



THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO

YARRA VALLEY WINE

**AUSTRALIAN WINE
MADE OUR WAY**

This picturesque cool-climate region is capable of producing both classic styles and alternative varieties.

Read on to learn all about Victoria's first wine-growing region.



C O N T E N T S



- The history of the Yarra Valley
- Geography, climate and soil
- The region's approach to grape growing
- Winemaking trends
- Prominent varieties
- Characteristics and flavour profiles

Cover: Sarah Crowe, Yarra Yering, Yarra Valley

YARRA VALLEY: THE TALE OF TWO BEGINNINGS



The Yarra Valley is a cool-climate region capable of making classic styles from a wide range of varieties. Its history is extensive, but it wasn't until the 1970s that it really started to shine.

- Colourful history
- Cool-climate diversity
- Innovative growers and winemakers
- Natural beauty and tourism

YARRA VALLEY: THE TALE OF TWO BEGINNINGS

The Yarra Valley is one of Australia's leading cool-climate regions, with varying elevations and a diverse landscape capable of producing classic styles across a range of varieties. Known as the birthplace of Victoria's wine industry, its history stretches back to 1838. But it wasn't until the 1970s that it really started to shine as one of Australia's foremost cool-climate regions – thanks to a second wave of winemaking pioneers.

Today, the Yarra Valley is home to an exciting breed of revolutionary winemakers. They are pushing the boundaries of grape growing and winemaking, while respecting the traditions of this idyllic region. An emphasis on the quality and flavour of the wine has spread to the local produce, making the Yarra a little slice of food and wine paradise.

Colourful history

Vines were first planted in 1838, making it Victoria's first wine-growing district. While increased demand for fortified wine saw the region cease production in 1921, replanting began in the 1960s, and the region is now recognised as one of Australia's foremost cool-climate regions.

Cool-climate diversity

This cool-climate wine region varies in altitude from 30 to 400 metres. A diverse landscape and variations in soil and climate allow classic varieties like Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, Cabernet Sauvignon and Shiraz to be grown throughout, as well as an exciting selection of emerging styles.

Innovative growers and winemakers

The Yarra Valley is home to a creative group of winemakers who are pushing the boundaries of cool-climate viticulture and winemaking. In recent years, a selection of alternative varieties, including Nebbiolo, Arneis, Gamay and Grüner Veltliner, have shown great promise in the Yarra Valley. This parallels the emergence of exciting winemakers who are challenging the status quo and pushing the boundaries of what's possible in the region.

Natural beauty and tourism

The Yarra River cuts its way through mist-filled valleys and lush, rolling hills from the ranges above, finally making its way through the centre of Melbourne less than 50km away. The Yarra Valley is a stunning region, scattered with quaint heritage wineries, contemporary cellar doors and awe-inspiring architecture. Abundant in regional produce, locals are keen to show off their foodie delights at farmers' markets, award-winning restaurants and busy cellar doors.



DID YOU KNOW

The Yarra Valley not only has a rich history of wineries – it also boasts a significant beer and cider culture, with local production dating back to the early 1800s. A scenic cider and ale tourist trail meanders past several micro-breweries and cider houses. A distilling culture is also on the rise, with gin a big drawcard for the region.



THE HISTORY OF YARRA VALLEY: 180 YEARS OF WINE HERITAGE AND EVOLUTION

1849

The first Lieutenant-Governor of Victoria invites a number of Swiss vigneron to the region and kickstarts a rich wine culture.

Paul de Castella purchases the Ryrie's property and – after drinking his cellar dry – starts making local wine.

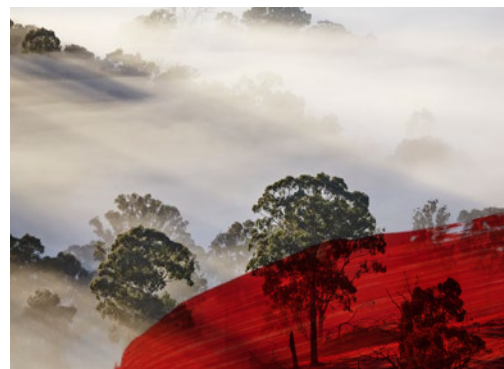
1838

Scottish-born Ryrie brothers plant first vines in the Yarra Valley, starting Victoria's first major wine-growing district.



