

Wine Australia fact sheet

Wine Regions - Australia's famous wine regions



While Australia has about 60 wine regions, the following ten are among its most famous and diverse. From the rugged and isolated beauty of Margaret River in Western Australia, to the historical home of Australian wine, the Hunter Valley in New South Wales, a journey across Australia's wine regions is filled with a diversity of climates, soils, elevation and – ultimately – wine styles.

Barossa Valley, South Australia

Renowned for its Shiraz production, the Barossa Valley is home to some of the country's iconic wines. Just one-hour north east of Adelaide, the region consists of gentle rolling hills and fertile valleys that combine with South Australia's Mediterranean climate to produce full-bodied red wines and delicate whites. They include Cabernet Sauvignon, Grenache, Mourvèdre and Merlot, while major whites include Riesling, Semillon and Chardonnay.

The Barossa was originally settled by Silesian Lutheran farmers in the 1830s and there are now more than 50 wineries and cellar doors in the region, ranging from small family enterprises to international companies.

Clare Valley

The Clare Valley is considered to be among South Australia's most picturesque regions. It is also known as the home of Australian Riesling and with good reason – Clare's consistency in making Rieslings of exceptional quality and style has won loyal consumers internationally.

Clare is not only famous for Riesling; it also produces award-winning Cabernet Sauvignon and Shiraz that vary dramatically in style throughout the region depending on vineyard location, soils and elevation.

Settlers from England, Ireland and Poland arrived in the region in the 1840s and wasted no time planting vines. Today visitors to the region can enjoy the popular Riesling Trail, a 27 km long sealed track that links the many small towns along the valley.

Coonawarra

The hidden treasure of the Coonawarra wine region is its precious layer of limestone beneath rich terra rossa soil. The two combine to produce Cabernet Sauvignon grapes that are the envy of wine regions all over the world.

Founded by Scottish settler John Riddoch more than a 150 years ago, Coonawarra offers wines of intense and classic fruit flavours that have won the hearts of consumers the world over.

Most Coonawarra Cabernets will effortlessly cellar for at least 10 years, but that's not the only variety the region is famous for. Other award winning varietals are Shiraz, Merlot and Chardonnay.

Heathcote

Rapidly raising the bar in terms of elegance and complexity, particularly with Shiraz, Heathcote's climate and soils of this Victorian region are strongly influenced by the Mt Camel Range which creates a cooler weather pattern in the grape growing period from October to March resulting in wines of finesse and longevity.

More recently, Heathcote winemakers have planted Viognier, small proportions of which are blended with Shiraz to provide an extra dimension to the flavour spectrum. Heathcote Cabernet Sauvignon is another signature style of the region. Italian varieties Sangiovese and Nebbiolo are also taking to their new home and provide added treasures to the region's reputation.

Aromatic white wine varieties such as Riesling, Viognier and Pinot Grigio display the underlining elegance and fine fruit structure that is characteristic of the region.

Hunter Valley

The Hunter Valley is Australia's oldest wine region, with the earliest vines planted in 1825.

Since those pioneering days, the Hunter's wine industry has flourished and now more than 80 wineries and cellar doors are open to tourist traffic en route from Sydney.

Winemakers in the Hunter have found success with varieties such as Shiraz, Verdelho and Chardonnay, but no other region has developed such an affinity with Semillon.

Semillons from the Hunter Valley have great capacity for graceful ageing, particularly in the years when the region defies its sub-tropical climate and turns on summer weather to bring on lime and citrus flavours.

McLaren Vale

A battle over the title of Australia's best Shiraz maker is fought each year between the Barossa Valley and McLaren Vale. Set among pastures and orchards and located to the south of Adelaide, McLaren Vale's rich soils and proximity to the gulf waters of St Vincent provide the perfect ingredients for intensely flavoured red wines and powerful but well-balanced white.



www.wineaustralia.com

Wine Regions - Australia's famous wine regions

There are now more than 50 wineries and cellar doors in the region. McLaren Vale's leading reds are Shiraz, Cabernet Sauvignon, Grenache and Merlot, while whites include Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc and Riesling.

Margaret River

Margaret River has quietly built a reputation for wines of outstanding quality in the past decade. While the region covers all the classic varieties, Margaret River winemakers have worked hard to develop a signature style of Cabernet Sauvignons.

The region has the added tourism drawcards of breathtaking coastal scenery and culinary delights to match its extensive range of wine styles, including Shiraz, Verdelho and the wonderfully herbaceous Sauvignon Blanc.

Mudgee

Nestled deep in the western slopes of New South Wales' Blue Mountains, Mudgee is another historical player in Australia's wine industry. Commercial planting occurred in the 1860s led by German immigrants, but the modern era of grape production really began in the 1970s.

A number of large national wine companies have set up shop in the region, complimenting the array of boutique wineries that offer a diverse range of wine styles.

Powerful Cabernet Sauvignon, with complex flavours and ageing potential, is a regional highlight. Chardonnay is the Mudgee's most popular and highly regarded white.

Tasmania

The history of viticulture in Tasmania is quite recent when compared with the rest of Australia. While some planting occurred in the 19th century, it wasn't until the 1970s that true winegrape planting began with the establishment of Pipers Brook.

Tasmania, known for its spectacular beauty, now has more than 60 vineyards and wineries, many of them just a few hectares in size.

Tasmania's cool maritime climate produces elegant wines with excellent natural acid. Specialist varieties include Pinot Noir for sparkling and still wine, Chardonnay, Riesling, Pinot Grigio, Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc.

Yarra Valley

Victoria's oldest wine region, the Yarra Valley is considered one of the world's finest cool climate wine producers. Specialising in Pinot Noir and Chardonnay, the key varieties for sparkling wines, the Yarra also impresses wine judges with its more subtle Shiraz and Cabernet Sauvignon styles.

Chardonnay is the Yarra Valley's most widely planted

white grape variety due to its flexibility of style – from complex, oaked wines to elegant restrained styles, Chardonnay is often made using traditional winemaking techniques.

Other white wines produced in the Yarra include Gewürztraminer, Marsanne and Sauvignon Blanc, which is often blended with Semillon.



www.wineaustralia.com