

AN INTRODUCTION TO AUSTRALIA

of Wineries

1,101

of Acres

98,439 ha

Major Regions

Coonawarra and Padthaway

Harvest

1998 - 954,500

Note:

White Wine Sales	Chardonnay	10,551 ha	14.8%
	Riesling	3,272	4.6%
	Semillon	3,728	5.2%
	Sauvignon B	1,322	1.85%
	Cabernet S	7,771 ha	11%
	Shiraz	9,126	13%
	Pinot Noir	1,583	2%
	Merlot	1,117	2%

Consumption 18 litres per capita

Roman Times	Vineyards 50,000 per hectare
19th Century	10,000 – 15,000
Modern Europe	4,000 – 8,000
Australia	1,500 to 3,000 mechanical harvesting

South Eastern Australia

State

Zone

Region

Subregion

New South Wales

- first plantings

From Mildara Blass Site

Australia

Barossa Valley

The Barossa is a pleasant one hour drive from Adelaide, South Australia's capital city, and is climatically ideal for grape growing. The first grapes were planted in this area in 1874 by pioneers of German origin who brought their preoccupation for thoroughness with them. It is Australia's largest quality wine region. The Barossa follows the Para River for about 23 miles then spreads eastwards to the rocky hills of the Barossa Ranges. Small towns along the way include Tanunda, Angaston and Nuriootpa, and most of Australia's major wine enterprises. It has a reputation for

memorable table wines, particularly Shiraz, Cabernet Sauvignon and Pinot Noir red grapes and with Semillon for rich, Burgundy style whites.

Clare Valley

Only a quarter the size of the Barossa, but with a history almost as long, Clare is 90 miles north of Adelaide. Settled in the 1840s by English, Irish and Polish settlers, the valley extends 20 miles north of Auburn. It has limestone soil on moderate uplands - the highest point is 1700 feet - and a warm to moderately cool climate. The district produces sturdy, well-structured reds. Recognition of Clare prompted Wolf Blass to establish a very strong presence in the region. As well as extensive vineyard plantings, Wolf Blass owns the historic Quelltaler (home of Black Opal) winery at Watervale.

Eden Valley

Situated to the east of the Barossa Valley, the Eden Valley is considerably higher, mostly between 400 and 600 meters above sea level. Climatic and geological differences ensure that the Eden Valley wines are distinct from those of the valley floor. Soils are rockier and more acidic. The cooler temperatures in the Eden Valley result in a longer growing season, and a different grape flavor profile is inevitable. Plantings of riesling outstrip all other grapes in Eden Valley, Shiraz is next. Chardonnay is also grown here and Cabernet is widely grown. -Discover Australian Wineries

Langhorne Creek

Situated to the southeast of McLaren Vale on South Australia's Fleurieu Peninsula, it has escaped the public scrutiny focused on many other areas. The area is much admired by Wolf Blass, and a significant proportion of some of his famous Black Label reds, including the Jimmy Watson trophy-winning trio in the mid-1970s, came from the district. (The Black Label also won the Jimmy Watson in 1999 - a record-breaking feat for a single label.) Chardonnay is by far the most widely planted white grape in Langhorne Creek, while Cabernet Sauvignon and Shiraz dominate the red plantings. -Discover Australia Wineries

McLaren Vale

McLaren Vale has been a well-recognized wine-producing region since vines were first planted in 1838. Bordered by the Adelaide Hills to the east and the Gulf of St. Vincent to the west, McLaren Vale is rich in diversity, incorporating rivers, hills, olive groves, orchards and ocean views within its geographical boundaries. Nearly all grapes flourish within the region. Renowned for intense, full-flavored reds and the fruit-driven power of its whites, the wines of McLaren Vale have been awarded countless medals, trophies and other accolades, both domestically and abroad over the years.

