

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO

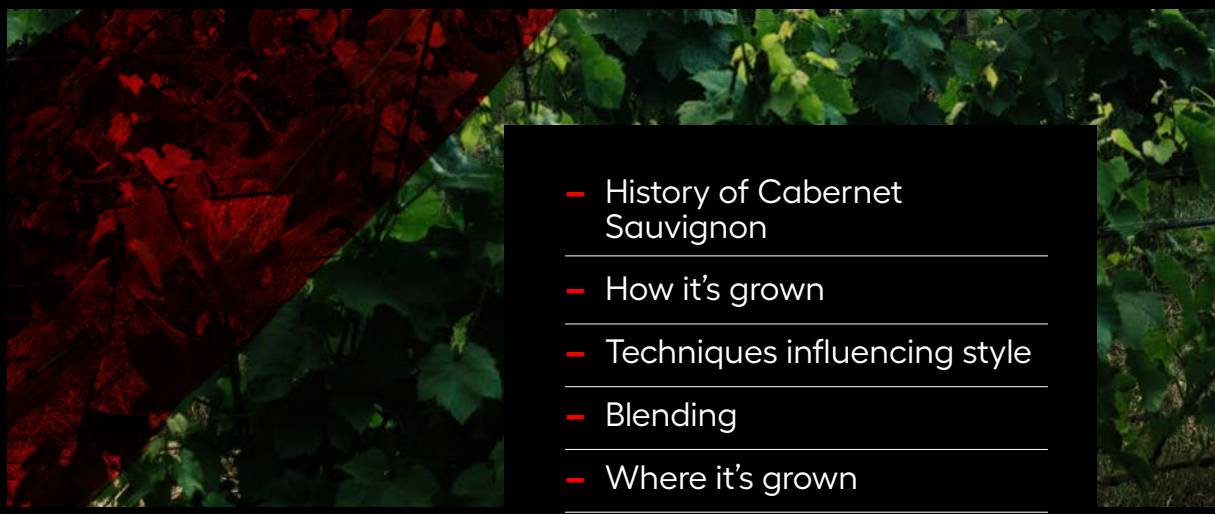
CABERNET SAUVIGNON AND BLENDS

AUSTRALIAN WINE MADE OUR WAY

Learn everything there is to know about this great Australian wine success story – a revered variety worthy of a place in every wine lover's collection.



CONTENTS



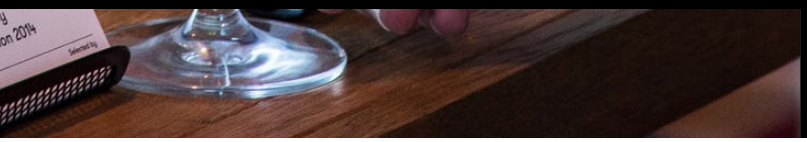
- History of Cabernet Sauvignon
- How it's grown
- Techniques influencing style
- Blending
- Where it's grown
- Characteristics and flavour profiles

Cover: **Virginia Willcock**, Vasse Felix, Margaret River



Beauty is so much more than skin-deep with Cabernet Sauvignon, despite this deeply coloured black grape variety being so striking. Under the surface, Cabernet Sauvignon boasts lots of tannin, bright acidity and easily recognisable aromas.

CABERNET SAUVIGNON: A TRUE AUSTRALIAN CLASSIC



ONE OF AUSTRALIA'S GREAT WINE SUCCESS STORIES

Cabernet Sauvignon is Australia's third most planted grape variety and an integral part of Australia's wine heritage.

- It's successful as a single varietal wine and as a dominant feature in classic blends.
- Australia is known for fuller-bodied, concentrated Cabernet Sauvignon, but also produces medium-bodied, tannin-driven styles.
- Barossa Valley's Kalimna Block 42 is believed to be the world's oldest Cabernet Sauvignon vines (planted in 1888).
- Planted in 58 of 65 Australian wine regions.

THE HISTORY OF CABERNET SAUVIGNON IN AUSTRALIA

1886

What are believed to be the world's oldest productive Cabernet Sauvignon vines are planted at Penfolds Block 42 Kalimna.



1832

Cabernet Sauvignon arrives on Australian shores in the collection imported by wine pioneer James Busby.

1966

Cabernet Sauvignon accounts for only 620 tonnes of the grapes crushed in Australia.



2016

50 years later, through innovation and craftsmanship – and to meet demand for the popularity of this special style – Australia crushes 255,000 tonnes of Cabernet Sauvignon.

TODAY

Winemakers across Australia respect and honour the variety's rich history while striving to make the best possible wines, crafting delicious Cabernet Sauvignons that reflect a sense of place.

A BRIEF HISTORY

Cabernet Sauvignon originated in the Gironde region in southwest France. The grape variety's history in Australia, however, dates back to the mid-1800s.

With time and persistence, Australian wine pioneers eventually found suitable sites in moderate climates and planted vineyards across New South Wales, South Australia, Western Australia and Victoria. Although the first Cabernet Sauvignon crops mostly contributed to blends, viticulturists and winemakers soon saw the potential of Australian Cabernet Sauvignon as a single-variety wine.

Interestingly, Australia boasts what are believed to be the world's oldest productive Cabernet Sauvignon vines, planed in 1886 at Penfolds Block 42 vineyard in the northern Barossa Valley. Langhorne Creek is also home to the historic Metala vineyard planted in 1891.

Today, after Shiraz and Chardonnay, Cabernet Sauvignon is Australia's third-most-planted wine grape variety, and it's the world's most widely planted vine.

DID YOU KNOW

Cabernet Sauvignon is a cross between Cabernet Franc and Sauvignon Blanc.

FUN FACT

IN FRANCE, CABERNET HAS PREVIOUSLY BEEN KNOWN AS PETITE CABERNET, VIDURE, PETITE-VIDURE, BOUCHE, PETITE-BOUCHE, BOUCHET SAUVIGNON AND SAUVIGNON ROUGE.



