

# NICHOLSON RIVER WINERY TASTING NOTES

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## 2015 Nicholson River “Wild Yeast Fermented” Chardonnay

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- Deep golden yellow – just as the owner intended – still youthful and crystal clear.
- Unmistakably Chardonnay – ripe nectarines and roasted nuts – quality oak – barrel ferment characters on show.
- Remarkably fresh on first sip. Lemon acidity underwriting its line and length. Time in the glass clarifies it even further – as it does for stable wines of quality.
- Coolness of site and a long ripening season resulting in a wine of balance – those ripe stone fruits tamed and tapered by the citrus.
- It dips its lid to the famous wines of Burgundy while capturing the sunshine of the southern hemisphere.
- Delicious wine – for Chardonnay tragics.

## 2018 Nicholson River Chardonnay

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- Paler yellow than the 2015 – which is to be expected – though I suspect it’s also related to vintage.
- High-toned citrus notes – lime as much as lemon – seaspray and botanicals – the nose restrained and less opulent than the “house style”
- More unctuous and rich on the palate – caramel from barrel-ferment loading it with charm – white stone fruits and lemon essence.
- Another exceptionally delicious wine – with a softer and subtler sensibility – dare I say Chablis to the 2015’s Montrachet.
- This will live for a long time – and will hugely reward the patience.

## 2021 Nicholson River Chardonnay (Low Preservative)

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- So much paler than the older wines – winemaking intrinsic here – unoaked wine. A significant shift in direction for the release under the Estate label.
- The botanicals of the 2018 revisited – finger lime and nettle – the same whiff of brine – the richness and bass notes of barrel ferment in quality oak usurped by the agility of cool climate fruit and the interest it undoubtedly offers when given a chance to age. It’s unlike any other unoaked chardonnay I’ve tried.
- Ken Eckersley, a pioneer of the region, is onto something here.
- This is a wine that is aligned to develop like a classic Hunter Semillon – with the depth of character that defines Chardonnay.
- A beautiful prospect as the world warms

## 2019 Nicholson River “Montview” Chardonnay

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- A return to the style of the 2015 Estate wine – golden in the glass – aromatically driven by peach and dried apricots; roasted cashews and lemon butter – barrel-ferment with bells and whistles.
- Rich and opulent – poached peaches and caramel – lemon essence too – acidity is still bright, tempering the mid palate flow of sweetness.
- Absolutely in its ideal drinking window – forward and friendly – soft furnishings ahead of framework. Absolutely captures the winemaker’s ability to adapt to vintage.

## 2021 Nicholson River Pinot Rose (Low Preservative)

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- The hue is en pointe – salmon pink with orange edges – just what the punters want.
- Superlative red berries lead the aromas – albeit with raspberries ahead of strawberries – a beautiful bouquet that compels another swirl and another lift to the nose.
- A weight and seriousness to the palate – tannins carry through – a chalky grip that offsets the spargey-spritz that still remains after two years in bottle.
- Terrific expression – only 140 dozen made.

## 2017 Nicholson River Pinot Noir (Low Preservative)

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- Dark cherry with brick red edges – remarkably robust and powerful – many Pinots on release carry no such weight or presence.
- Spice and sinew – clove and cured-meats – aniseed and oak-toast – so many layers to the bouquet – savoury and earthy.
- It's more treble than bass on the palate – sapid – red cherry and rhubarb – acidity bright and thirst slaking.
- A wine that screams of the site – can safely be tucked away for a decade with only potential to be realised.

## 2015 Nicholson River Syrah

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- Amazing colour retention – opaque – more purple than red – 8 years young.
- White pepper, and black – bunchy characters – the coolness of the vineyard captured. Syrah irrefutably the style. Raspberry notes add the charm and softness.
- A sensational wine – black and red fruits wrestling with tannin and quality oak – wines of the Old World would do well to match its purity and freshness. It concedes nothing to them in terms of complexity and class.

## 2017 Nicholson River Syrah (Low Preservative)

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- Appropriately more youthful than the 2015 – though as much reflective of vintage as it is its junior status.
- Medium weight and full of levity – white pepper and aniseed sharing the stage with wild raspberries and strawberries. Serious and focused.
- While the 2015 welcomes you with open arms, the 2017 holds its cards closer.
- Will live for decades – red fruits set to unfurl off a black core.
- A magnificent wine. Reason enough to hold this vineyard in the highest esteem.

## 2017 Nicholson River Syrah (Low Preservative)

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- A lovely Bordeaux blend – dark and dense in the glass.
- Earthy and savoury – dark berries; hoi-sin; dark soy; and softy applied oak..
- The sum far greater than its parts – the small percentage of Cab Franc making a huge impact – judicious work at the blending table resulting in a wine of poise and balance.
- The freshness of this wine is amazing – acidity and purity of fruit – the magic of the site. The intuition and insight of the winemaker speaks as loud as the vineyard and its unique aspect.

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