Then in 2018 the marris got what might be described as judicious pruning and were rendered in metallic bronze against a textured watermark. Designers may craft new graphic expressions but the Cape Mentelle marri trees stand firm and tall filtering sea breezes protecting the mature vines from prevailing southwesterly winter winds.

Our look back at the evolving Cape Mentelle label marks the release of the first wines under the new Cape Mentelle Heritage series, which of course features those very

'The Cape Mentelle marri trees stand firm and tall filtering sea breezes...'

special trees – this time depicted simply and proudly in embossed gold – designed by, Denomination, Sydney.

For those whose botany is a little hazy...

Rough-barked marri trees are most closely associated with southwest WA. They are part of the *myrtaceae* family, which also encompasses the mallee tree. The first notation of eucalyptus *calophylla* trees was in 1831 in the *Journal of the Royal Geographical*

Society of London, an entry said to have relied partly on the passion of Augusta-based botanist, Georgiana Molloy.

Marri leaves are spear-shaped, its flowers range white to pink but perhaps the marri's most memorable feature are the large bulbous gum-nut fruits iconised by children's author and illustrator May Gibbs, creator of *Snugglepot and Cuddlepie* and the Gumnut Babies. The trees also featured in the poetry of WA's Noongar man, the late Jack Davis.

Cape Mentelle's stand of marri is not just a graphic inspiration, these trees play several vital roles in the viticulture program. As an aforementioned wind break but also as a significant and diversionary food source for voracious flocks of silver eyes. A gumnut diet is preferable to grape grazing any day.

And just in case you are attending a wine trivia night, one more marri fact. The red-tinted oozing marri sap (*kino*) contains tannins with antiseptic qualities used by local indigenous people as a medicinal remedy, and for tanning hides. One supposes the concentrations varied.

The Cape Mentelle Heritage range features the iconic Cabernet Sauvignon, Chardonnay 2022 and Shiraz 2018. [See New Releases.]

New Releases

Spring marks the beginning of another energising season in the vineyard. This year it also heralds the release of two wines in the new Cape Mentelle Heritage series led off by the 2022 Chardonnay and arresting 2018 Shiraz. All wines available to members of the Cape Mentelle Wine Club, online shoppers and at Cellar Door. If you have any queries please contact the helpful CMV staff.
T: 08 9757 0812 or
E: cellardoor@capementelle.com.au



CAPE MENTELLE HERITAGE CHARDONNAY 2022

• Purity • Elegance • Finesse

Our expressive Heritage tier Chardonnay sourced from the dual southernmost vineyards – Chapman Brook and Crossroads.

‘A true translation of both blocks, with power and elegance. Appeals with refreshing minerality, salinity and seductive notes of pastry, star fruit, finger lime and nectarine. A dynamic, delicate and vibrant wine of great length and appeal.’

Red Letters

Typically one doesn't enjoy getting red letters – unless they are in the *Halliday Wine Companion*. So it was a thrill to open to page 140 of the new 2025 edition and see not only five Red Stars signifying another 'Outstanding' Ranking but also two wines in punchy red type. The *Cape Mentelle Reserve Chardonnay 2021* 'A powerful rich wine with layers of flavour' scored 95 Points and its red

CAPE MENTELLE ZINFANDEL 2022

• Bold • Vibrant • Generous

A cult classic crafted from the harvest of dry-grown, low-yielding mature bush vines.

‘Opens with floral aromas and cherry notes melding to raspberry coulis and coconut. The smooth expansive palate evokes black forest fruits, choc-coated candied orange over a fine energizing tannin frame.’

CAPE MENTELLE CABERNET SAUVIGNON 2021

• Elegant • Pure • Fragrant

A classic expression of Margaret River cabernet that is backed by both pedigree and longevity.

‘A delicious approachable style with aromas of berries, thyme and truffles and a mellow palate echoing notes of dark plums, cassis, blueberries and spice. Integrated with a persistent palate. A match for duck breast.’

