



It's here.



2005 Leeuwin Estate Art Series Chardonnay

It's a rarity for wine press to agree, so when they do, it's time to listen up.

The Australian wine critics are unanimous in their decree:
this is one of the top 3 Art Series Chardonnays produced by Leeuwin Estate...
and who are we to disagree?

A wine of pedigree | A stunner of a vintage | A producer with integrity

A wine of pedigree

2001 vintage	98 pts	Wine Spectator	92(+?) pts	Stephen Tanzer	91 pts	Robert Parker
2002 vintage	96 pts	Wine Spectator	93 pts	Stephen Tanzer	92 pts	Robert Parker
2003 vintage	94 pts	Wine Spectator	92 pts	Stephen Tanzer	93 pts	Robert Parker
2004 vintage	94 pts	Wine Spectator	94 pts	Stephen Tanzer	93 pts	Robert Parker

A stunner of a vintage

According to the Winemakers Federation of Australia, **Margaret River's 2005 vintage was outstanding**. In fact, it could have been **the vintage of all vintages**, had it not been for scattered rain in March and April.

Mild spring conditions and minimal rainfall during the growing season resulted in moderate shoot growth and well-balanced canopies. Conditions for flowering were optimum, and summer temperatures generally warm, tempered by cool nights, allowing for even and optimum ripening. The result? **Outstanding Chardonnay displaying intense varietal characters and abundant natural acidity**.

Given the WFA's comments, I guess it's lucky that the fruit from Leeuwin Estate's legendary Block 20 was **all harvested by March 14**...which might just make it **the vintage of all vintages**.

A producer with **integrity**

With a well-deserved reputation as **Australia's most age-worthy Chardonnay**, stocks of the Art Series Chardonnay are squirreled away each year in Leeuwin Estate's cellar. But a lifetime of opening bottles to find **cork taint and oxidation** undermined the Horgans' confidence in sending museum stock to tastings, so they made the hefty decision to check the condition of **each & every bottle** in their museum collection.

The winemakers undertook this tedious task over the last 6 months, opening and checking every bottle, right back to the 1980 vintage. The gems were transferred to a **new screw cap bottle** to ensure **quality, consistency and longevity**, then topped with Art Series Chardonnay of the very same vintage, and hand labeled with original labels. This painstaking and expensive task was carried out under an **inert gas blanket** to protect these noble and pristine old wines from any undesired oxidation.

A world-first? **Probably**.

A producer of integrity who is committed to quality? **Undoubtedly**.

And a **resounding verdict** from Australia

*"I'm often asked how the latest Leeuwin stacks up against previous greats. Well, let's put it this way; I have always rated the '95 as the greatest, just a smidge ahead of the '87 with maybe the '01 a close-run third. But after tasting the '05, I have to say that time may well prove it to be **the greatest Leeuwin Chardonnay yet**..."* Ray Jordan, The West Magazine, The West Australian, 16/02/2008

*"Is this the best Chardonnay in Australia? Too right it is. Brilliantly complex, unreservedly restrained and yet a full-on clog dancer from its very first moment on your palate. The trajectory of this wine is astronomical. **You'll still be tasting it tomorrow**. Did we say this is the best Chard in Aus? Long live the Queen."* Taste Food & Wine 2008, The Best Wines of Australia, Matthew Jukes & Tyson Stelzer

*"The 2005 Art Series Chardonnay will go down in Western Australian wine history...as being **amongst the 10 or 12 greatest Australian white wines ever**...we have no hesitation in restating emphatically that Leeuwin Estate is consistently the finest producer of Australia's greatest white wine variety. End of story."* John Jens, Western Suburbs Weekly, 12/02/2008

The US verdict?

The wine has yet to be released for review, but on a recent visit Denis Horgan was joined by Harvey Steiman to take a look at the '05 up against a vertical of Art Series Chardonnay dating back to 1985. Naturally, the '87 was a stand out, widely considered by most critics to be the greatest Chardonnay ever made in Australia. The '05 release, though, with its restraint, length and elegance, seems destined to be one of the all time greats, alongside the '87, '95 and '01.

Guess you'll have to hold your opinion until you have the good fortitude to try it for yourself.

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