



Vasse Felix

A triumph of balance and precision, the 2018 Tom Cullity envelops the palate in fine-grained tannins and enduring perfume. An unforgettable tasting experience from one of Australia's greatest vintages!



VASSE FELIX



Tom Cullity Cabernet Malbec 2018

Margaret River, Australia

Region and Vineyards

The 2018 Tom Cullity Cabernet Malbec is sourced from **Vasse Felix's original vineyard blocks in Wilyabrup**, Margaret River's golden heartland for Cabernet Sauvignon. These dry-grown vines, first planted in 1967, benefit from the region's **maritime influence, ancient gravel-loam soils**, and a **long, temperate growing season** that fosters elegance and natural structure in red wines.

The 2018 vintage was **exceptional**, marked by consistent rainfall during winter that restored soil moisture, followed by a warm but even growing season. Importantly, there was **no extreme heat** nor pressure from birds—thanks to an unprecedented "mega blossom" of native Marri trees. The grapes were harvested from **23 March to 10 April**, under perfect ripening conditions. This is considered one of the finest Margaret River Cabernet vintages of the decade, producing wines of vibrancy, fine tannins, and complexity.

Winemaking

True to Vasse Felix's philosophy, the 2018 Tom Cullity was crafted with minimal intervention to express vineyard purity. The **Cabernet Sauvignon (78%), Malbec (17.5%), and Petit Verdot (4.5%)** were **hand-picked**, then **destemmed but not crushed** to preserve whole berries. Fermentation occurred using **wild yeasts**, with **69% fermented statically** and **31% in open-top vessels**, where the Malbec and some Cabernet were **hand-plunged**.

An extended **skin contact time of 11 to 33 days** allowed the development of fine tannins and full flavor extraction. All parcels were **basket-pressed to fine French oak barriques**, with **59% new oak**. The wine matured for **18 months**, harmonizing texture and complexity. It was bottled in **February 2020**, and is **vegan-friendly**.

Alcohol :14,50 %

Composition: 78% Cabernet
Sauvignon, 17% Malbec, 5% Petit
Verdot



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Tasting Notes

- **Color:** Brilliant garnet with a deep purple-black hue.
- **Aroma:** Intense and layered, offering aromas of native forest undergrowth, red gravel, and ocean spray, with notes of nori and mushroom. The fruit is vibrant—fresh boysenberry and Turkish delight—balanced by potpourri, red peppercorn, bay seed, and subtle liquorice.
- **Palate:** Supremely elegant and poised. The palate is succulent yet powerful, with a lifted, almost weightless structure. Tannins are fine-grained and persistent, encircling a core of perfume and fruit that lingers exquisitely.

Did you know?

The wine takes its name from **Dr. Thomas Brendan Cullity**, who founded Vasse Felix in 1967. The Tom Cullity bottling is produced only in outstanding vintages and descends from the original vines he planted—making it not just a wine, but a liquid chronicle of Margaret River's vinous origins.

Wine Pairing Ideas

- **Wagyu beef ribeye** – the wine's structure and fine tannins complement rich, marbled textures.
- **Duck breast with plum reduction** – fruit-driven layers of the wine mirror the sweet-savoury contrast.
- **Porcini mushroom risotto** – earthy notes in both wine and dish resonate beautifully.
- **Aged Manchego or Comté** – umami depth and firm texture find harmony with the wine's persistent, savoury core.



James Halliday (JH) : 99 Points (2018)

This wine is the benchmark of the latent power, grace and inherent balance of the 2018 vintage in Margaret River. Texturally similar to the classically sophisticated 2014 vintage, but with far greater density and weight. Here, the savoury tannins are countersunk into the fruit already: shapely, firm, chewy, malleable – everywhere and nowhere at once. Waves of blood plum, cassis, blackberry, pomegranate, juniper, raspberries, saltbush, bay leaf and salted red licorice crash against the rocks, as kelp, nori, iodine, red gravel and brine ride the smaller sets out the back. Sensational. Astounding. A wine for the ages. (7/2022)



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Robert Parker (RP) : 99 Points (2018)

The 2018 vintage can comfortably be described as being one of the greatest, if not the greatest vintage in Margaret River's 55-year modern history (i.e., since 1967). When this 2018 Tom Cullity Cabernet Sauvignon Malbec was released, it was both satisfying and terrifying. The former, because it confirmed everything I had suspected/hoped prior to its release. The latter because it would force me to put my neck on the line and give it the score I believe it deserves. Having seen it blind a number of times in esteemed international company, I am comfortable that this wine more than stands up alongside its counterparts from Bordeaux and Napa in the 2018 vintage. It is a marvelous example of Margaret River Cabernet, in that it offers us red raspberry, pomegranate, cassis and red licorice, alongside pink peppercorns, nori, sun-dried kelp, hints of iodine and earth, and all of it framed by ferrous tannins. It is fresh, it is structured, it is incredibly long. It will live forever.



James Suckling (JS) : 98 Points (2018)

A great edition of the top Cabernet blend from Vasse Felix, this has a lot of power and depth. The aromas run from red to blue and dark berries with a leafy edge and attractive, fresh florals. The palate has a core of blue-toned fruit flavor that drives so deep, with a helix-like interplay of acidity and tannin. Impressive. Drink over the next decade or more.



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