1863

Hubert de Castella and Baron Guillaume de Pury join their friends in the Yarra Valley. They establish the three great wineries: Yering, Yeringberg and St Huberts.



1875

St Huberts, covering 200 acres, produces over half a million bottles of wine. Yarra Valley wines start winning local and international awards.

1960s

Vines – and winemakers – return to the Yarra Valley and a staple of new-generation wines are established.

1877 –1937

The first golden age of the Yarra Valley is short-lived. A series of events, including an economic depression, leads to the decline of the region. Increased demand for fortified wine sees wine production cease in 1921 and all vineyards are converted to pasture by 1937.

1973

Dr Bailey Carrodus makes the first commercial Yarra Valley vintage in 50 years. His innovative style paves the way for future cool-climate winemakers.



1980 –1985

The momentum of this resurgence paves the way for a list of new wineries, firmly establishing the Yarra Valley as a serious wine region.



1990s & 2000s

New wineries continue to open as the Australian wine industry booms. Local winemakers buck the trend for big, intense styles of wine, instead embracing the region's cool climate and creating an exciting culture of experimentation.



TODAY

This premier cool-climate region is a hotbed of creativity. Winemakers are reducing the amount of intervention in the winery while spending more time in the vineyard.

HISTORY OF THE YARRA VALLEY: 180 YEARS OF WINE HERITAGE AND EVOLUTION

In the beginning

The Yarra Valley's rich history dates back 30,000 years or more. The Wurundjeri people are its traditional landowners. "Birrarung" is the name they gave the Yarra River – meaning "place of mists and shadows" – a phrase that adequately describes the stunning region still to this day. According to the Aboriginal dreamtime story, a wedge-tailed eagle etched the River Yarra into the landscape to create the valley.

1838

Due to its close proximity to Melbourne, the Yarra Valley was Victoria's first major wine-growing district. The first recorded vines were planted by the Scottish-born Ryrie brothers in 1838, on their property known today as Yering Station.

1849

The Yarra Valley's rich viticultural history can largely be traced back to Charles Joseph La Trobe, the first Lieutenant-Governor of Victoria. La Trobe gained an appreciation for wine in his early twenties while living in Neuchâtel in Switzerland before he moved to Australia. He even went as far as planting vines in the garden of the first Government House in Melbourne. However, his real and lasting contribution was inviting Clement Deschamps, son of the head vigneron in Neuchâtel, to come to Victoria in the early days of the colony. Deschamps was eventually joined in Victoria by friends and acquaintances from his hometown, including Paul de Castella. Castella arrived in 1849 and purchased William Ryrie's property, an estate that would become Yering Station. While initially Paul was more interested in drinking wine than making it, he soon ran out of supplies of his favourite Pommard and took the opportunity to start making his own wine.

1863

Word spread fast and two more Swiss vigneronns were enticed to the Yarra Valley – Hubert, Paul’s elder brother, and Baron Guillaume de Pury. While each endured the trials and tribulations of viticulture and winemaking, they were eventually successful in establishing the three great vineyards and wineries (Yering, Yeringberg and St Huberts) of the Yarra’s first golden era. The local wine industry flourished and, unsurprisingly, tourism boomed.

1875

St Huberts, now covering 200 acres, produced over half a million bottles a year to satisfy the booming Melbourne market for wine. Melbourne was a very wealthy city, and wines from the Yarra Valley were winning awards at well-respected exhibitions both at home and abroad.