VITICULTURE: HOW CABERNET SAUVIGNON IS GROWN



Site selection

Cabernet Sauvignon thrives in warm to cool, dry regions with a maritime influence. A site with plenty of sunshine and the right soil type are key.

Yield

Though Cabernet Sauvignon vines can yield a lot of fruit, overcropping is a risk.

The vine

Cabernet Sauvignon vines are hardy and can produce vigorous yields.

- Small to medium clusters with medium-long peduncles (stalks)
- Small, round blue-black grapes
- Thick skins
- Medium-sized leaves



Irrigation

Viticulturists may irrigate Cabernet Sauvignon vines to introduce water during periods of inadequate rainfall and to help produce sufficient yields.

Harvest

As a late-ripening variety, Cabernet Sauvignon harvesting typically starts later in the season.



Pruning

Especially important to control excessive growth. A variety of canopy management techniques can be used to ensure the canopy is balanced and the fruit zone is appropriately shaded, avoiding sunburn and excessive ripeness.

VITICULTURE: HOW CABERNET SAUVIGNON IS GROWN

Site selection

Site selection for Cabernet Sauvignon is crucial, as it can greatly impact the quality and characteristics of the resulting wines. For high-quality Cabernet Sauvignon, a site with plenty of sunshine and the right soil type are key.

– Climate

Although Cabernet Sauvignon can grow in a variety of climates, it's a late-ripening vine that thrives most successfully in warm to cool, dry regions with a maritime influence. In hot regions, the fruit characters become less defined but are still useful in commercial blends; they often add sought-after tannins to bring more structure to wines made from other high-cropping vines.

Although Cabernet Sauvignon can perform well in cool climates, if it's too cold, the wines may take on more stalky or herbaceous notes, such as green leaf and capsicum (bell pepper). In greater concentrations, these characteristics can adversely affect Cabernet Sauvignon's quality and leave the wine tasting green and 'stalky'. Likewise, in regions where the grape is exposed to excess warmth and over-ripening, the wine can develop flavours of cooked or stewed blackcurrants.

In Australia, Coonawarra's moderate climate, along with its well-drained, red-limestone-based soils and good water for supplementary irrigation, is ideal for medium-bodied to full-bodied Cabernet Sauvignon table wines. Other regions where the climate suits Cabernet Sauvignon include Margaret River, the Yarra Valley and Langhorne Creek.

– Soil

Studies of Cabernet Sauvignon vines grown on different soil types reveal that soil is a key element in determining vine performance and quality of fruit. Cabernet Sauvignon flourishes on well-drained soils, such as the terra rossa soils of Coonawarra and the gravelly soils of Margaret River.

The vine

The Cabernet Sauvignon vine is one of the most cold-hardy and disease-resistant grape vines. It has the potential to be very vigorous and growers use a number of different trellising and canopy-management techniques depending on the vigour of their vines. It's one of the last major grape varieties of the season to bud and ripen.

Irrigation

Viticulturists may irrigate Cabernet Sauvignon vines to introduce water during periods of inadequate rainfall and to help produce sufficient yields. Sites with readily available water – in case additional irrigation is needed – are ideal for producing medium-bodied to full-bodied table wines.

Pruning

One of the main purposes of pruning is to 'tell' the vine how many bunches of grapes to grow. This is achieved by diverting energy growth to the right place. Given Cabernet Sauvignon is a vigorous vine, pruning is especially important to control excessive growth. A variety of canopy management techniques can also be used to ensure the canopy is balanced and the fruit zone is appropriately shaded, avoiding sunburn and excessive ripeness. Pruning can be done by hand or mechanically, typically during the winter months or closer to spring.

Yield

Cabernet Sauvignon can be high yielding, and yields can strongly influence the quality and flavour of the wine. Though high-yielding vines can produce high-quality fruit with the desired wine traits, overcropped Cabernet Sauvignon vines can result in wines with less clear variety definition than those with lower-yielding crops. These can be less concentrated and flavourful. Winemakers may choose to use these wines in blends rather than single-variety wines.

Harvest

Cabernet Sauvignon is a late-ripening variety; therefore, harvesting of Cabernet Sauvignon generally begins later in the season. The later the harvest, the more the grapes will develop the black fruit and high tannin traits that are characteristic of high-quality Cabernet Sauvignon wines. (Early grape harvesting often results in wines with greener, more herbaceous aromas and flavours.)

However, the climate of the growing season can impact how early wine producers will harvest Cabernet Sauvignon grapes. They look at a number of factors to determine the maturity of the grapes:

- Sugar levels
- Grape colour
- pH/acidity
- Phenolic content, such as tannin
- Aromas
- Flavours

Other harvest considerations for Cabernet Sauvignon producers are: the intended use for the grapes, such as the style of wine they're looking for or whether or not they will be blended; what's typical for a given region and year; weather conditions; and labour and winery schedules.

Cabernet Sauvignon grapes can be either hand-picked or machine-picked, but premium growers typically harvest by hand.

DID YOU KNOW

Cabernet Sauvignon typically buds and ripens one to two weeks after Merlot and Cabernet Franc.



