

VIRGINIA WILLCOCK

CHIEF WINEMAKER

As a teenager, Virginia saw the happiness and joy wine brought to her parents and their friends after a hard day's work in their small vineyard. It was here she decided winemaking was going to be her career. "I loved the idea of growing fruit, and then turning it into something that could be more beautiful and would make people happy."

Virginia Willcock is now the Chief Winemaker behind some of Australia's most critically acclaimed wines, at Margaret River's founding wine estate, Vasse Felix. She joined as Chief Winemaker in October 2006.

Virginia has an insatiable curiosity for the role microbiology plays in grapes and vineyards in making more environmentally expressive wines. This has driven the revolutionary development in winemaking style at Vasse Felix and served as inspiration for many other producers around Australia – in particular her work with wild-yeast fermentation in Chardonnay and Cabernet Sauvignon.

Virginia is one of the most awarded female winemakers in Australia, having been named 'Gourmet Traveller WINE Australian Winemaker of the Year' in 2012 (she was also a finalist in 2010), 'Winemaker of the Year' by The West Australian Good Wine Guide 2013, and 'Winemaker of the Year' in the 2017 Australian Women in Wine Awards. Virginia was also nominated as 'Winemaker of the Year' in Wine Enthusiast Magazine USA's 2014 Wine Star Awards, and 'Winemaker of the Year' in the ASVO (Australian Society of Viticulture and Oenology) Award for excellence 2016. A respected authority on Margaret River winemaking, Virginia has represented the region as presenter and panellist of numerous international media, trade conventions and masterclasses, in addition to being a sought-after regional wine show judge. She also served on the board of the Margaret River Wine Industry Association for several years.

Virginia has completed 30 vintages in Margaret River, and worked international vintages in Albania, Italy in Trentino, Sicily and Abruzzo as well as New Zealand.



WINEMAKING PHILOSOPHY

"Make the wines you love to drink. As winemakers we scour the world to find those rare and precious wines we will most love. So at Vasse Felix, with our pristine environment and historic vineyards, we must strive to make just that. To perfect a distinctive style that is unique and special, that people all over the world will recognise."

