



## ACCLAIM

### 2018 Art Series Chardonnay

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"Benchmark pedigree Margaret River chardonnay from the perfect 2018 vintage. Kaffir leaf, ocean spray, nectarine, yellow peach, custard apple and white peach are the start. Saffron curls, vanilla pod and freshly grated nutmeg frame saline acidity, crouched and coiled. Length of flavour extends across the palate in an endless procession of texture and complexity. All of the power, grace and excellence of previous years is here, amplified." **98 points.**

**Top Place Chardonnay Varietal Award**

*Erin Larkin, 2022 Halliday Wine Companion, August 2021*

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"This is the closest I have come to awarding a wine 100 points. Tempted briefly. But sorry guys, I'm philosophically opposed to awarding any wine 100 points. So it gets 99-plus. And having been fortunate to have tasted each Art Series chardonnay, most on release, I'm happy to put my neck out and say this is the finest yet released. It's a wine that shows the continued pursuit to improve on the near perfection of previous vintages which seems to be the Leeuwin mantra.

Stellar wine from a stellar vintage. The remarkable thing is that this is a wine that gets 100% barrel fermented in new French oak barriques with regular lees stirring for 11 months – and it certainly doesn't taste excessive, or even slightly oaky. It has such hi-fidelity purity with complex seductive aromatics of vanilla bean and light oatmeal with a cutting minerality. But the palate, oh, the palate. This is where things start to explode and go crazy. Power, poise, and persistence with a dry savouriness balancing the intense ripe fruit. It is such a long finish with a slightly, ever so slightly chabby touch completing a remarkable wine." **99-plus points.**

*Ray Jordan, The West Australian, 27 February 2021*

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"Sheer brilliance. Fragrant, to the point of lily blossom florals. Brilliant citrus cut of pure white lemon, even an exotic tint of pineapple. Sensational depth of white peach. Oak is magically entwined in its fibers, providing texture and substance to the weave yet never showing on the surface. Crystalline acidity of astonishing energy and longevity. A core of power and concentration that characterises both Leeuwin and Margaret River. It hovers, motionless, for minutes." **98 points.**

*Tyson Stelzer, WBM, June 2021*

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"Very light colour, remarkable for a 4-year-old wine. The bouquet is complex and yet very fresh and restrained, showing captivating nougat aromas which lead into a concentrated, powerful yet elegant palate. Absolutely delicious array of flavours. Lemon drops, honey and myriad other aromas and flavours. Tremendous power and persistence. A sensational chardonnay." **98/100**

Huon Hooke, *The Real Review*, 27 February 2021

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"This was the wine which took Australian Chardonnay from the dark ages of oak-embalmed curiosities or simple sunshine in the bottle to wines of supreme quality, able to sit comfortably with the great chardonnays of the world. For a time, it stood head and shoulders above anything else we could produce. These days, it has peers, from Margaret River and further afield, but it has never stumbled. It has remained as one of our absolute finest chardonnays to this day, and this latest release will only confirm that. Whether or not it is the very best chardonnay made in Australia is largely personal preference at this level, but there is no questioning that it is always a favourite. And a wine which always improves even further with time in the cellar. Fermentation in French oak and then a further 11 months in barrel.

This release, obviously very young, explodes with stonefruit, nectarines, grilled nuts, peaches and a hint of vanillin oak, but it is well integrated and quite transparent. A note of honey emerges on the finish.

The creamy, supple, seamless texture is a highlight and promises to become ever more thrilling in the coming years. It is already showing some early complexity and the flick of acidity carries it through to the extremely long finish, a finish which never drops in intensity.

A wine which confidently walks the tightrope between elegance and sheer power but at all times, as with everything to do with this wine, it is impeccably balanced. 2018 seems yet another truly brilliant vintage in the region – but it seems that it almost always is. This scintillating chardonnay will improve in the coming years (be in no hurry). A wine which deserves a score somewhere around the 98 to 100. I have gone 98, only because I have no doubt it is going to get even better." **98 points.**

Ken Gargett, *WinePilot.com*, March 2021

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"Impressive, complex, supple and elegant, but not shy on intensity. Opens with creamy, satiny notes of apricot, pear, lemon curd and passionfruit puree, with touches of toasted hazelnuts, salted caramel, jasmine and green tea. The way the details mingle with and complete each other makes this as complex a wine as this is a refreshing one, with a fresh thread of acidity weaving in and out." **97 points.**

MaryAnn Worobiec, *Wine Spectator*, 20 October 2021

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"**THE ICON** From an excellent vintage – warm, with very few hot days – this musculet yet lithe Chardonnay suffuses the senses with Leeuwin Estate's clear and penetrating signature perfume of granular pear and fleshier fresh fig. Harmonious lemony acidity makes for an ultra-long, seamless finish, through a palate of acacia, lanolin, smoke and crème patisserie. The concentrated fruit effortlessly mops up the 100% new oak. A luminous, graceful and balanced powerhouse." **97 points.**

