



VASSE FELIX

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## Great Vintages Just Keep Getting Better

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Told that she had been named Winemaker of the Year and that Vasse Felix's Heytesbury chardonnay was Wine of the Year, Virginia Willcock's response was a simple: Cool.

Then with a little more reflection: No, that's really cool.

I wasn't sure how cool it would be if I had also mentioned that the Heytesbury was also White Wine of the Year and that Vasse Felix was Winery of the Year.

Choosing the best of the best for The West Australian Wine Guide 2013, the 13th edition of this annual review of the State's wine, was a difficult task.

The standard of winemaking and the quality of wines from all the State's wine regions have reached new heights.

A succession of outstanding vintages since 2007 and maturing vineyards have given the winemakers some great fruit to work with.

And the winemakers have continued to refine and tweak their wines to bring them to new levels of quality and consistency, while exploring some interesting new styles and interpretations.

For Vasse Felix's Willcock, the past few years have seen outstanding show success.

The previous vintage of this year's Wine of the Year won 11 trophies and I believe the 2011 is a slightly better wine.

On top of that are the superb cabernets and other wines in the portfolio that easily justify the title of Winemaker of the Year.

Overall, the chardonnays and cabernets were the strongest wines, largely as a result of some great recent vintages, but some interesting young wines from the 2012 vintage poked their youthful heads through as well.

The cabernets in WA have clearly stamped themselves as consistently Australia's finest and these are coming from a number of areas, including Margaret River and the Great Southern. The continuing emergence of shiraz was also a highlight.

Chardonnay was the most impressive white variety.

The trend towards oaked semillon and sauvignon blanc blends has resulted in wines of greater complexity and interest.

This year's wine guide hits the shelves next week. In all, more than 900 wines have been reviewed and scored. The guide also contains handy tips on tasting and cellaring. As well, leading Perth chefs have created special recipes to match some of the wines.