HOW RED WINE IS MADE



1. HARVEST



2. DESTEMMING & CRUSHING



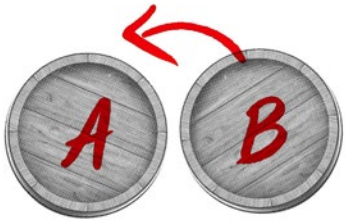
3. FERMENTATION



4. PRESSING



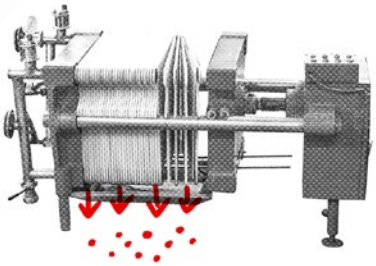
5. MALOLACTIC FERMENTATION



7. BLENDING



6. MATURATION

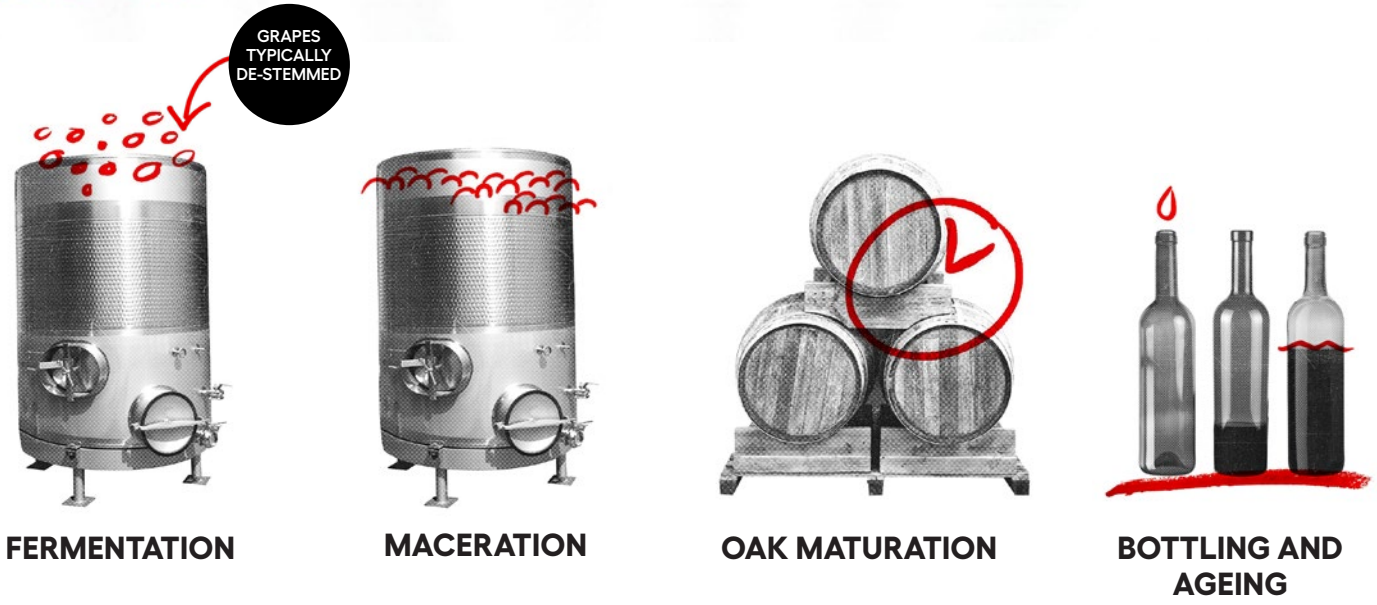


8. FINING & FIL-TERING



9. BOTTLING

WINEMAKING: TECHNIQUES INFLUENCING CABERNET SAUVIGNON STYLE



WINEMAKING: TECHNIQUES INFLUENCING CABERNET SAUVIGNON STYLE

Varying techniques may be used, allowing the winemaker to create their own wine style and to build character and complexity.

Fermentation:

In the winery, Cabernet Sauvignon is typically de-stemmed, meaning only the grapes undergo fermentation. The reason for this is that the grapes already have enough aroma and tannin and do not benefit from any additional tannins from the stems. (If the grapes were fermented with the stems, the wine would be very tannic and likely quite green in flavour.)

Maceration:

Maceration is the process of manipulating the contact of juice and wine with the skins of the grape to impact the colour, aromas and flavours of the wine. Extended contact with grape skins can occur after the grapes are crushed, before alcohol fermentation or after alcohol fermentation and before pressing the skins. Australian Cabernet Sauvignon winemakers use both pre-fermentation and post-fermentation methods, depending on the stylistic and structural outcomes they desire for the wines.

Maturation:

Cabernet Sauvignon generally has a long maturation period – 12 to 24 months. Maturation in new (usually French or American) or used oak barrels is quite common for the variety. The extended maturation in oak helps soften Cabernet Sauvignon's inherently firm and structured tannins, and allows the character of the oak to integrate with the fruit.

Ageing:
Australian Cabernet Sauvignon wines have great ageing potential. The high-quality wines have the tannin structure, concentration and complexity to age for decades. Young Cabernet Sauvignons have firm tannins, high acidity and flavours of cassis, blackberry and herbs. As the wines mature, their tannins soften, becoming mellow and smooth, and they take on characteristics of cedar, tobacco, earth, soy and cocoa.