Sarah Ahmed, *Decanter Premium*, March 2021

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"Fragrant, floral and pure, with ripe nectarine and citrus aromas. The palate is spectacular. Fine and elegant, the complex stonefruit flavours meld seamlessly, finishing with great length of flavours." **97 points.**

Barry Weinman, *Western Suburbs Weekly*, March 2021

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"25 reviews of Leeuwin Estate Art Series Chardonnay (prior to this one) and the lowest we've ever rated it is 93/100. Amazing really.

The first thing I noticed here was the intensity. The fruit intensity. It's a striking wine, explosive in a refined way, elegant and textural at once, persistent. Its presence and power can be admired and enjoyed now but wow does

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LEEWIN ESTATE - THE ART OF FINE WINE

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this have a future, and a long one. White peach, citrus, pear, sweet cedar and almonds. The whole is more than its parts. It's beautiful, pure, exemplary." **96 points.**

Campbell Mattinson, [The Wine Front](#), 10 February 2021

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"Apricot intensity on the nose. And fresh hazelnut, cumin, lightly pan-warmed walnuts. Quince and gorgeous greengage on the palate. Has opulent spread but a charge of acidity that turns satin as it fills the mouth. Top notes of jasmine. A bite of grapefruit... Aristocratic bearing, proud, elegant."

Tamlyn Currin, [JancisRobinson.com](#), 1 July 2021

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"I am very far from being the first person to suggest chardonnay may in many senses be Australia's best grape variety - the one that best shows off both the talents of Australia's winemakers and the myriad growing conditions of a wine-growing country that is often erroneously portrayed as being somewhat monolithic in character. Of course there are many great wines being made in Australia from shiraz, grenache, cabernet and, increasingly, Italian, Spanish and other Mediterranean grape varieties. But there's so much experience with chardonnay now, a sense that the winemakers know the best places for the variety (after early years when it was planted somewhat will-nilly) and what they want to do with it. A producer such as Leeuwin Estate, for example, has been making its top-of-the-range Art Series Chardonnay for more than 40 years now. And it's never been better; never more resonant, complex, silk-textured, thrillingly fine and bright."

David Williams, [The Guardian](#), July 2021

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"Translucent yellow. Powerful, mineral-accented nectarine, orange, pear nectar, iodine and pungent flowers on the intensely perfumed nose. Smooth, chewy and dry in the mouth, offering wonderfully concentrated yet vibrant orchard and pit fruit flavors complemented by suggestions of fennel, sweet butter, saffron and candied lemon peel. Shows superb definition and finishes minerally, smoky and extremely long, with lingering citrus and pit fruit notes and a touch of smokiness." **96 points.**

Josh Reynolds, [Vinous](#), 15 July 2021

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"All barrel-fermented in new French oak barriques with lees stirring, followed by 11 months in barrel, 100% new Bordelais barriques. From the original 1970s plantings, the fruit absorbs the oak easily, retaining a floral edge to the perfume, cool but dense white fruit, and then a nutty, very lightly smoky barrel note comes through. In the mouth there is real substance here, a real grip with some skin-contact notes, but driving acidity of minerals and lemon pith, a lovely tension in this wine, the oak again just lying quietly beneath, and the tingle and tang of souring lemon acidity along with fresh fruit pushing the finish."

Tom Cannavan, [Wine-Pages.com](#), 15 September 2021

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Forty-five years after the famed "Judgment of Paris", when nine judges chose California wines above top wines of France at a tasting in Paris, the "Judgment of Napa", organised by Culture Dvine, took place as a tribute to three key individuals: Steven Spurrier, organiser of the 1976 Judgment of Paris tasting, George Taber, the TIME magazine journalist who reported on the shock results and Patricia Gastaud-Gallagher whose idea for the momentous tasting elevated the profile of California wines overnight.

During an intimate occasion on October 6 2021, at the Charles Krug Winery in St. Helena, California, guests tasted 20 rare wines (10 Chardonnays and 10 Cabernet Sauvignon/blends) in a blind tasting. We were delighted to learn that Leeuwin Estate 2018 Art Series Chardonnay was included in the Chardonnay bracket, alongside Premier Cru/Grand Cru Burgundies and leading Californian Chardonnays and to hear that both tasting panels, comprising some 35 public tasters and 8 professional wine experts, ranked the Leeuwin in 1st place, topping the Chardonnay tasting. **First Place Chardonnay.**

[The Judgment of Napa](#), October 2021

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