Padthaway

When land in Coonawarra became increasingly scarce and expensive, many of Australia's major wine companies were forced to search for an alternative area to develop for the production of premium wine. The Padthaway/Keppoch region, 50 miles northwest of Coonawarra, proved to be the most suitable. Comprised of a similar terra rosa soil over limestone, the strip of rich red soil is 10 miles long and about a mile wide. The area has a slightly warmer climate, providing a stability that produces less variation in vintages. Rainfall is lower but, like Coonawarra, there is a good supply of underground water and, once established, the vines grow very well. Before the first vines were established in 1963, the region was divided into seven large grazing-oriented properties. The most famous, Padthaway House, was refurbished in the late 1920's; it is one of the most beautiful old colonial inns. Although originally envisioned as a red wine area, the region has proved to be extremely versatile, and has produced white wines of many styles. Rhine Riesling, Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc and Pinot Noir have been successful grape varieties, producing excellent results. Padthaway has a comparable area under vine to Coonawarra. The intense varietal character found in the high grade fruit of the area guarantees that Padthaway/Keppoch will become of increasingly important to the industry. In areas further south and east of Naracoorte, large areas are being planted by some of Australia's largest wine companies. Along with the existing Koppamurra vineyard, this will provide a huge resource of top quality grapes for the future of wine in Australia, particularly for export.

Yarra Valley

The Yarra Valley district is situated in the state of Victoria around the towns of Lilydale, Yarra Glen and Healesville with some vineyards in the other suburbs of Melbourne. Vines were first planted in the Yarra Valley around 1840. Vineyard areas in the Yarra expanded rapidly and by the late 1860s, they covered around 150 hectares. By 1890, Victoria produced almost 60 per cent of Australia's wine - more than all the other states combined. Then, unfortunately, tastes changed and fortified wines became the fashion. Cool climate areas that produced fine table wines, such as the Yarra Valley, died out and by the early part of the 20th century most vineyards in the Yarra had ceased operation. The last vintage was at Yeringberg in 1921. The renaissance of the Yarra Valley wasn't until 1968/9 when St. Hubert's Yarra Yering, Fergussons and Yeringberg all got underway with planting. Since then, many other large and small wineries have firmly established themselves in the Yarra. In recent years, wine tourism has gripped the Yarra. Many excellent restaurants and cellar door hospitality areas each week attract thousands of keen wine drinkers, from all corners of the world. The Yarra Valley is once again a wine mecca.

Hunter Valley

Just a two-hour drive from Sydney, the Hunter Valley is the most visited wine region in Australia. Tastings are available at more than 100 large and small cellar door facilities, many of which offer souvenirs, arts and crafts items, and refreshments. Vintage generally starts in late January, finishing some time in April. Vines were planted in the early 1830s by 10 growers, the most famous of whom was James Busby, who is considered to be the father of Australian viticulture. Situated between the Pacific Ocean and the Great Dividing Range, the Hunter Valley experiences a range of climatic conditions. Because of varying weather conditions, sturdy grape varieties, such as Semillon and Shiraz, can be sampled at every cellar door. The Chardonnay grape was later introduced to the region and it now accounts for more than 40% of the current wine grape production in the Hunter. To the northwest, Verdhelo, Semillon and Merlot are being planted, along with modest quantities of Italian varieties such as Sangiovese, Dolcetto and Barbera. Inland, toward the Upper Hunter, Chardonnay, Cabernet Sauvignon, Semillon and Shiraz take on subregional characters due to the milder micro-climates experienced in the area. -Discover Australian Wineries

Coonawarra

Referred to as the Bordeaux of Australia for its cool climate and its elegant yet richly flavored Cabernet Sauvignon, it contains a narrow strip of soil the color of paprika: terra rossa. The soil contrasts with the lime-green leaves and gnarled black vines to create Coonawarra's distinctive bright palette. The loamy soil overlays porous, well-draining limestone that provides a gentle and consistent water supply to the vines. This results in exceptional grape development and characters. Yet this strip of soil is only about 20 kilometers long and 1.5 kilometers wide, narrowing at each end, and varies in depth from a few centimeters to a meter.