



There is no doubt that when you are talking about wines and the early pioneers you cannot go past, or indeed ignore, the impact of Houghton's on the Australian wine industry.

Houghton was established in 1836, just four years after the fledgling colony of Western Australia was founded. It

is one of Australia's oldest operating wineries and in 1937 the then winemaker, Jack Mann, created Houghton White Burgundy which is still highly popular today but sold as Houghton White Classic alongside the very elegant Wisdom range of iconic award winning Cabernet Sauvignon and Chardonnay. In 1922 the 16-year-old Jack Mann, began his winemaking apprenticeship at Houghton. Jack was to become the driving force of Houghton for 51 consecutive vintages bring passion, creative genius and an influence that extended far beyond Houghton, to the whole West Australian and Australian wine industry.

Houghton is now the tenth-largest red and white bottle brand in Australia, and sources fruit from every major premium grape-growing region in WA, including Gingin, Margaret River, Frankland River and Mount Barker in the Great Southern, and the emerging Pemberton region. Houghton is marking its celebrations with 175th year labelling on wines released this year, in addition to the winery's signature stripe series of wines.

I was fortunate to have the opportunity of tasting a wide range of Houghton wines recently and from that tasting two wines struck me as excellent examples of the Houghton magic – they are the Houghton Gladstones Cabernet and the Houghton Cabernet Sauvignon from the Houghton Stripe

# Houghton

## A WEST AUSTRALIAN ICON

range which is named after the 100-year-old trademark that epitomises the flavoursome, vibrant style of Houghton.

### 2009 Houghton Cabernet Sauvignon

This Cabernet Sauvignon is a mouth-watering and well-balanced red wine with loads of cassis (blackcurrant) and dark plum flavours with hints of cigar box, soft tannins and a touch of oak. I am convinced that this is one of the best everyday drinking wines on the market today at around \$13.00 a bottle.

With a brilliant garnet colour and ruby red hue, the wine displays intense aromas of raspberry, cherry and plum fruit complemented by black olive and hints of tomato leaf, mint and red capsicum. The palate shows classic raspberry, blueberry and cherry fruits combined with chocolate, cinnamon and clove spice. The tannin structure is soft with 13.5% alcohol.



### 2008 Houghton Gladstones Cabernet Sauvignon

The highlight for me was the stunning Gladstones Cabernet Sauvignon. Sourced from 37-year-old cabernet sauvignon vines in the Wilyabrup vineyard, this is a truly classic Margaret River wine with firm structure and complexity showing the fine French oak to enhance the fruit flavours. The 2007 vintage was regarded as one of the superior red wine vintages in Western Australia. The grapes for this wine were hand harvested and fermented in small open fermenters. Ferments were hand plunged and then pressed directly to ½ new Bordeaux coopered French oak and ½ one year old Bordeaux coopered French oak.

With an intense deep purple red, with vibrant scarlet hues, the wine gives high intensity and attractive aromatics of berry fruits, cassis and cigar box – lovely indeed with aromas of star anise and charr oak spice giving the complexity expected of such a wine – well done Houghton!



*Greg Bondari*

Food and Wine Editor



# avoca point CAFÉ

Well this has to be one of the best kept secrets of the Central Coast – The Avoca Point Café situated right on the water's edge of the world famous Avoca Beach with its white sands and blue ocean allowing the diner to watch the whales or dolphins riding underneath beautiful blue waves.

Situated underneath Avoca Beach Surf Club the Point Café menu is both extensive and adequate and there is something to please everyone nearly 20 options ranging from a vegetarian eggs, breakfast bruschetta, Spanish omelette, ricotta hotcake stack, and homemade natural muesli for breakfast. The food is both innovative and fresh and for that lazy Sunday the Avoca Point Café offers an all-day breakfast as well as lunch 7 days a week and of course dinner in summer. Some of the most popular menu items include:

- Seafood tasting plate of prawns, scallops, Tasmanian smoked salmon, flathead and lemon pepper squid, with chunky chips and salad,
- BBQ duck pancakes with Asian salad and their special dressing, and the
- Wagyu beef burger served with bacon, Swiss cheese, fresh beetroot and tomato chutney made from their secret herbs and spices served with chunky chips and salad.

As this is considered to be the top breakfast and coffee spots on the Central Coast it was with much enthusiasm that we set out to savour the delights of the much talked about Point Café.

The new summer menu looks a delight with such selections as avocado, asparagus, fetta and pomegranate salad with citrus dressing or baby bocconcini with trio cherry tomatoes compote, rocket pine nut oil, crispy basil and crostini bread for entrée. For the mains there is the leek and mild blue cheese tart with wine poached pear, walnut and wild arugula salad with caramelised balsamic and blue cheese dressing or the chicken breast wrapped in prosciutto and stuffed with brie, served on roasted kiffler potatoes, merlot reduction and seasonal vegetables. It is hard to go past the pecan pie and vanilla bean ice cream or the lemon meringue pie with berry compote and ice cream for desserts. For the chocoholic there is the chocolate indulgence option of Belgian chocolate mousse served with Frangelico and Chantilly cream – wow!

Whatever your choice bookings are essential or juts visit the website to check out the new menu for summer – see <http://www.handcatering.com.au/restaurant/dinner-menu.html>. The Avoca Point Café will be open for dinners from January to Easter.

**The Avoca Point Café**  
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