



**BIO: Peter Dillon- Chief Winemaker and Director of Viticulture  
Handpicked Wines**

It is safe to say wine runs through Peter Dillon's veins. Raised in the Victorian High Country, he was born into a winemaking family and was first introduced to wine by his grandmother. Her stories of vintages past, and the wine always flowing over the dinner table, inculcated an early deep appreciation for wine and ultimately planted the seed for his future career.

He undertook training at the University of Adelaide, receiving an Honours degree in Oenology before embarking on a journey of wine operations in both a macro and ultra-premium scale across the country for several producers.

As a previous board member of the Margaret River Wine Association and a current member of the Mornington Peninsula Wine Association, he has gained deeper insight into the Australian wine-growing enterprise.

Over the span of his career, Peter has become intimately familiar with site-specific wines. This familiarity, in combination with the cool-climate pedigree of Handpicked's flagship vineyard in the Mornington Peninsula – Capella — has allowed him to craft wines that offer a true sense of place ever since 2014 when he joined Handpicked.

For years he has been heavily involved in some of the most prestigious Wine Shows across Australia, both as a committee member and a judge. In 2016, Peter was selected as one of 12 scholars of what is considered the most exclusive wine school in the world – the Len Evans Tutorial – which every year seeks out the most gifted palates to be dubbed wine-judging royalty.

Appointed Chief Winemaker in 2017, he oversaw vineyard holdings expansion to carefully selected premium sites – two additional vineyards in the Yarra Valley, two in Tasmania and one in the Barossa Valley. As a result, Peter travels extensively to ensure quality throughout these vineyards and other regions across Australia and the world, where he oversees grape growers who have become part of the Handpicked family.

Wearing a second hat as Director of Viticulture, he practices a vineyard-driven approach to winemaking that accentuates the character, complexity, and geology of each site.

Sustainability is at the heart of this approach, having introduced a plethora of sustainable and organic practices, from compost teas to water harvesting and insectariums. His natural and unceasing curiosity for rare and alternative grape varieties, along with new winemaking techniques, has resulted in that wines have been recognised globally for their exceptional quality, cementing Handpicked as a top-site high-quality Pinot Noir and Chardonnay producer in Australia.

With hundreds of accolades and several regional trophies to his name, he has also seen the winery recognised with a Halliday Five Star Winery Rating for XX consecutive years as well as featuring in The Real Review's Top Wineries of Australia since 2018.

Under Peter's leadership, Handpicked and all six of its vineyard sites have become certified with Sustainable Wine Growing Australia, highlighting Handpicked's commitment to best-practice sustainability. Currently, Peter is in the process of transitioning all of Handpicked's vineyards to Certified Organic Status, and with five of the winery's six vineyards now certified, Pete is set to achieve this goal by the end of 2025.

2024 brought Peter, and his team continued recognition in the wine awards circuit. Notably, Handpicked won 'Best in Region Chardonnay' at the most recent James Halliday Chardonnay Challenge in not one but three regions: Yarra Valley, Tasmania and Mornington Peninsula. The incredible sweep of trophies validates Peter's obsessive pursuit of site-specific excellence across Australia's top wine regions.

He currently resides in the Mornington Peninsula with his wife - a fellow winemaker - and three children. With a future that seems brighter than ever, his passion for crafting wines that express the unique and special nature of their land will continue to conquer many a palate.