



RATHFINNY

JOB DESCRIPTION

POSITION	Harvest Winery Staff (HWS)
LOCATION	Rathfinny Wine Estate, Alfriston, BN26 5TU, East Sussex
MANAGER	Winemaker

PURPOSE OF POSITION

This position involves the active participation in all the operations of the winemaking facilities at the Rathfinny Estate leading to the successful, safe, and profitable production of wine under the direction of the winemaker and senior winemaking team. Winemaking is primarily focussed on Rathfinny Estate Sparkling wines but also includes Cradle Valley still wines.

Harvest period will normally involve weekends, long work hours and flexible start & finish times. Often the tasks being undertaken in this role can be time critical, so working patterns may need to be adjusted without notice to take into consideration weather, breakdowns, and other operational issues.

CULTURE AND CONDUCT

At Rathfinny Estate we are committed to producing exceptional wines and experiences, enjoyed the world over, that reveal the character of our family Estate in Sussex, using methods that are kind to our land, people, community, and wider environment.

To deliver this commitment we foster an environment of high-performance and a culture of excellence which drives the production of exceptional quality products which are safe, legal, authentic as well as providing excellent customer service.

All staff are expected to:

- Engage in the ongoing process of continual improvement in all aspects of quality, safety, authenticity, and legality.
- Utilise skills, knowledge, and experience to suggest ways to solve problems and improve processes.
- Work with enthusiasm and professionalism.
- Treat colleagues with respect and kindness.
- Be friendly, helpful, and cheerful with the team and the public.
- Communicate openly and behave in an ethical, honest, and fair way.

WINERY AND VINTAGE OPERATIONS

HWS will actively participate in all winery and vintage operations (including set up, operation, cleaning, and maintenance):

- Fruit receipt and press operations.
- Vintage winery activities including racking, transfers, additions.
- Primary and malolactic fermentation management including inoculations and cultures.
- Laboratory work.

High levels of winery hygiene and organisation will need to be maintained throughout this time, and staff will be expected to spend considerable time on tasks related to cleaning equipment and the winery environment.



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HWS will need to manually handle grapes, additives, buckets, hoses, equipment, (up to 16kg), be able to perform repetitive tasks at a good speed and maintain high levels of quality.

Additionally, HWS will participate in related vintage operations administration which includes:

- Record-keeping of inputs, outputs, losses.
- Recording of winemaking and laboratory activities.

Winery and vintage operations will require both individual and team tasks, HWS will be expected to:

- Ensure work is completed as instructed, thoroughly, efficiently and in a timely manner.
- Record specifics of all operations accurately and as instructed.
- Support the production team as necessary during peak periods.

HYGIENE, FOOD DEFENCE, HOUSEKEEPING & SECURITY

HWS will abide by the Food safety and personal hygiene policy for Rathfinny Wine Estate.

HWS will actively protect products from risk related to food safety or quality resulting from accidental or malicious actions (HACCP & TACCP) including reporting any practice or situation which may lead to unsafe food as well challenging any instances of access to food areas by unauthorised people.

HWS will actively participate in the Hygiene, Food defence, Housekeeping, Security, and Protection of all the winery assets, including:

- Buildings and all plant and equipment in the winemaking and production departments.
- Wine in storage.
- Property.

HWS will be provided appropriate training and food protective clothing (FPC) to allow them to produce safe, high quality authentic wines and drinks.

HWS will support the winemaking and production department in maintaining site standards that satisfy BRC food-safety standards.

SAFETY

HWS will abide by the Health and Safety policy for Rathfinny Wine Estate.

HWS will actively participate in the provision of a safe, professional work environment including:

- Complying with all applicable Health & Safety regulations and instructions.
- Always operating with a high level of safety.
- Reporting in a timely manner any practice or situation which staff believe to be unsafe.
- Operating in accordance with safe working procedures.

HWS will be provided appropriate training and personal protective equipment (PPE) to allow them to work efficiently and safely in this working environment.



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WORKING ENVIRONMENT

As part of the job role, HWS may be required to:

- Work at cool winery and night-time temperatures (typically 10-16°C).
- Work with cleaning chemicals and other substances hazardous to health.
- Work with sulphur dioxide SO₂ (allergen).
- Work in a noisy environment.
- Work at heights.
- Work in confined spaces (if trained).
- Work at night and on the weekends.
- Operate complex wine production machinery.
- Work standing up for prolonged periods of time.
- Work in wet and slippery environments.
- Conduct repetitive tasks such as cleaning, additions, and analysis.

HWS may be required to work around and with powered vehicles including:

- Powered pallet truck.
- Motorised scrubber-dryer.
- Delivery vehicles.
- Forklift and attachments (if experienced).
- Tractors and attachment (if experienced).

ADDITIONAL DUTIES

There will be times when you may be required to undertake additional tasks, duties, and responsibilities within your capabilities. Rathfinny wine estate reserves the right to vary your tasks, duties, and responsibilities at any time and from time to time according to the needs of the Company's business. However, you will not be assigned to duties or required to perform services which you cannot reasonably perform or which are outside the range of your normal skills and experience.

EVERYONE IS WELCOME

Rathfinny is an equal opportunities employer and actively supports Human Rights, and all Equality legislation. Our ethos is to respect and value people's differences, to help everyone achieve more at work as well as in their personal lives so that they feel proud of the part they play in our success.

We believe that all decisions about people at work should be based on the individual's abilities, skills, performance and behaviour and our business requirements. We are committed to the fair treatment of our staff, potential staff, or users of our services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependents, age, physical/mental disability, or offending background.

B CORPORATION

Actively participate in B Corp certification and the adoption of the highest standard in social and environmental performance, public transparency, and legal accountability to balance profit and purpose. The winery team will discuss their annual targets and as a temporary member of that team, you will be expected to contribute to them.



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TESTIMONIALS

“My first harvest at Rathfinny was an unforgettable start to my wine career. The experience was rich, intense, and set a high standard.

Before harvest, I gained hands-on experience with disgorging, labelling, and electrolysis. As harvest approached, I prepped the winery—cleaning pumps, tanks, barrels, and presses. Rathfinny’s meticulous approach to cleanliness stood out, creating an ideal working environment.

During harvest, I worked across the winery—handling transfers, rackings, press monitoring, barrel work, and lab analysis. Yeast inoculations and fermentation monitoring became some of my favourite tasks.

Beyond the work, the Rathfinny team made me feel truly welcomed. Harvest dinners, from Monday barbecues to Saturday pastries, brought us together. These shared moments, alongside the learning experience, made my time at Rathfinny incredibly rewarding.

I left with new skills, great memories, and lifelong friendships—grateful for the mentorship and the opportunity to be part of such a special harvest.”

MARIA PETRE – HARVEST STAFF IN 2023