

# 2017 TOM CULLITY



Vasse Felix, Margaret River's founding wine estate, was established by Dr Thomas Brendan Cullity in 1967. Among his first plantings were Cabernet Sauvignon and Malbec vines, from which he produced the estate's first red wine. The Tom Cullity descends from these original vines and represents the purest expression of our history, place and vintage; the pinnacle of Vasse Felix.

## TASTING NOTES

**APPEARANCE** A lovely, translucent ruby.

**NOSE** The tightly intermingled perfume carries Tom's Block characters of savoury tobacco, earthy forest and nori-like ocean breeze. Delicate red berry notes move into savoury tones of cherry pip, mushroom, white clay, brie rind and tamari. A floral fragrance of violets frames this elegant vintage.

**PALATE** A restrained and ethereal rendition of Margaret River Cabernet, the body is plush and shapely, with lovely red berry fruit characters and super fine, talc-like tannins of unbelievable length. Graceful and sophisticated with a savoury core, the delicate complexity of perfumes linger on the long, drying finish.

## WINEMAKER COMMENTS

2017 was an elegant, late season harvest resulting in beautifully ripe fruit, well preserved bright fruit fragrance and a long, delicate tannin profile. The unique small sections of Tom's old blocks were hand-harvested from 7 to 24 April, destemmed only without crushing and then wild fermented as whole berries. The Cabernet Sauvignon was static fermented, gently pumped over through a splash tub, then left on skins for up to 33 days to stabilise and become structurally sound. The Petit Verdot and Malbec were open fermented, hand-plunged and pressed dry. Each small batch fermentation was basket-pressed and gently transferred to fine French oak for 19 months of maturation. With minimal rack and return, this wine was aged on its fine lees, bringing beautiful savoury elements and soft tannins to this delicate vintage.

## VINTAGE DESCRIPTION

2017 was a cooler and later vintage than the previous 10 years; a year of elegant, structural, slightly lighter bodied wines; though ripe in flavour, vibrant and very perfumed. Higher than average yields in combination with a cooler season contributed to delayed ripening of the fruit and good retention of acidity. Some timely warmth and sunshine occurred throughout January, although February temperatures remained moderate with some rainfall. With the cooler weather, canopy management and fruit thinning was imperative to mitigate disease pressures and allow for even, persistent ripening. There was a warm start to March to finish the white harvest, followed by the driest April since 1982, allowing the reds to ripen beautifully.

## VARIETIES

82% Cabernet Sauvignon,  
17% Malbec, 1% Petit Verdot

## HARVESTED

7-24 April 2017

## FERMENTATION

100% whole berry  
100% wild yeast

## FERMENTATION VESSEL

80% Static Ferment  
20% Open Top Ferment

## TIME ON SKINS

12-33 days

## PRESSING

Basket Press

## MATURATION

French Oak Barrique  
61% new, 39% 1-4 year old  
19 months

**BOTTLED** February 2019

**TA** 6.1g/L **PH** 3.52

**MALIC ACID** 0.0g/L

**RESIDUAL SUGAR** 0.37g/L

**ALCOHOL** 14.5%

**VEGAN FRIENDLY** Yes

**CELLARING** Approachable  
on release at four years  
of age. 20+ years for  
elegant and savoury aged  
Cabernet Sauvignon.