

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

12 October 2018

Yarra Valley Wine Wins National Chardonnay Competition

A Yarra Valley wine, the 2017 Willow Lake Vineyard Chardonnay from A. Rodda Wines, won the Langton's James Halliday Chardonnay Challenge for the first time since the challenge began in 2012, as announced yesterday at 4.00pm.

Scoring a total of 97 out of 100 points, the chardonnay produced by Adrian Rodda from grapes grown on the Upper Yarra Valley Willowlake Vineyard near Gladysdale, took out the top wine award from 543 other chardonnay wines entered into this year's challenge from 36 regions.

Although the Yarra Valley is home to the Langton's James Halliday Chardonnay Challenge, the region had not yet won the top gold of the competition until this year, denying the Margaret River with a third win or the Adelaide Hills with a second.

Adrian said to win the top wine of the Yarra Valley class is an achievement in itself, given the number of quality wines from the region.

"To then come out on top against the rest of the country is truly remarkable, and very humbling," said Adrian.

"This result, first and foremost, is a testament to the Willowlake Vineyard and the hard work of viticulturist Tim Wray and his crew to grow such high quality chardonnay.

"I feel privileged to make wine from such a special place and region."

Adrian said over the years he has had the privilege of participating in a number of tastings conducted by Australia's most distinguished wine writer, winemaker and judge, James Halliday which both challenged and inspired him.

"When I look back at how my thinking has evolved to what it is today, I can pinpoint moments where "The Chairman" is front and centre – so I must really thank James for the challenge.

"To win the ultimate chardonnay award in the country is extraordinary, not only for the exceptional standard of Australian chardonnay right now but because it also bears the name of James Halliday," he said

James Halliday's love for Australian chardonnay is no secret.

James said, "The bigger picture sees Australian chardonnay with a growing reputation among leading wine critics in the UK and the USA, and a coherent approach by our winemakers to the vinification and style of the wine.

"The cool 2017 vintage in the Yarra Valley resulted in purity, finesse and length in many lovely chardonnays.

"Adrian Rodda's wine is a prime example," said James.

The Langton's James Halliday Chardonnay Challenge seeks to find the best chardonnay in the country in each given year, with all wines assessed in regional classifications by a panel of judges.

All media enquiries and requests for interviews with Chris Crawford or Adrian Rodda or images please contact:

Kerrie Lyons
Totem Marketing
Email: kerrie@totemmarketing.com.au
Phone: 0449 999 588

Caroline Evans
Wine Yarra Valley
Email: cevans@wineyarravalley.com.au
Phone: 0409 190 646

The Chair of Judges for the first time, was senior wine judge and Crown Melbourne's General Manager – Beverage, Chris Crawford who led five panel judges and 10 associate judges over three days to assess all wines without any hint of the producer or vineyard.

Chris said the 2017 A. Rodda Wines Willow Lake Chardonnay was a stand out.

“The wine showed elegance, balance and purity, with plenty of flint and pithy, zesty fruit, it had lovely texture and persistence,” said Chris.

The judges also award a trophy to the top wine of each region but only in the instance where a wine from each region scores more than 95 points.

In 2018, eight regional winners were awarded from the Adelaide Hills, Beechworth, Hunter Valley, Margaret River, Mornington Peninsula, Tasmania, Tumbarumba and Yarra Valley.

Chardonnay lovers can find out more about this year's Langton's James Halliday Chardonnay Challenge winners by viewing the announcement by James Halliday on [Wine Yarra Valley's Facebook page](#) and via the following link - chardonnaychallenge.com.au

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More information:

2018 Winner

2017 A. Rodda Wines Willow Lake Vineyard Chardonnay, 97 points

Available directly from Adrian Rodda, email: wines@aroddawines.com.au / online: aroddawines.com.au

Or from the following retailers:

- Best's Cellars Sydney
- The Prince Wine Store, South Melbourne
- Blackhearts and Sparrows, Melbourne
- The City Wine Shop, Melbourne

Regional Winners

- Adelaide Hills: 2017 Shaw + Smith Lenswood Vineyard Chardonnay, 97 points
- Beechworth: 2016 Indigo Vineyard Secret Village Chardonnay, 95 points
- Hunter Valley: 2017 First Creek Wines Winemaker's Reserve Chardonnay, 95 points
- Margaret River: 2017 Stella Bella Wines Suckfizzle Chardonnay, 96 points
- Mornington Peninsula: 2016 Handpicked Wines Capella Vineyard Chardonnay, 96 points
- Tasmania: 2016 Shy Susan Wines Chardonnay, 96 points
- Tumbarumba: 2017 Boutique Wines by Charles Sturt University Chardonnay, 95 points
- Yarra Valley: 2017 A. Rodda Wines Willow Lake Vineyard Chardonnay, 97 points

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