

MARGARET RIVER



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FRANCES ANDRIJICH



For my mother Jagoda,
Annaliese, Mikhaila,
Michael and Freddy
with love.

Cover: North Point,
Gracetown.

Frontispiece: Aerial view
of Wilyabrup Brook
area, over Moss Wood's
Ribbon Vale vineyard.

Previous: Rivermouth,
Margaret River.

This page: Hardy Inlet,
Augusta.



FROM THE PHOTOGRAPHER

The Margaret River region has become my second home. Over the years I've watched it grow — from a small cluster of country villages to a burgeoning cultural hub, cosmopolitan and rich in attractions and events. The area draws in a remarkable diversity of people, from artists and musicians to winemakers and chefs, yet it has always retained its sense of community.

Photographic opportunities are infinite, and manifest themselves every day — a lone surfer on the blade of a perfect wave, kids playing on the reef at South Point against a screen of backlit waves, an electric-blue wren looking straight into my lens or dawn light streaming through the misty canopy of Boranup Forest. The region is eloquently deserving of its title as one of Australia's National Biodiversity Hotspots. The wild contrasts are evocative of Margaret River's essence.

For me, capturing that essence is in the combination of light, weather, landscape and luck. A photographer needs to be patient in this part of the world. The weather is so changeable and volatile, like the sea, and the land seems to reinvent itself with each new season. I can stand at Sugarloaf Rock waiting for an amazing sunset and suddenly the sky morphs into a Turneresque grey slate as a magnificent storm front approaches. One doesn't need the clichéd perfect conditions to witness this region's beauty.

Among these majestic scenes, I spot tiny stories quietly unfolding before my eyes; a skeleton leaf on a log close to where I have stopped for lunch, two canoeists paddling upriver in the last of the evening light, Baudin's black cockatoos stretching their wings in a dazzling feathered display.

Margaret River people are passionate about their work. Artists find solace in the peace of the region yet have a wide choice of galleries to display their work. Rock climbers, mountain bikers and trekkers thrive in this part of the world. And driven entrepreneurs, often young, create eco-friendly businesses that work in harmony with the region's abundant natural assets.

The region is rich with agricultural produce. I love meeting the people who work the land. They have such relaxed personalities, yet — like true artisans — everything they produce is of the highest quality, whether it be chocolate, ice-cream, cheese or cured meats, to name just a few. Visitors and locals are spoiled for choice.

Vintage is a favourite time for me. It's exciting to hear the different languages of grape pickers from all parts of the world. My passion for this aspect of Margaret River reflects my own Croatian upbringing. I feel at home with it all (my father always made his own olive oil and wine, as did his parents before him) and now love documenting the process.

THE MARGARET RIVER REGION



The elements come together, natural and man-made, and images are seized while fossicking for moments. I work instinctively, trying to get to a place that will show me the heart of it. Nowadays, some of my closest friends are here; visiting the produce market I meet and greet dozens of familiar faces. My connection with Margaret River grows with each trip and I'm forever grateful to the locals who share their stories and secret spots with me.

I hope with this book readers discover something new — that it offers a glimpse of the magic that I have been privileged to encounter and capture. It's a special part of the world, revitalising and inspiring, and when I venture here camera in hand, I'm totally absorbed.

A rainbow over Wilyabrup Cliffs.

Overleaf: Country road, Wilyabrup.





Hardy Inlet, Augusta.



Dawn at Augusta.



Rocky outcrops of
Cape Naturaliste,
Bunker Bay.

Farm Break at
Bunker Bay.





Relaxing at Samudra
cafe, Dunsborough.

Performer Johnno
B Biscuit captivates
a young audience,
Margaret River
Farmers' Market.



Iconic Margaret River
Hotel in the town centre,
Margaret River.



Fresh produce at
the Margaret River
Farmers' Market.





Quarry Beach,
Augusta.