1877–1937

Despite high hopes and a promising start, the first golden age of the Yarra Valley was short-lived, and a series of events led to the region’s decline. Phylloxera hit Victoria in 1877, a property crash in 1891 led to economic depression and the federation of Australia in 1901 introduced greater competition from grape-growing regions in other states. Increased demand for fortified wine saw Yarra Valley wine production cease in 1921, and by 1937 all vineyards were already – or were being converted to – pasture.

1960s

Reg Egan from Wantirna Estate was the first to replant vines in the region in 1963. Without winemakers like Reg, Dr Bailey Carrodus from Yarra Yering, Dr John Middleton from Mount Mary and Guill de Pury from Yeringberg, the Yarra Valley would likely still be best known for dairy farming and remarkable scenery.

FUN FACT

THE BELOW QUOTE COMES FROM 'JOURNEY TO WINE IN VICTORIA', W S BENWELL:

"ONE EVENING, AFTER A LONG DAY IN THE SADDLE, A SERVANT ANNOUNCED THAT THERE WAS NO POMMARD LEFT. CRIES OF CONSTERNATION AROSE FROM THE THIRSTY HUNTERS, BUT THE SERVANT, WHO HAD WORKED ON THE FIRST RYRIE VINE PLANTINGS, APPEARED WITH A LARGE CHINA JUG CONTAINING SOME OF RYRIE'S WINE. IT WAS POURED, AND THE PARTY DRANK UP. 'BETTER THAN POMMARD!' THE GUESTS DECLARED. IF THIS WAS THE SORT OF WINE THAT COULD BE MADE RIGHT UNDER THEIR FEET, THEN WHO CARED ABOUT WHAT CAME FROM BURGUNDY AT THE OTHER END OF THE EARTH? RYRIE'S VINEYARDS MUST BE EXPANDED WITHOUT DELAY. AND SO IT WAS."

1973

Dr Bailey Carrodus from Yarra Yering made the first commercial vintage produced in the region for more than 50 years. As an Australian scientist holding a doctorate in plant physiology from Oxford, he became renowned for his bold, unique and charismatic wines. He was also an innovator in the vineyard, planting unirrigated, low-yielding vines in a time of high yields and irrigation. This pursuit of the highest quality cool-climate wine styles has become a hallmark of the region, and the Yarra Valley has played a vital role in the evolution of Australia wine in recent decades.

1980–1985

The early '80s thrived on this resurgence, paving the way for a list of new wineries and firmly establishing the Yarra Valley as a serious wine region. The Besen family founded TarraWarra in 1982, followed by Yarra Ridge a year later. Wine writer James Halliday founded Coldstream Hills, and the Klapp family founded Long Gully in 1985.

1990s and 2000s

Around 40 new wineries were established in the region as the Australian wine industry boomed. The Yarra Valley's cool climate wasn't suitable for producing the big, intense styles of wine that were wowing critics and wine drinkers around the world. Instead of seeing this as a problem, however, a number of local winemakers embraced the distinction. Winemakers like Steve Webber at De Bortoli, Steve Flamsteed at Giant Steps and David Bicknell at Oakridge Wines recognised that the Yarra Valley had some amazing vineyard sites, and they spent time learning what made them so special. They also began to experiment with winemaking techniques and styles like carbonic maceration and whole-bunch fermentation. This focus on experimentation inspired a new generation of winemakers in the Yarra Valley – ones who have taken the art of winemaking to the next level, with remarkable results.

Today

This premier cool-climate region has become a hotbed of creativity, with world-renowned classic styles being joined by wines that represent the cutting edge of Australia's avant-garde winemaking styles. Winemakers are experimenting with extended skin contact, low or no sulphur additions, whole-bunch fermentation and more, reducing the amount of intervention from the winery while spending more time in the vineyard.