CAPE MENTELLE HERITAGE SHIRAZ 2018

• Rich • Assertive • Profound

This is the first release of our Heritage Shiraz from the stunning 2018 vintage.

‘An alluring, daring powerful six-year-old shiraz with abundant dark fruits. Opens with a heady bouquet of orange, cocoa and dark plum plus some smoky-toasty notes leading to an opulent bold palate. Tannins beginning to soften to a silky texture and lingering palate.’



stablemate *Cape Mentelle Heritage Cabernet Sauvignon 2020* was similarly accredited for its impact, ‘One powerful concentrated red’ scoring 95 Points and leading the bracket of five other Cape Mentelle wines, each notching up 90-plus points.

Wine Club

’Tis heading toward the end of the year, a time to share, care and relax with family and friends. And perhaps to stock up the fridge and cellar? The Cape Mentelle calendar has scheduled the coming weeks for the despatch of the **Wine Club Member Packs** – and here is a preview.

The **Mentelle Explorers Six-Pack** features both cellar aged and current release wines:

2016 Wallcliffe Sauvignon Blanc Semillon
2018 Wallcliffe Sauvignon Blanc Semillon
2022 Wallcliffe Sauvignon Blanc
2022 Chardonnay (Pre-release)
2021 Cabernet Sauvignon
2019 Heritage Cabernet Sauvignon

The **Mentelle Collection Six-Pack** features:

2013 Chardonnay
2019 Heritage Cabernet Sauvignon
2022 Chardonnay (Pre-release)
2015 Shiraz
2017 Wallcliffe Sauvignon Blanc Semillon
2021 Cabernet Sauvignon

If you are visiting Margaret River over the summer don't forget that Wine Club members are invited to join us for a complimentary tasting – for you and a guest.



Pic: Ovis Creative

As our Heritage Collection now includes a wider selection of estate grown wines we offer two cellar tasting options – either a Regional or a Heritage tasting. Available daily at the Cellar Door, 10am-5pm.

If you are not a member of our Wine Club and would like to join, please follow this link: www.capementelle.com.au/Wine-Club
We can't wait to meet you!

*‘This wine should be eaten,
it is too good to be drunk.’*

JONATHAN SWIFT

Singapore Flings

Richard Hemming pulls the cork on Singapore's wine world.



When I moved from leaden London to sunny Singapore, I naturally assumed the plonk of choice would be pink, served ice-cold in a large glass with a side order of smugness. What could be better for poolside afternoons in the equatorial heat?

What I soon realised is that most of Singapore life takes place in blissful air-conditioned interiors, and that hearty reds like Amarone and shiraz are much more popular than delicate rosé.

Five years later, I'm well versed in the habits of wine drinking in Singapore. It's a much more sophisticated market than I ever imagined. During my day job as Head of Wine Asia at 67 Pall Mall, I oversee a list of 6,500 different wines from 40 countries, with 1,000 served by the glass, a collection that includes several vintages of Cape Mentelle.

There's a healthy representation of Margaret River wine because it's our nearest vineyard region, also making it a regular destination for Singaporean wine lovers. Similarly, Singapore is a frequent port of call for travellers from WA.

So for anyone that's visiting, here's everything you need to know about drinking wine in Singapore.

While the affinity for Amarone is somewhat unexpected, the rest of the Singaporean wine scene stretches far and wide. From cornershops to Michelin-star restaurants.

At the top end, Burgundy reigns supreme, much as it does in most international cities these days. This doesn't only mean the most cult names, but plenty of good-value, offbeat options. Certain producers such as Burgundy superstar Laurent Ponsot and South

Australian stalwart Henschke have long-standing personal connections to Singapore.

Red remains the most popular choice, perhaps partly because it is an auspicious colour in the Chinese heritage, which is intertwined with Singaporean culture. For similar reasons, wines at alcohols of 15% or above are not considered too boozy because that's modest compared to high-octane spirits such as *baiju*, familiar to Asians.

