



# Halliday hails WA



by john jens

**W**INE writer James Halliday is a one-man wine industry. On the winemaking side, he helped found Brokenwood in the Hunter Valley before moving his legal practice to Melbourne where he founded the highly regarded Coldstream Hills Winery.

He has authored or contributed to more than 50 books and translated into seven languages.

He has been Australia's senior wine columnist and opinion-maker, initially in *The National Times* and then through his *The Australian* newspaper columns for nearly two decades.

Halliday gives his time freely to showjudging in all corners of this country and internationally. He is in demand as a speaker for summaries on all aspects of our wine industry.

When work for the James Halliday Australian Wine Companion 2010 edition was ready, *Western Suburbs Weekly* ran an article stating that the WA wine industry had never had a better, more effective or more influential friend in its push to build the imagery and sales of the State's finest and best value-for-money wines. Nothing has changed. The Australian Wine Companion 2010 has been released and as always, it an essential reference work for both the industry and consumers.

Once again, the tiny (4 per cent of Australia's grape crush) WA wine production output, deservedly, has fared extraordinarily well.

WA has done reasonably well with semillon but barely rates a mention among other white wine, sparkling wine, rose, shiraz, shiraz

viognier and the Rhone-blend categories. John Kosovich Wines is well reviewed in the fortified arena but the Talijancich family, the other great WA premium fortified producer, has not sent samples for some years, if ever.

## Riesling

WA's results remain similar to the previous edition with three of the highest rated 13 of this variety (23 per cent). The 2008 releases from Duke's, Forrest Hill Block 1 and the Yard Whispering Hill Riesling are all on the equal highest points.

## Chardonnay

WA gained two of the three highest pointed wines (Marchand & Burch 2007 and The Leeuwin Art Series Chardonnay from 2006).

WA also gained 13 of the 35 highest pointed chardonnays in the *Companion* (37 per cent).

## Sauvignon Blanc

WA gained two of the top five rated Sauvignon Blancs (the 2008 Ashbrook and Howard Park releases) and 14 of the most highly pointed 43 of this variety in this 2010 *Australian Wine Companion* (33 per cent).

## Sauvignon Semillon Blends

James states that "at the top end (this) is the nigh-on exclusive preserve of the Margaret River".

Margaret River provides the top two wines (the 2008 Cullen Mangan SBS and the 2006 Suckfizzle SBS), six of the top seven and 20 of the most highly pointed 25 wines (80 per cent).

## Cabernet Sauvignon

WA gained one of the two highest pointed wines for this variety (the 2007 Forrest Hill) and 18 of the top 46 wines (39 per cent). The 13

Margaret River winners in this category also confirm its dominance of the Coonawarra region's 10.

In the **Other Bordeaux red blends and varietals** class, WA has 10 of the 31 highest ranked-wines or 32 per cent.

The 2007 Flametree Cabernet Merlot, premium 2004 Voyager blend and 2007 Woodlands Reserve Merlot are the WA winners here.

The James Halliday Wine Companion 2010 (Hardie Grant Books) is on sale at \$35 and James' subscription website is at [www.winecompanion.com.au](http://www.winecompanion.com.au). (quote JH010574WC for a discounted website membership.)



**Book seller Anne Barnetson with James Halliday's new book *Australian Wine Companion*.**

**Picture: Marie Nime**

[www.communitypix.com.au](http://www.communitypix.com.au) d317290