



2021 Champion of Australian Chardonnay and Cabernet Crowned

MEDIA RELEASE

7 DECEMBER 2021

Last night, Mornington Peninsula's Montalto and Coonawarra's Yalumba were crowned the 2021 James Halliday Australian Chardonnay and Cabernet Challenge Trophy Winners, as the highest pointed Chardonnay and the highest pointed Cabernet Sauvignon.

The 2019 Montalto Single Vineyard "Tuerong Block" Chardonnay from the Mornington Peninsula took the top honours at the 2021 James Halliday Australian Chardonnay Challenge, scoring 98 points to claim the top trophy from 384 entries, encompassing 31 Australian wine regions.

The 2019 Yalumba The Menzies Cabernet Sauvignon from Coonawarra took the top gong in the 2021 James Halliday Australian Cabernet Challenge, scoring 98 points, topping the 297 entries from 22 wine regions across Australia.

This year, for the first time, the James Halliday Australian Chardonnay and Cabernet Challenges were 'blended' and judged simultaneously, with the results announced via a livestream presentation hosted by wine writer, Nick Ryan.

The ten Chardonnay and Cabernet Sauvignon 'Best of Region' Regional Winners were from regions achieving scores of 95 points or more. The award-winning winemakers joined the livestream to receive their awards and discuss their wines.

James Halliday then joined to reveal the overall Trophy winners in what was a true celebration of the world's most planted and popular 'king' and 'queen' varieties.

James Halliday supported the decision to bring the Chardonnay and Cabernet Sauvignon Challenges together, saying it *"provides a win-win scenario for all the stakeholders. The results provide a unique snapshot of the state of play of these two great varieties."*

Chair of Judges, Chris Crawford reflected on the Challenge saying, *"Over two and a half days, nine judges assessed over 650 entries of Chardonnay and Cabernet Sauvignon from across Australia. It was exciting to see the vast array of differing styles the judges selected and there are no surprises that regions like Margaret River and Yarra Valley produced the lion's share of highly pointed wines. All the top ranked wines of each region are a testament to how far these wines have come. Displaying balance, depth, freshness and intensity – overall impressive quality."*

The 2021 James Halliday Australian Chardonnay Challenge Regional Winners are:

Adelaide Hills Best of Region

Chain of Ponds – 2020 Chain of Ponds Millers Creek Chardonnay – 96 points

Hunter Valley Best of Region

First Creek Wines - 2019 First Creek Wines Winemaker's Reserve Chardonnay – 96 points

Margaret River Best of Region

Driftwood Estate – 2020 Driftwood Estate Single Site Chardonnay – 97 points

Mornington Peninsula Best of Region & Chardonnay Challenge Trophy

Montalto - Montalto Single Vineyard 2019 "Tuerong Block" Chardonnay – 98 points

Tasmania Best of Region

Derwent Estate Wines – 2018 Derwent Estate Calcaire Chardonnay – 96 points

Tumbarumba Best of Region

Penfolds Wines – 2019 Penfolds Cellar Reserve Chardonnay – 95 points

Yarra Valley Best of Region

Yarra Yering Vineyard – 2020 Yarra Yering Chardonnay – 97 points

The 2021 James Halliday Australian Cabernet Challenge Regional Winners are:

Coonawarra Best of Region & Cabernet Challenge Trophy

Yalumba - 2019 Yalumba The Menzies Cabernet Sauvignon – 98 points

Margaret River Best of Region

Fermoy Estate - 2019 Fermoy Estate Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon – 97 points

McLaren Vale Best of Region

Leconfield Wines - 2019 Richard Hamilton Wines 'Hut Block' Cabernet Sauvignon – 96 points

Yarra Valley Best of Region

Zonzo Estate - 2020 Zonzo Estate Yarra Valley Cabernet Sauvignon – 96 points

The full results are now available to view at <https://australianwinechallenge.com.au/>

– ENDS –

For further information contact:

Wine Yarra Valley – Caroline Evans, CEO - cevans@wineyarravalley.com.au

Margaret River Wine – Amanda Whiteland, CEO - amanda@margaretriver.wine



Notes: Chardonnay and Cabernet Sauvignon of all vintages are eligible and judged by region without judges knowing which region they were officiating. Wines achieving a Gold Medal score (95 points and over) were selected to determine the Best of Region wine, then each Regional Winner was judged again for the Trophy.

Link to Live Stream:

Click [here](#)

Judging Images:

Click [here](#)

The judges for the 2021 James Halliday Australian Chardonnay & Cabernet Challenge were:

Chris Crawford (Chair of Judges)	Tim Perrin
Mark O'Callahan	Natalie Cleghorn
Philip Rich	Kayleen Reynolds
Sarah Crowe	Mavis Zang
Ben Mullen	Justin Purser

Previous James Halliday Australian Chardonnay Challenge Trophy Winners

2012: Penfolds Yattarna Chardonnay 2008, Tasmania
2013: Seppelt Drumborg Chardonnay 2011, Grampians, Victoria
2014: Deep Woods Estate Reserve Chardonnay 2013, Margaret River
2015: Silkman Reserve Chardonnay 2014, Hunter Valley
2016: Penfolds Bin A Chardonnay 2015, Adelaide Hills
2017: Amelia Park Reserve Chardonnay 2016, Margaret River
2018: A. Rodda Wines Willow Lake Vineyard Chardonnay 2017, Yarra Valley
2019: Oakridge 864 Funder and Diamond Chardonnay 2017, Yarra Valley
2020: no challenge held

Previous James Halliday Australian Cabernet Challenge Trophy Winners

2016: McWilliam's Single Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon 2014, Hilltops
2017: Mandon Estate Research Station Reserve Cabernet 2014, Margaret River
2018: Nocturne Cabernet Sauvignon 2017, Margaret River
2019: Ringbolt Cabernet Sauvignon 2018, Margaret River
2020: Xanadu Cabernet Sauvignon 2018, Margaret River

All previous results available at:

<https://australianwinechallenge.com.au/past-results>

The James Halliday Australian Chardonnay and Cabernet Challenge is a celebration of the world's most popular two varieties and Australia's outstanding regional diversity.

Born in the Yarra Valley in 2012, the James Halliday Australian Chardonnay Challenge celebrates all chardonnays in its quest to find the nation's best. Chardonnay is Australia's most planted white variety and the continuing evolution of its style by Australian makers is heralded globally.



The James Halliday Australian Cabernet Challenge was launched in 2016. As the world's most widely planted vine and Australia's third most planted variety, Cabernet Sauvignon is one of Australian wine's great success stories.

Margaret River Wine Association and Wine Yarra Valley will collaborate and jointly host the Chardonnay and Cabernet Challenges. They will be judged in the Yarra Valley in 2021 and then will move between the two iconic regions on alternate years.

Margaret River Wine and Wine Yarra Valley are the official and peak wine industry bodies in their respective regions. While each is passionate about their own area, they are thrilled to have the opportunity to work with another Australian fine wine region.