White and sparkling wines are therefore much smaller categories, although the latter is growing rapidly, driven in part by a trend for grower Champagnes. Cult names are highly prized by those in the know, and secondary

'I've had better success with dry, softer whites such as a classic Margaret River Chardonnay...

market bottles can command four or five times their release price.

On the other hand, super clubs like Marquee at the Marina Bay Sands are still the preserve of luxury brands where bottles are paraded to your table with maximum visibility, involving sparklers and neon lights and apparently no shame at all.

As a famously foodie nation, Singapore boasts every cuisine under the sun. Wine-matching moments are therefore very classic, following conventions for French, Italian and Spanish cuisine. But for more locally influenced cuisine, it can be very different.

Southeast Asian dishes are frequently high in chilli spice, which gives wine-matching a particular challenge. The perceived wisdom of serving non-dry whites like 'lighter' riesling is

sometimes useful but I've had better success with dry, softer whites such as a classic Margaret River Chardonnay – and yes, ripe-fruited reds such as Amarone can work well too. It's like fighting with fire!

As someone who has spent the last year writing a book on matching with Asian flavours, you can trust me on this.

Then there are local dining habits, where banquet-style service means a multitude of dishes are served simultaneously. Sometimes an anything-goes attitude is the only option here, and you might make some surprising discoveries. Or just go local and drink beer or jasmine tea instead.

At the lower end of the market, wine can look worryingly expensive in Singapore because excise duty is around \$10 per bottle, regardless of bottle value. Once you get above around \$70 retail, the duty becomes a much smaller proportion of the price, which makes the most expensive wines look like bargains compared to Australian pricing with its punitive WET.

Something to beware of is back-vintage white wine. As a small-volume market, Singapore can be slow to sell through its stock, and some whites end up lingering on the shelf, in non-ideal storage conditions. However, the best suppliers and restaurants can generally be trusted.

As an indicator of that competitiveness, mega-app Vivino opened its first-ever bricks-and-mortar store in Singapore in September

2024. It joins dozens of other wine merchants across the city, with every major mall boasting several to choose from. Asian restaurants often allow BYO, while others have lists comprehensive enough to please even the pickiest drinker – including ice-cold rosé served in a large glass. And there's nothing wrong with that.

Richard Hemming MW heads up 67 Pall Mall Singapore a members' club for wine lovers with bases in London, Hong Kong, Verbier and soon – Bordeaux and Melbourne. He also contributes to jancisrobinson.com and was once a cellar hand in McLaren Vale.

Cape Mentelle wines are now available online for Singapore delivery:

www.capementelle.com.au/SHOP/Singapore-Online-Shop

Where's Dave?

A catch up with Cape Mentelle founder David Hohnen.

Pic: Sean Blocksidge



David Hohnen reckons 1949 was an excellent vintage for both the 'truck' and its driver.

If you live in Margaret River you might have spotted the shiny maroon Chevy pick-up cruising down the main street, with David Hohnen at the wheel.

'Women come over and pat it,' confessed David, who commissioned over eight months restoration of the Vintage 1949 'old truck' to its former glory days. It was originally discovered in a barn in Nebraska and was imported to Australia in 2022 resting in Mullaloo Beach north of Perth till David spotted his dream vehicle, which in some ways evokes his first-ever car, a classic 1948 Holden FX.

The Chevy acquisition was spurred by a recent trip back to Fresno California where David first studied winemaking at UC Davis. 'There was one parked across the road.

And that was it.'

But there is more in David's life than shiny old cars and old rego plates, including the Chevy's 'AU-26' that he has nostalgically owned since the 1960's.

