Cullen

An iconic Australian wine, the 2021 Diana Madeline reveals vibrant aromas and intense flavors, crafted with Cullen's unwavering commitment to biodynamic viticulture and sustainability.

CULLEN WINES
WILYABRUP & MARGARET RIVER

Alcohol :13,50 %

Composition: 91% Cabernet Sauvignon, 4% Merlot, 3% Cabernet Franc, 2% Malbec

Diana Madeline 2021

Margaret River, Australia

Region and Vineyards

The **Margaret River region** of Western Australia, specifically the subregion of **Wilyabrup**, is renowned for producing some of Australia's most refined and structured wines. This area benefits from a maritime climate that is influenced by the Indian and Southern Oceans, providing a long, warm growing season with cool nights, which is ideal for **Cabernet Sauvignon** and other Bordeaux varieties. Wilyabrup's soil, composed of **ancient granite, gravelly sandy loam, and lateritic subsoils**, ensures excellent drainage and promotes deep root growth, which is essential for producing concentrated, high-quality fruit. Founded in 1971, the Cullen vineyard is one of the oldest in the area and has become a benchmark for biodynamic and organic viticulture in Australia, reflecting the region's distinctive terroir and Cullen's commitment to sustainability.

The **Cullen vineyard** was planted by Dr. Kevin and Diana Cullen and has been continuously managed under biodynamic principles since 2004. Today, the estate is **certified biodynamic** and entirely carbon-neutral. The Cabernet Sauvignon vines span **11.33 hectares** while the Merlot was added in 1976, covering **1.76 hectares**. The estate's vines are now mature, with deep roots that enhance the complexity of the grapes. This meticulous attention to both the land and the vines allows the Cullen team to produce wines that express the full character of Wilyabrup with elegance and precision.

Winemaking

The **2021 vintage** was marked by challenging conditions, including a series of rain events and high bird pressure, but low yields ensured the fruit ripened fully and maintained concentration. The grapes, consisting of **91% Cabernet Sauvignon, 4% Merlot, 3% Cabernet Franc, and 2% Malbec**, were hand-harvested on biodynamic fruit and flower days. Each variety was vinified separately with indigenous yeasts, preserving the natural complexity of each grape and allowing for a nuanced blend.

Once fermented, the wine was aged for **15 months in biodynamic French oak barrels**, with **50% new oak** used to enhance structure and impart subtle, toasty undertones. The result is a wine that balances the lush fruit flavors of Cabernet Sauvignon with the floral notes of Cabernet Franc and the roundness of Merlot and Malbec. This careful aging regimen, paired with biodynamic practices, yields a wine of remarkable depth, vibrancy, and aging potential.

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Tasting Notes

- **Color:** Deep ruby with a vivid purple rim.
- **Aroma:** An enchanting bouquet of **cherry, cedar, rose, and dark chocolate** mingles with subtler notes of iron and sandalwood.
- **Palate:** Silky tannins frame a complex palate, where flavors of **salty plum, dark chocolate, cedar, and cherry** harmonize with floral touches of rose and a hint of sandalwood. The wine finishes with impressive length, leaving a juicy, unctuous impression that reflects both the power and finesse of the vintage.

Did you know?

The **Diana Madeline 2021** vintage not only celebrates **50 years of Cabernet Sauvignon** planted in the Wilyabrup vineyard, but it also honors **Diana Madeline Cullen**, the matriarch of the Cullen family. In 2023, she would have celebrated her 100th birthday, marking her as an icon in Australian wine history. Her daughter, Vanya Cullen, continues her legacy with a pioneering commitment to biodynamic and sustainable practices that are setting standards worldwide.

Wine Pairing Ideas

- **Roasted Lamb with Rosemary:** The wine's structured tannins and savory, cedar notes beautifully complement the richness and herbaceous undertones of roasted lamb.
- **Beef Wellington:** The juicy dark fruit and earthy sandalwood flavors in the wine enhance the mushrooms and tender beef in this classic dish.
- **Aged Gouda or Comté Cheese:** These cheeses have a nutty, slightly caramelized profile that matches the wine's complex, earthy layers and accentuates its depth.
- **Duck à l'Orange:** The fruity acidity and dark chocolate notes in the Diana Madeline offer a delightful counterpoint to the sweet citrus glaze and rich duck meat.

97

Robert Parker (RP) : 97 Points (2021)

The 2021 Diana Madeline is composed of Cabernet Sauvignon (91%), Merlot (4%), Cabernet Franc (3%) and Malbec (2%). The only other time since the first 1995 vintage of this wine (formerly labeled as the Cabernet Merlot) that the percentage of Cabernet Sauvignon has crested 90% or higher was the 2016 vintage, which saw 93% Cabernet Sauvignon. The 2021 vintage in Margaret River was an interesting one, with several climate curveballs thrown at viticulturists during key times during the harvest season. Here, the fruit was handpicked on biodynamic fruit and flower days across five picks from the middle of March to the Super Moon flower day two weeks later. The wine was matured in French oak for 15 months (50% new). This 2021 is a lean, mineral rendition of the Diana Madeline, with bay leaf, rose petals, cassis, bramble and black tea forming layers that settle in the mouth. The tannins are grippy and very fine, causing one to chew slightly as one drinks. This is ethereal, as these wines often are, yet with line and length that belies its pretty curves and textures. The perfect, ideal apogee for this wine's drinking window is in the future. Get it while you can.

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Diana Madeline 2021

97 James Halliday

James Halliday (JH) : 97 Points (2021)

Diana Madeline. The name evokes a lot of emotions, for what the woman stood for then and what the wine stands for now. The 2021 vintage equals 50 years of cabernet sauvignon plantings at Cullen. When released in early 2023, it was on what would have been her 100th birthday. It's a wine that can come from nowhere else, so strong is its sense of place. Expect to swoon over aromas of roses, violets and mulberries doused in baking spices, a ferruginous quality as much as detailed if persuasive tannins. It's complex, complete and structured. Gosh, what a wine. What a woman. The perfect combination.

97 Decanter

Decanter (DCT) : 97 Points (2021)

Fragrant, spicy, mineral and elegant, as befits a cooler and fortunately low-yielding vintage, with rainfall during the growing season and harvest. Lovely cedar and graphite detail to the saturating plum and mulberry fruit. A youthfully firm acid line and fine-textured terracotta tannins cut a swathe through (yet are softened by) the fruit, making for a harmonious, persistent palate. 100% biodynamic barriques and puncheons, 50% new, with 11% amphora-fermented.