A COOL, MISTY VALLEY WITH DIVERSE OFFERINGS



- Only 45km northeast of Melbourne
- Divided into the Lower Yarra and Upper Yarra
- Bordered by mountain ranges
- Diverse geography, climatic differences and soil types allow several varieties to excel

GEOGRAPHY, CLIMATE AND SOIL

Geography

Located just 45km northeast of Melbourne's CBD, the Yarra Valley is a vast and diverse region. It's divided into the Lower Yarra and Upper Yarra, with distinct altitudes, soils, rainfall and climates between them. The Great Dividing Range borders it to the north, the Dandenong Ranges to the south and the Yarra River runs through its heart.

Wineries are dotted along its hillsides, some gently rising, some very steep. The unique landscape and terrain allow for a vast array of growing sites to produce outstanding cool-climate wines. When you consider the range of influences, including both Mediterranean and continental climates, variations in elevation and radically different soil types, it's difficult to make conclusive observations about this diverse region. But that's exactly what makes the Yarra Valley such a dynamic place – one that challenges and excites winemakers.

FUN FACT

SOMETIMES THE LOWER HILLS OF THE YARRA VALLEY BECOME SHROUDED IN MIST, AT TIMES APPEARING ALMOST BLUE IN COLOUR. THIS INFAMOUS BLUE MIST FASCINATED SWISS VITICULTURISTS WHO SETTLED IN THE REGION.

CLIMATE



VERY HIGH

>1000M
>3280FT

.....

HIGH

750-999M
2460-3279FT

.....

MEDIUM

500-749M
1640-2459FT

.....

LOW

0-499M
0-1639FT

ALTITUDE
→
YARRA VALLEY
30-400M (98-1312FT)

CONTINENTAL

WITH MEDITERRANEAN INFLUENCES

YARRA VALLEY

Climate

While the Yarra Valley is one of Australia's cooler wine regions, its differences in altitude and aspect lead to substantial variations in mesoclimate. Bordered by mountain ranges, vineyard elevations vary from 30 to 400 metres, and the climate moves between Mediterranean and continental. There is limited maritime influence, with a small diurnal temperature range reflecting its proximity to the ocean. Even the warmest sites are relatively cool, reaching a mean January temperature of only 18.9°C. Frost is rarely a problem, but can very occasionally affect the lower vineyards on the valley floor.

Latitude

- 37° 73'S

Mean January temperature (MJT)

- 18.9°C (66°F)

Mean January temperature refers to the mean temperature of the warmest month. In the cool-temperature range, the Yarra Valley experiences a long, slow ripening period to produce flavoursome grapes and wines.

Growing season rainfall (GSR)

– 559mm (22in)

Calculated from October to April in Australia, growing season rainfall is a good indication of how much water is available to the vine. The Yarra Valley experiences most of its rain during winter and spring, with summer being relatively cool, dry and humid. The use and extent of irrigation varies significantly between producers.

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.

DID YOU KNOW

The Yarra Valley is cool in relation to most of Australia's viticultural regions. But thanks to variations in altitude, it's capable of growing a wide number of varieties including some more typically suited to warmer climates.





SOIL

Two prominent and radically different soil types create regional diversity and interest:

- Northern side features soils of grey to grey-brown on the surface, with red-brown clay subsoils often filled with rock.
- Southern side features much younger, immensely deep, fertile red volcanic soil.



SOIL

The Yarra Valley's diverse topography is reflected in its various soil types. This includes two prominent and radically different soils:

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. This is derived from the ancient sandstone of the Great Dividing Range. It's relatively acidic and low in fertility, but generally well-drained.

The other major soil type is the much younger, immensely deep, fertile and well-drained vivid red volcanic soil, typically found at Seville, Hoddles Creek and elsewhere on the southern side of the valley. The variation in altitude and soil types in this hilly region creates differences in climates and exposure, which allows several varieties to excel.



DID YOU KNOW

In Australia, as in other countries, geographical indications (GI) define designated wine regions such as Yarra Valley. An 85% rule applies in Australia, which means wine labelled "Yarra Valley" must contain at least 85% Yarra Valley fruit. This upholds label integrity and safeguards the consumer.