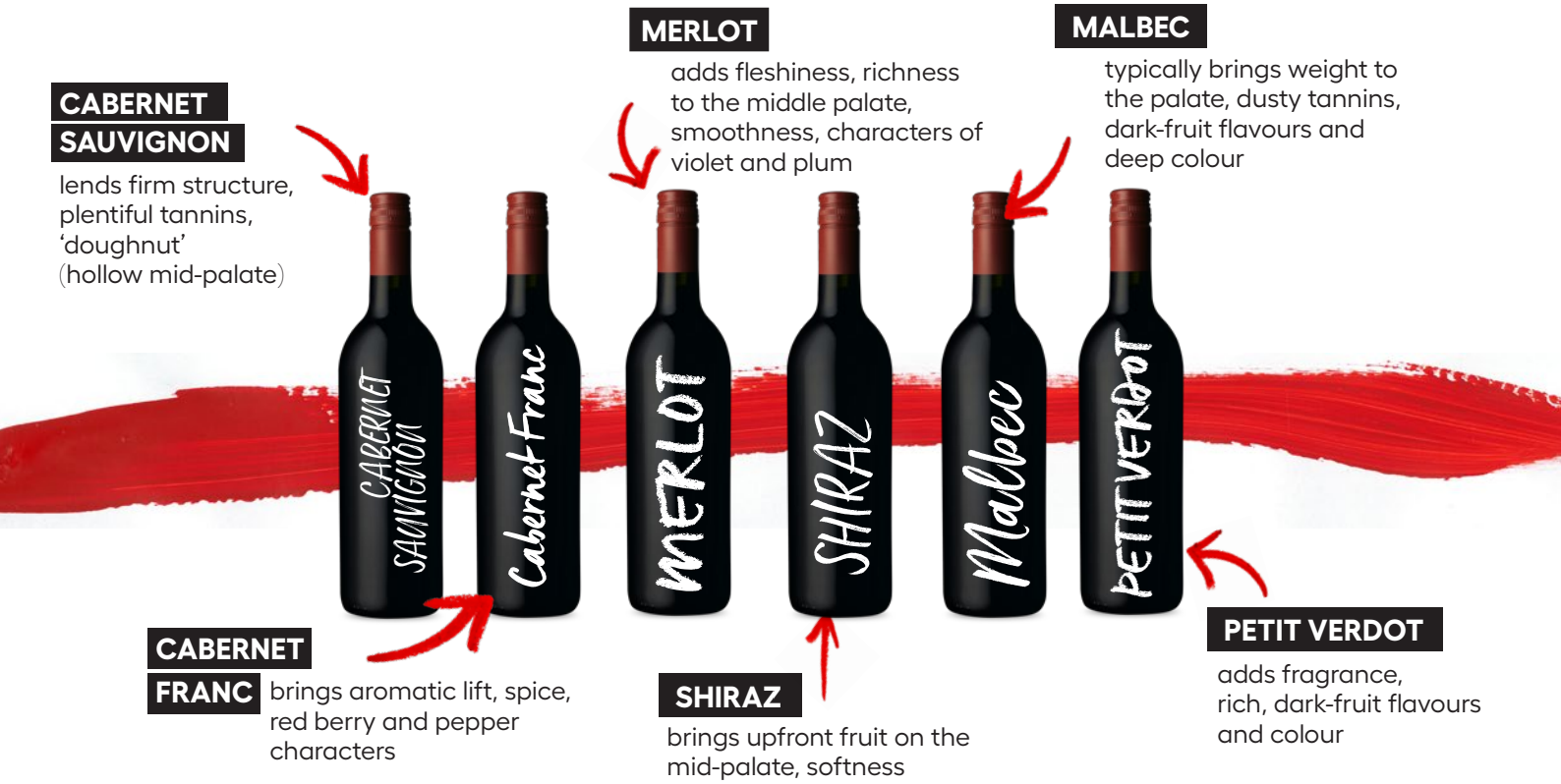
Winemakers frequently use oak to age premium Cabernet Sauvignons. This adds additional tannins and flavours depending on the type, toasting and size of the oak such as:

- Smoke.
- Vanilla.
- Coffee.
- Cedar.

Because Cabernet Sauvignon can stand the test of time, it's been a fixture in a lot of Australia's most historic and successful wines.



CABERNET SAUVIGNON AND BLENDING



CABERNET SAUVIGNON
lends firm structure, plentiful tannins, 'doughnut' (hollow mid-palate)

MERLOT
adds fleshiness, richness to the middle palate, smoothness, characters of violet and plum

MALBEC
typically brings weight to the palate, dusty tannins, dark-fruit flavours and deep colour

CABERNET FRANC
brings aromatic lift, spice, red berry and pepper characters

SHIRAZ
brings upfront fruit on the mid-palate, softness

PETIT VERDOT
adds fragrance, rich, dark-fruit flavours and colour

CABERNET SAUVIGNON AND BLENDING

The structure of Cabernet Sauvignon is such that it can benefit from blending with other wine varieties. Cabernet-Shiraz, for example, is a uniquely Australian blend that is highly successful.

Cabernet Sauvignon is sometimes said to have a hole in its mid-palate, often referred to as the Cabernet 'doughnut'. The wine hits the front of the palate with fruit flavour, then leaps, giving a distinct impression of lingering flavour and tannin on the back palate, which leaves a hollow sensation in the middle of the tongue. This is why winemakers often choose to blend Cabernet Sauvignon with other grapes – to provide more mid-palate plushness and make a better, more complete wine.

Australia has had access to exceptional Shiraz from a diverse range of regions from the early days. Some of the greatest Australian wines ever made are a blend of Cabernet Sauvignon and Shiraz. These wines are complex and robust, with incredible ageing potential. Often the two varieties even come from different regions to develop more levels of ripeness and layers of complexity.

In addition to Australian Shiraz, grapes you typically see blended with Cabernet Sauvignon include:

- Merlot
- Cabernet Franc
- Malbec
- Petit Verdot

Each of these grapes brings something distinctive to Cabernet-based blends.

Ultimately, through blending, winemakers aim to create a wine that has greater balance, complexity, intensity and length.