These days some of his free time (when not operating a negociant business with his winemaker daughter Freya) is spent riding another vehicle – a motorbike across WA's wheat belt, or dangling a line in the waters of Hardy Inlet, Augusta, where he recently bought a house. More time and peace to pull the cork on the contents of his cellar that recently offered up an older Burge Family Shiraz blend and a Mountadam Cabernet. Of course it still boasts a collection of Cape Mentelle, more recent releases now acquired at founder's rates.

Class Act

The LANGTONS Classification of Australian Wine is now in its 8th Edition. Configured back in 1990 by Langton's co-founder Andrew Caillard MW and his associates, this benchmark collection is essentially a 'form guide' to Australia's most highly sought wines, the foundation of many wine investment decisions.

Cape Mentelle Heritage Cabernet Sauvignon has been listed in the Classification since its inception and has poured proudly at the recent national all-capital city Classification Roadshow.

The current edition applauds Cape Mentelle Cabernet as a Margaret River classic.

'Age-worthy with its beautiful fragrance, pure blackcurrant fruit, dried herb notes and sinewy structure, this is an historic wine style of the Margaret River region.'

The grapes for this wine are selected from the original mature vine Wallcliffe Vineyard, (planted 1970-1973) and cosseted to create the flagship Cape Mentelle red crafted using classic Bordelais techniques with an Australian twist.

Cape Mentelle's Dave Moulton and Coralie Lewis hit the Langton's trail that headed east from Perth, delighted to showcase the current *Cabernet Sauvignon 2020*. 'It's an honour to be included in the Langton's Classification, an internationally recognised endorsement of the amazing quality and diversity of Australian wine.'



Life is a Cabernet

The king of red grapes is heading for the limelight again this November at the 42nd annual **Cape Mentelle International Cabernet Tasting** to be held at Cape Mentelle Winery on 15 November. Forty-two isn't any particular milestone but four-plus decades of cabernet celebration definitely do deserve a toast. In a generous glass of course!

On the bench will be 20 global cabernets from Vintage 2021 – spanning notables from Bordeaux, Napa Valley, Tuscany, Chile,

South Africa, NZ and of course the Aussie and Margaret River contingent. The Tasting is followed by a magical long lunch in the Vat Cellar featuring regional produce inspired food matches crafted by chef George Cooper and his team from Tiller Dining.

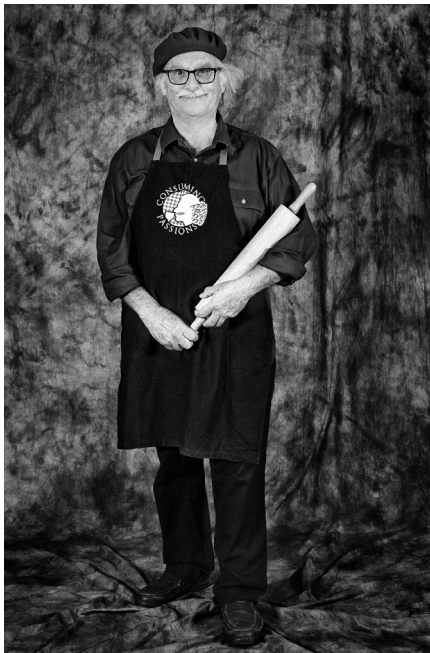
Tickets are scarcer than hens' teeth (but there are some.) So don't dally.

Contact the winery: cabernet.tasting@capementelle.com.au or call (08) 9757 0888

Consuming Passion

Vale Ian Parmenter OAM

Pic: Stephen Blakeney Photography



Earlier this year Margaret River lost one of its local heroes. The inimitable Ian Parmenter OAM – TV chef, chardonnay vigneron, author, passionate local food advocate, foundation driver of the Margaret River Producers' Association and Margaret River Farmers' Market (est. 2002) and regular at Margs Blue Ginger Café where a chair is now dedicated to his memory. His jaunty beret and signature quick cook ABC-TV *Consuming Passions* series inspired many family dinners – and some of those recipes were modified for *Mentelle Notes*.