VITICULTURE AND WINEMAKING IN YARRA VALLEY

- A passionate past and progressive future
- Respect for diverse climatic influences
- Commitment to innovation and experimentation
- More time in the vineyard, less intervention in the winery
- Cool-climate classics alongside alternative varieties

VITICULTURE AND WINEMAKING IN YARRA VALLEY

A passionate past and progressive future

The Yarra Valley has a proud history of viticulture. But while the local wine industry thrived initially, its first golden age was short-lived. It wasn't until the 1960s that vines were replanted in the region, with 1973 marking the first commercial vintage in more than 50 years.

The Yarra Valley embraced this second chance, and a new wave of winemakers breathed life back into the region. Innovation and experimentation was at the heart of this movement, with pioneers such as Dr Bailey Carrodus experimenting with unirrigated, low-yielding vines at a time of high yields and irrigation.

As Australian wine boomed in the late 1990s and early 2000s, winemakers embraced the region's cool-climate diversity and took their craft to the next level.

Today, the Yarra Valley is a hotbed of creativity, with winemakers experimenting with extended skin contact, low or no sulphur additions, whole-bunch fermentation and more. This quest for differentiation and innovation has become a hallmark of the region, and produces some stunning results.

Cool-climate classics alongside alternative varieties

The Yarra Valley is relentless in its pursuit to produce the highest quality cool-climate wine styles and has played a vital role in the evolution of Australian wine.

While Chardonnay and Pinot Noir are considered to be royalty in the Yarra Valley, Cabernet Sauvignon and Shiraz also do very well in the region's lower, warmer sites. These classic Australian varieties have been joined in recent years by emerging varieties like Nebbiolo, Arneis, Gamay and Grüner Veltliner. The emergence of these varieties is complemented by the emergence of a new breed of bold and creative winemakers, challenging the status quo and pushing the boundaries of what's possible in the Yarra Valley.

Respect for diverse climatic influences

Every Yarra Valley site has subtle variations in soil, aspect and elevation, heightening the significance of terroir. As each season brings unpredictability and difference, local viticulturists must make the most of each vintage's climatic differences, carefully managing canopies and yields to ensure only high-quality fruit makes it to the winery. Precision viticulture and soil-mapping technology are frequently used to help the winemaking teams work to their strengths and select the finest grapes from the best blocks.

Sustainable practices

Care and attention are given to ecosystems within the vineyard and surrounding native bushland and waterways, helping to maintain healthy, sustainable and productive vineyards for years to come.

Harvest

Harvest typically commences around mid-February with Pinot Noir and Chardonnay and finishes in April with Cabernet Sauvignon. With the variations in altitude, fruit from the warmer locations at lower altitudes are picked first, followed by the cooler vineyards higher up the valley.



COMPLEMENTARY READING

TIMO MAYER: A GERMAN FARMER BRINGING BACK THE FUNK

Funk: it's not the first thing you might think of when it comes to Australian wine, but for some it's a vital part of a wine's makeup. Introducing Timo Mayer and his famous whole bunch.

Timo Mayer grew up in Germany, surrounded by all things grape and wine. His family has been making wine for more than 400 years near Stuttgart in the Baden-Württemberg region, a highly traditional wine area filled with many small growers. The easy road for Timo would have been to stay there, learn his trade and eventually take the reins of the family winery. But he was restless and wanted to forge his own path.

After a few years of travelling the world working in hospitality, Timo ended up in Australia. Along the way he met his wife Rhonda, and the arrival of their first child in 1993 meant it was time to get a little more serious about life. Together they moved to the Yarra Valley, beginning a regional love affair that is still going strong today.

At the time, the Yarra Valley had a growing reputation as a great Australian wine region, but it was a reputation built mostly on conservative, trophy-chasing wineries. High alcohol and lashings of new oak were fashionable, producing wines that belied the region's cooler climate. Innovation and a true understanding of the Yarra Valley's strengths was limited, with just a few names flying the flag for thoughtful, elegant wines. Names like Dr Bailey Carrodus at Yarra Yering and Dr John Middleton at Mount Mary are still celebrated as pioneers today, but at the time they were outliers. Steve Webber was another carving a reputation at De Bortoli for wines that bucked the trend – wines that had a little funk. In 1996, Timo Mayer started working at De Bortoli Wines, with Steve Webber teaching him the art of the funk that would help revolutionise winemaking in the Yarra Valley.