COMPLEMENTARY READING

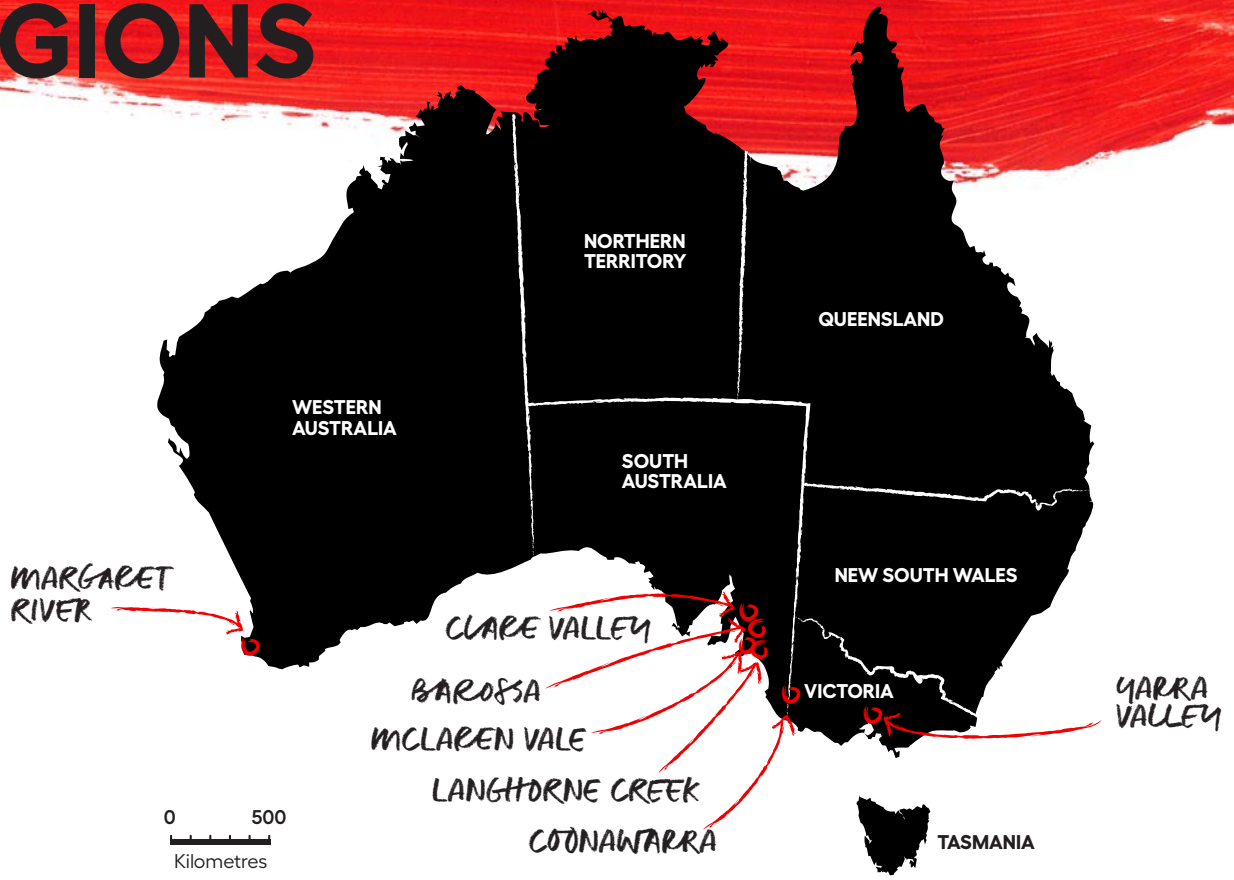
CABERNET SAUVIGNON AND SHIRAZ – THE GREAT AUSTRALIAN RED BLEND?

Cabernet Sauvignon's structure often benefits from being blended with other grape varieties. Cabernet Franc, Merlot, Malbec and Petit Verdot help flesh it out and ensure that a quality wine can be made in almost all years. In Australia, vignerons in the 1950s didn't always have these varieties to turn to. One thing Australia has had and always will have, however, is access to exceptional Shiraz from a diverse range of regions. It's easy to see how an unlikely partnership in France became a logical progression in Australia.

One of Australia's great winemakers, Max Schubert, can take the biggest share of the credit for popularising the Shiraz Cabernet blend. While he surely wasn't the first to combine the varieties, he was the first to create an iconic wine from their union. Max was a true admirer of Cabernet blends, originally wanting to use Cabernet Sauvignon as the basis for a project that lead to a little wine known as Grange.

Most winemakers would be happy with creating one iconic wine in their lifetime. Not Max. In 1960, after introducing Grange to the world, he produced another icon when he bottled the first vintage of Penfolds Bin 389. The multi-regional blend of Cabernet Sauvignon and Shiraz inspired many in the Australian wine community with its combination of power and structure. Bin 389 has been joined by blends from renowned wineries like Yalumba, Hardys, Jacob's Creek and Wolf Blass, alongside an array of wines from boutique wineries from the Barossa to Hunter Valley. The Cabernet Shiraz blend is a proudly Australian wine style that continues to be enjoyed today.

AUSTRALIAN CABERNET SAUVIGNON REGIONS



AUSTRALIAN CABERNET SAUVIGNON REGIONS

You can find Cabernet Sauvignon's brilliance all across Australia. Australian Cabernet Sauvignon means medium-bodied to full-bodied wines with firm, structured tannins and fresh acidity. And although regional expressions vary, the variety's character shines through no matter where it's grown.

Two Australian wine regions have established themselves as iconic, world-class producers of Cabernet Sauvignon. Coonawarra in South Australia and Margaret River in Western Australia.

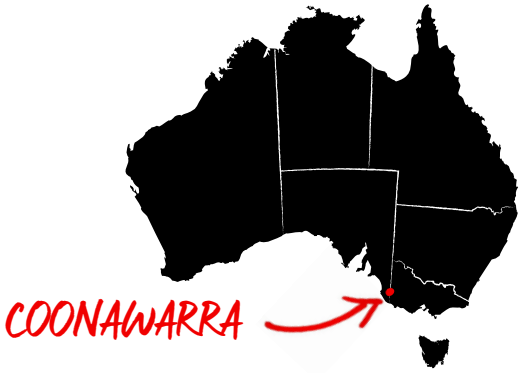
While Coonawarra and Margaret River may be the country's leading Cabernet Sauvignon regions, others have emerged as contenders, including the cool-climate Yarra Valley in Victoria and warm climates like McLaren Vale, Langhorne Creek and Barossa in South Australia.



COONAWARRA



- Maritime influence
- Australia's famous terra rossa soil
- Strong winemaking heritage
- Cabernet Sauvignon is king
- A tradition of blending





SOUTH AUSTRALIA

COONAWARRA

Maritime influence

Coonawarra is only 100 kilometres (62 miles) inland from the Australian coast, so a predominantly moderate maritime climate prevails in the region, with dry and moderately cool summer ripening most grape varieties to perfection. Its maritime location does not, however, prevent the occurrence of spring frosts that are occasionally quite severe. The extensive cloud cover that moderates the most important ripening period temperatures also sets the region apart.