Ian's first cooking contribution (matched to a Cape Mentelle wine of course) was Chicken Chardonnay in 1995. The final Parmenter recipe was Barramundi Pawpaw, published in 2013.

To honour his memory we are re-publishing *Crunkly Fish* (2007) a recipe he chose to match spring time when, 'There's budburst in the vines. Swamp hens are chasing along the riverbank. Dam-side the pobble bonk frogs are bonking (it's the sound they make). Citrus trees are groaning – albeit quietly – with fruit... It's time to put away the casserole dishes... And now something to enjoy with the fabulously zesty new *Cape Mentelle Sauvignon Blanc Semillon 2007*.'

Now 17 years on, may we suggest a match with the zingy *Cape Mentelle Wallcliffe Sauvignon Blanc 2022*.

CRUNKLY FISH

Serves 4

INGREDIENTS

600g skinless fillets (snapper, dhufish, red emperor)
2 tbsp cornflour, salt and pepper
1 egg, lightly beaten
1 cup Panko crumbs
3 tbsp canola oil
3 tbsp spring onions, chopped
2 cups broccoli florets
1 tbsp oyster sauce (or sweet soy)
2 tbsps chicken or veggie stock
3 tbsp pine nuts, lightly toasted
grated lemon rind
steamed rice
To serve: sweet chilli sauce, lemon wedges, spring onion garnish

METHOD:

In a large bowl season cornflour with salt and pepper. Toss fish. Add egg and stir. Add breadcrumbs and toss well. Remove fish pieces. Put frying pan (or wok) over high heat. When hot pour in 2 tbsp oil and stir-fry fish for 4-5 mins. Remove and cover with paper towel, keep warm in oven. Blanch broccoli and drain. Add remaining oil to the same pan, add spring onion and stir fry 2 mins. Add broccoli and stir fry 2 mins. Sprinkle with water to moisten. Stir in oyster sauce, pine nuts and lemon rind. Serve fish on steamed rice, topped with broccoli and spring onion garnish; chilli sauce on the side.

Then pour a generous glass of *Cape Mentelle Sauvignon Blanc* and toast the ebullient Ian Parmenter. You are remembered fondly by all at Cape Mentelle!

Margs Matched

Event creation is a fine art, especially in the bountiful realms of fine wine and food. So hats off to the creators of *Pair'd* (14-17 November) a new Margaret River landmark celebration of world-class wines and food. Curated through a sommelier's lens, this 4-day full-on immersion in good gastronomy is surely going to whet appetites. And will inevitably make culinary memories of the Margaret River region and its exceptional harvest.

The *Cape Mentelle Cabernet Tasting* (15 November) is but one of the numerous satiating activities. Just imagine a long weekend that includes forest dining, a night hawker market, BBQ beach club, crayfish and chardonnay garden party and a line-up of celeb chefs including Dave Pynt (Singapore) and Ben Shewry (Australia).

Cape Mentelle will also be participating in the *Grand Tasting* (16-17 November) and the associated Masterclass series. Organisers claim *Pair'd* will be where 'adventure meets indulgence.' If that sounds like you, check out www.pairedmargaretriver.com and book your match.



Screen Time

Not long now to summer and living easy... So why not kick off with a night at the *Movies at Cape Mentelle*. Our ever-popular al fresco cinema will be screening again weekly from 17 December to 1 February 2025. Film lovers can expect both classic and new release movies and theme nights best enjoyed in beanbags on the winery lawns. Delicious catering courtesy of local food truck Little Hands Dumplings, snacking

food to match your mood, plus your pick from the Cape Mentelle wine store. Chilled Chardonnay perhaps or a glass of new release Cabernet? The program will be available in December. www.capementelle.com.au/movies



Pic: Ovis Creative

Pick a Box

It's not every day that Cape Mentelle's HQ gets a call about 40-plus-year-old *Cape Mentelle Cabernet*. To be specific the Jimmy Watson winning 1982 vintage. But that's what happened recently. Careful collector Scott Proctor, general manager of the Meadow Springs Golf and Country Club in Mandurah, discovered two bottles of the coveted 1982 trophy vintage in his cellar. He knew the story of the back-to-back 'Jimmy' wins (the 1982 and 1983 vintages) and realised their rarity. Generously he offered to return both bottles to the Cape Mentelle museum collection. What a gesture! So Dave Moulton headed off to Mandurah to swap some bottles, the older duo for more youthful Museum Release cabernets from 2014, 2018 and 2020.