Australia's famous terra rossa soil

Although terra rossa (red soil) is not unique to the region, Coonawarra's distinctive vivid strip is one of the most valuable patches of soil in Australian wine. It's either friable clay or a shallow friable loam derived from and lying atop a bed of soft limestone.

DID YOU KNOW

Mint flavours are often associated with wine regions that are warm enough to have low levels of pyrazine (the compound that makes some wines taste like capsicum) but are still generally cool, such as Coonawarra.

FUN FACT

COONAWARRA IS AN ABORIGINAL WORD THAT MEANS 'HONEYSUCKLE', WHICH GROWS WILD IN THE AREA.

Strong winemaking heritage

Coonawarra's agricultural history began in the mid-1800s, when settlers recognised the potential of the flat, fertile plains for sheep farming and fruit growing. Enterprising Scottish settler John Riddoch planted Coonawarra's first grapevines in 1891, 30 years after establishing a lucrative sheep farm at Penola. Today, thanks to the pioneering work of people like David Wynn and Bill Redman, Coonawarra is, perhaps alongside Margaret River, Australia's most famous region for Cabernet Sauvignon.

Cabernet Sauvignon is king

Coonawarra produces complex Cabernet Sauvignon wines known for their intensity. These powerful reds:

- Are medium- to full-bodied.
- Showcase bold, dark and red fruits, with concentrated flavours of blackcurrant, mulberry, plum, blackberry and dark cherry. Classic flavours of mint, eucalyptus and cassis are also present.
- Have firm tannins without being astringent or hard.
- Often feature considerable oak seasoning, with notes of vanilla or toast.

In addition to Cabernet Sauvignon, Coonawarra produces a diverse range of varieties and styles. In recent years, a new generation of winemakers has helped reinforce the old guard of established winemaking families, continuing the tradition of elegant winemaking and bringing the region to a new audience.

A tradition of blending

Up until the 1950s, Shiraz was the main grape variety grown in Coonawarra. The style is medium-bodied, with spice and raspberry-toned fruit. Coonawarra winemakers have been blending Shiraz and Cabernet Sauvignon for decades. Merlot, on the other hand, doesn't have a long tradition in Coonawarra, but it has been a very successful blending partner for Cabernet Sauvignon and makes for interesting, elegant wines.

CLIMATE



MARITIME

INFLUENCED WITH COOLING EFFECTS OF SOUTHERN OCEAN

ALTITUDE

COONAWARRA
50–110M (164–361FT)

VERY HIGH
>1000M
>3280FT

HIGH
750–999M
2460–3279FT

MEDIUM
500–749M
1640–2459FT

LOW
0–499M
0–1639FT

COONAWARRA

Altitude

Coonawarra is a flat, low-altitude region. Lower altitudes generally have little effect on vines. However, even a small slope's aspect can affect the amount of sunlight the vines receive and mitigate some weather conditions like hail.

Climate

- Maritime-influence
- Moderate (cool to warm)
- Dry, cool summers
- Coonawarra experiences a maritime influence due to upwelling of cold ocean currents at certain times of the year. Cold winters and cool summer night temperatures are the norm. Consistent cloud cover in Coonawarra also contributes to temperature reduction.

Latitude

- 37° 32'S

Mean January temperature (MJT)

– 20.1°C (68°F)

MJT refers to the mean temperature of the warmest month.

Growing season rainfall (GSR)

– 260mm (10.2in)

Calculated from October to April in Australia, growing season rainfall is a good indication of how much water is available to the vine.

Please check the Wine Australia website for up-to-date information. Altitude refers to the highest and lowest vineyard in the GI region, not necessarily the highest or lowest point within the region and is calculated using the National Vineyard Scan and state contour datasets. Latitude is taken at the central point of the GI region. Meteorological data is taken from the national climate data bank of the Bureau of Meteorology: the Australian Data Archive for Meteorology (ADAM). Climate indices have been calculated across the whole GI region by the Antarctic Climate and Ecosystem CRC as part of a research project co-funded by Wine Australia. Growing season rainfall (GSR) and mean January temperature (MJT) based on 1991–2017 averages from the Bureau of Meteorology (2018). GSR is calculated from October to April.





Cabernet Sauvignon has seen great success from grape vines planted in Coonawarra's famed terra rossa soil – thin, iron-oxide-based topsoil over limestone.

SOIL

The Cabernet Sauvignon grape thrives in a variety of soil types, but it generally finds success with well-drained, gravel-based soils that absorb heat and radiate it to the vines to help with ripening.

In Coonawarra, Cabernet Sauvignon has seen great success from grape vines planted in the region's terra rossa soil – thin, iron-oxide-based topsoil over limestone.

DID YOU KNOW

Even though Coonawarra's first vines were planted in 1891, it really rose to fame with the revitalisation of the Wynns vineyard and winery in the 1950s. Coonawarra has a longer history of growing Cabernet Sauvignon than Margaret River, which didn't begin significant wine production until the 1970s.

NOTABLE COONAWARRA CABERNET SAUVIGNON PRODUCERS

Coonawarra is home to well-established, historic brands names that have endured and continue to champion the region's Cabernet Sauvignon style including:

- Redman Wines – established in 1908 and rose to fame with its 'Rouge Homme' labels.
- Wynns Coonawarra Estate – one of the region's best-known names, the legacy of those first vines planted by John Riddoch.
- Hardy Wines – Established by Thomas Hardy in 1853.
- Katnook Estate – Boasts a history stretching back to 1867.

MARGARET RIVER



- Gourmet paradise
- Cabernet Sauvignon is the region's hero wine
- Stand-out blends
- Innovative, experimental outlook



WESTERN AUSTRALIA



Margaret River didn't emerge as an ideal grape-growing region until the late 1960s, and was chosen for its specific climate and soil profile, which match the best growing conditions for Cabernet Sauvignon.

From its first vintages in the early 1970s by amateur vignerons who were new to grape growing and winemaking, the Margaret River region quickly stamped itself as one to watch – especially when it came to Cabernet Sauvignon.

Gourmet paradise

Margaret River, which sits in the far southwest corner of Western Australia, is one of the most geographically isolated wine regions in the world. But this isolation has been no barrier to the development of the region as it's grown and evolved into a place dedicated to the pursuit of great food, exceptional lifestyle and fine wine.

Hero wines

Cabernet Sauvignon is the hero variety for many Margaret River producers. The Margaret River style, though still medium-bodied to full-bodied, is richer in flavour and more rounded in texture than that of Coonawarra. In its best years, Margaret River Cabernets show an astonishing balance of fruit ripeness, acidity and defined tannin structure. The wines are characterised by dark, blueberry fruit characters and bay leaf, bouquet garni or dried-herb aromas.

Stand-out blends

The region has gained a reputation for producing powerful yet elegant Cabernet Sauvignon blends, many of which involve Merlot. These wines are medium-bodied to full-bodied, with earthy characters, and ripe cassis and violet aromas.

Innovative, experimental outlook

From organic and biodynamic farming methods and whole-bunch fermentation in amphora to extended skin contact and experiments with alternative varieties, the next generation of Margaret River producers are pushing boundaries, changing perceptions and finding a new audience for the region around the world, ensuring it remains vibrant and vital for years to come.

FUN FACT

IN THE YEARS SINCE IT WAS ESTABLISHED AS A FINE-WINE REGION, MARGARET RIVER HAS GROWN TO BECOME HOME TO MORE THAN 200 WINERIES.

DID YOU KNOW

Professor Harry Olmo in the 1950s and Dr John Gladstones in the 1960s identified Margaret River as having tremendous potential, exhibiting superb conditions for viticulture.

CLIMATE



MEDITERRANEAN

WITH STRONG MARITIME INFLUENCES, WITH OCEANS ON THREE SIDES

ALTITUDE

MARGARET RIVER
0–150M (0–492FT)

VERY HIGH
>1000M
>3280FT

HIGH
750–999M
2460–3279FT

MEDIUM
500–749M
1640–2459FT

LOW
0–499M
0–1639FT

MARGARET RIVER

Climate

- Mediterranean climate with strong maritime influences from having the ocean on three sides. Most marked maritime climate in terms of rainfall of any region in Australia.
- High winter rainfall, a dry, warm summer and low risk of frost and hail provide excellent conditions for viticulture.
- Low diurnal temperature range leads to very even heat accumulation.

Latitude

- 33° 96'S

Mean January temperature (MJT)

- 20.9°C (69.62°F)

Growing season rainfall (GSR)

- 202mm (7.95in)

Margaret River receives the majority of its rainfall during winter.



SOIL

Margaret River soils are predominantly gravelly loam on granite and gneiss, with low overall water-holding capacity.

SOIL

The Cabernet Sauvignon grape thrives in a variety of soil types, but it generally seems to find particular success with well-drained, gravel-based soils that help absorb heat and radiate it to the vines to help with ripening.

NOTABLE MARGARET RIVER CABERNET SAUVIGNON PRODUCERS

Many of Margaret River's wine producers have become beacons for fine Australian Cabernet, including:

- Cape Mentelle
- Cullen Wines
- Howard Park Wines
- Juniper Estate
- Leeuwin Estate
- Moss Wood
- Vasse Felix
- Woodlands Wines

YARRA VALLEY



- Victoria's first major wine-growing district
- Cool-climate style
- Food and wine paradise and popular tourist destination





YARRA VALLEY

The Yarra Valley in the state of Victoria is one of Australia's foremost cool-climate regions, making classic wine styles from a wide range of grape varieties, including Cabernet Sauvignon.

Victoria's first major wine-growing district

Due to its close proximity to Melbourne, the Yarra Valley was the state of Victoria's first major wine-growing district. Its history stretches back to the mid-1800s. But like many regions in Victoria, its viticultural progression came to a halt in the early 1900s due to both general economic depression in the region and a consumer preference at the time for fortified wines. The resurgence of interest in winemaking began in the 1970s with pioneers like Dr Bailey Carrodus from Yarra Yering, Reg Egan from Wantirna Estate, Dr John Middleton from Mount Mary and Guill de Pury from Yeringberg – vineyards that are still leaders in the region today.

Cool-climate style

The best examples of Yarra Cabernet boast an aromatic character and an elegance that you rarely find in fuller bodied reds from warmer regions of Australia. With optimal cellaring conditions, these wines can age for 10 to 20 years and beyond.

Here, winemakers often blend the Cabernet Sauvignon grape with small proportions of Cabernet Franc and Merlot. The aromatic and flavour characteristics of Cabernet-based wines include red and black currant, dark berries, and leafy and vegetable characteristics, such as herbs, tomato, capsicum and olive. They generally have hints of woody notes from barrel ageing; younger wines display spice and vanilla characters, with older examples displaying cedar and leather.



CLIMATE



CONTINENTAL
WITH MEDITERRANEAN INFLUENCES

ALTITUDE

YARRA VALLEY
30–400M (98–1312FT)

VERY HIGH
>1000M
>3280FT

HIGH
750–999M
2460–3279FT

MEDIUM
500–749M
1640–2459FT

LOW
0–499M
0–1639FT

YARRA VALLEY

Climate
- One of Australia's coolest regions.
- Rainfall dominant in winter and spring.
- Cool, dry and humid summers.

Latitude
- 37° 73'S

Mean January temperature (MJT)
- 18.9°C (66.02°F)

In the cool-temperature range, Yarra Valley experiences a long, slow ripening period to produce some flavoursome grapes and wines. Temperature hazards such as spring frosts can be a risk.

Growing season rainfall (GSR)
- 559mm (22in)

The Yarra Valley experiences most of its rain during winter and spring, with the summer being relatively cool, dry and humid.