Scott Proctor and Dave Moulton swap bottles.

Mentelle Notes had no hesitation to grant Scott honorary Mentelle Ambassador status, even though he didn't leave home with his treasured bottles.

The Mentelle Ambassador program invites all budding travellers, be they whizzing through Japan on the shinkansen, sailing the Dalmatian coast or cycling in the Pyrenees to take an ambassadorial bottle along for the ride. Take a selfie (high res image) and send to: info@capementelle.com.au. If *Mentelle Notes* publishes your image the prize is a current release mixed case of Cape Mentelle's finest!



Silver Spanner



Hats off please for 'Pearsy'! Geoff Pears has been Cape Mentelle's indefatigable maintenance man for 25 years, literally holding all things together in the vineyard workshop. He was recruited by founder David Hohnen for his mechanical aptitude and can-do attitude. Leave it to Pearsy is the motto! And he delivered year after year. Getting harvesters, sprayers, weed trimmers back up and running. Rest assured Pearsy's major milestone will rate more than a silver spanner.

Terrace Lounging

New this summer is the Cape Mentelle Wine Lounge (doubles as our Movie Marquee at night) where you can sit back and sip a chilled bottle of *Cape Mentelle Rosé* on the veranda surrounded by native gardens and busy bird life. Artisan cheese boards available and bean beds on the lawn. Offered on a first in, happy days basis. Open daily all summer 10am – 4pm. Come and chill!

Latest Drops

CAPE MENTELLE HERITAGE CHARDONNAY 2022

'Makes a quantum leap on many levels. Subtle florals of lemon and grapefruit with a lightly roasted almond character. Palate delivers with restraint and control but there is a deep and penetrating core with a neat savoury element. Traces of sea shell and lemon rind with a delicate chalky limestone character.'

96 POINTS, Ray Jordan
WA WINE REVIEW 2025

'Catapults CM into the top echelon of chardonnay producers...this is a superb Chardy.'

95 POINTS, Ken Gargett, WINE PILOT

'An assured, confident chardonnay, harmonious in both aroma and taste.'

95 POINTS, Jeni Port, WINE PILOT

CAPE MENTELLE HERITAGE CABERNET SAUVIGNON 2021

'Cabernet lovers will rejoice in the classic varietal aromas of blackberry, black cherry, plum with a sprinkling of peppercorn, acacia, mint, earth and vanilla. Sweet-fruited through and through, warm in texture and layered in black fruits, mint, leafy herbals, violet florals with a lasting attractive dusty, peppery finish. Tannins are firm – a boost for a long future – and fine – something that makes it approachable right now. Best of both worlds.'

96 POINTS, Jeni Port, WINE PILOT

CAPE MENTELLE HERITAGE SHIRAZ 2018

'This is no wallflower. It's voluminous, full of ripe, plump tannins and lots of cedary oak adding to its structure and flavour. A core of good fruit and layers of savouriness – tobacco, wood smoke, beef stock and all manner of spices. It's persistent on the finish, detailed and will have a big fan base.'

95 POINTS, Jane Faulkner
HALLIDAY WINE COMPANION 2025

CAPE MENTELLE CABERNET SAUVIGNON 2021

'It's beautifully buoyant, almost silken. A staircase of tannins unwinds on the finish. This is an exciting cabernet offering instant gratification but it also has great potential for aging.'

95 POINTS, Gabrielle Poy
THE REAL REVIEW