SOIL

The Yarra Valley's northern side feature soils of grey to grey-brown on the surface, and range from loamy sand to clay loam in consistency with red-brown clay subsoils, often filled with rock. The other major soil type is the immensely deep and fertile red volcanic soil on the southern side of the valley.



SOIL

The Yarra Valley's diverse topography is reflected in its various soil types. The traditional grape-growing areas on the northern side of the valley feature soils of grey to grey-brown in colour on the surface, and range from loamy sand to clay loam in consistency with red-brown clay subsoils, often filled with rock. The other major soil type is the immensely deep and fertile red volcanic soil in the southern side of the valley. The variation in altitude and soil types in this hilly region creates differences in climates and exposure, which suits some varieties including Cabernet Sauvignon.

NOTABLE YARRA VALLEY CABERNET SAUVIGNON PRODUCERS

Yarra Valley is known for its cool-climate Cabernet Sauvignon of subtlety and grace. Find them at wineries including:

- Dominique Portet
- Mac Forbes
- Mount Mary
- Seville Estate
- Wantirna Estate Vineyard
- Yarra Yering
- Yeringberg



BEST OF THE REST

BEST OF THE REST

In addition to Coonawarra, Margaret River and the Yarra Valley, a number of other Australian regions that are stars on the Cabernet Sauvignon scene include:

- McLaren Vale
- Langhorne Creek
- Eden Valley
- Clare Valley

McLaren Vale, another moderate to warm maritime-influenced climate, produces full-bodied, rich wines with dense, dark-fruited expressions, chalky tannins, and notes of dark chocolate, mint and cedar. These wines can age quite well, especially in cooler vintages.

Langhorne Creek produces full-bodied, rich, flavourful Cabernet Sauvignons with soft tannins and ripe black-fruit flavours. Langhorne Creek's signature style typically blends Australian Shiraz with the Cabernet.

In Eden Valley, high-quality Cabernet Sauvignon boasts perfectly ripened cassis-accented fruit flavours. These contrast with wine from higher, cooler sites with more elegant undertones of green leaf and dark-berry characters.

In Clare Valley, you'll find luscious, powerful Cabernet Sauvignons with riper, richer dark-fruit characters than their cool-climate counterparts. Here, winemakers often blend Cabernet with Shiraz and sometimes a little Malbec.

FUN FACT

CABERNET SAUVIGNON GROWS ON EVERY CONTINENT EXCEPT ANTARCTICA.

CHARACTERISTICS AND FLAVOUR PROFILES



CHARACTERISTICS

COLOUR

Cabernet Sauvignon

BODY — Light, Medium, Full

SWEETNESS — Dry, Medium dry, Sweet

TANNIN — Low, Medium, High

ACIDITY

ALCOHOL — 8%, 13.5–15.5%, 17%

FLAVOURS

- Black cherry
- Blackcurrant
- Mint
- Eucalyptus
- Capsicum (bell pepper)
- Cassis

OAK FLAVOURS

with notes of toast or vanilla

CHARACTERISTICS AND FLAVOUR PROFILES

Cabernet Sauvignons are known for their intensity – colour, flavour, acidity and tannins.

FOOD PAIRINGS



FATTY MEATS
such as lamb chops



BEEF CUTS
such as ribs and scotch fillet



BEEF STEW



DUCK BREAST

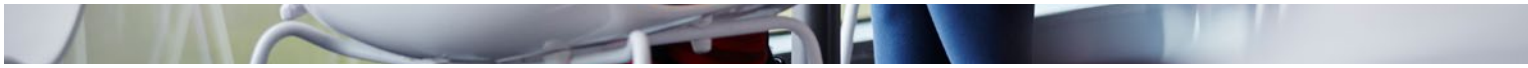
FOOD PAIRING

Cabernet Sauvignon is a complex, multi-layered wine. With its high tannins and rich, fruity flavours, it matches well with foods that are high in fat, which includes a lot of meat dishes.



CABERNET SAUVIGNON:

AUSTRALIA'S COMPLEX GEM



CABERNET SAUVIGNON: AN AUSTRALIAN SUCCESS STORY

Cabernet Sauvignon is an essential part of Australian wine's heritage. Known and appreciated for its dominant features in classic blends, it's solidified its status as a single grape variety that creates rewarding, complex wines. The quality of the wines run the gamut, from affordable, everyday table wines to some of Australia's most sought-after, collectible fine wines.

KEY POINTS TO REMEMBER

- Cabernet Sauvignon has a rich viticultural history in Australia dating back to the mid-1800s, with what are believed to be the world's oldest productive Cabernet Sauvignon vines planted at Penfolds Block 42 Kalimna in 1886.
- Cabernet Sauvignon grapes produce deeply coloured red wines with lots of tannin, bright acidity and easily recognisable aromas.
- Cabernet Sauvignon can grow in a variety of climates, but it's a late-ripening vine that thrives best in warm to cool, dry regions with a maritime influence.
- Although Cabernet Sauvignon has achieved great success as a single-variety wine, winemakers often blend it with other varieties including Shiraz, Merlot, Malbec, Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot. Blending often produces a more easy-drinking wine, with these other grapes smoothing any gaps in Cabernet Sauvignon's flavour profile.
- South Australia's Coonawarra and Western Australia's Margaret River are the country's leading Cabernet Sauvignon regions, but other regions including the Yarra Valley in Victoria have emerged as producers of exceptional Australian Cabernet Sauvignon.
- Australian Cabernet Sauvignon wines have great ageing potential – high-quality wines have the structure and complexity to age for decades.

AUSTRALIAN WINE MADE OUR WAY

Australia's unique climate and landscape have fostered a fiercely independent wine scene, home to a vibrant community of growers, winemakers, viticulturists, and vignerons. With more than 100 grape varieties grown across 65 distinct wine regions, we have the freedom to make exceptional wine, and to do it our way. We're not beholden to tradition, but continue to push the boundaries in the pursuit of the most diverse, thrilling wines in the world. That's just our way.

Discover more about Australian wine at **www.australianwine.com**

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