In his time at De Bortoli, Timo learnt a lot about the funk of wine. He learnt about wines that stank like a poorly cleaned barnyard when first opened that blossomed into wonderfully detailed expressions of site and region when given the chance to open up. With the help and support of family and friends, he eventually planted his own vineyard in 2000, naming it the Bloody Hill Vineyard, in reference to the effort required to work on such a steep hillside.

In 2004, eccentric Timo decided to apply whole-bunch fermentation – a little-used technique in Australia – to one of his Pinot Noir wines. Some recoiled in horror, but many were intrigued. They were fascinated by the increased complexity, the silkier tannins and the freshness of the wine. And while few ever push the boundaries as far as Timo, the influence he has had on wines across Australia cannot be underestimated. A technique that was rarely used in Australia is now back and becoming the rule rather than the exception. And the wines being made are helping to shatter perceptions of Australian wine around the world.

YARRA VALLEY TOP 5 VARIETIES



PINOT NOIR

36%

CHARDONNAY

33%

SHIRAZ

8%

**CABERNET
SAUVIGNON**

6%

**PINOT GRIS/
GRIGIO**

5%

Source: Wine Australia National Vintage Survey. Variety share based on average tonnage from 2015–2019

NOTEWORTHY VARIETIES

The glory of such diversity in a wine region means there's no single star performer – the variation in altitude creates differences in climates and exposure that allows several varieties to excel. While the cooler climate of the Yarra Valley has long been famous for producing award-winning Chardonnay and Pinot Noir, you'll also find world-class Cabernet Sauvignon and Shiraz coming out of this complex and intriguing region, not to mention a promising line-up of alternative varieties.

CHARDONNAY

FINE, TEXTURAL AND RESTRAINED

AROUND
1/3
OF TOTAL ANNUAL CRUSH

GROWN ON DIVERSE SITES



FLAVOURS

- Apple
- Pear
- Peach
- Nectarine
- Melon
- Mango
- Pineapple
- Fig
- Toast
- Vanilla
- Butter
- Toffee
- Honey
- Spice
- Coconut
- Nougat
- Toasted almond
- Crème brûlée
- Chalk
- Minerality

TYPICAL FRUIT FLAVOURS

TYPICAL SECONDARY FLAVOURS

CHARDONNAY

The Yarra's regional prominence for Chardonnay continues to this day. Chardonnay is grown on diverse sites and in many different styles, but is typically fine, textural and restrained with a beautiful line of citrus acidity running through. Gone are the oaky, rich and voluptuous styles of the 1980s and '90s, with a focus on site expression and fruit purity. The grapes are often picked at lower sugar levels (Baumé) to keep acid levels high. Aroma and flavours span citrus and stone fruit, and are minerally and floral. With age, they can develop appealing flavours of fig and a savoury dimension. Fruit sourced from the coolest sites is also used for sparkling wine production.

Notable Chardonnay producers include:

- TarraWarra Estate
- Mac Forbes
- Giant Steps
- Luke Lambert



+ ADVANCED NOTES

YARRA VALLEY CHARDONNAY: THE NEXT GENERATION

A new generation of winemakers are bringing expertise, experimentation and bold ideas to the Australian Chardonnay landscape, with many Yarra Valley winemakers at the fore. Luke Lambert, for example, has broken from tradition, creating naturally complex, multi-layered wines using wild yeast fermentation, wild malolactic fermentation and large, old oak casks to create wines that reflect the lean qualities of the harsh, rocky soils high in the Yarra Valley.

Mac Forbes is another Yarra Valley winemaker following a sustainable, minimal-intervention path to craft his Chardonnay, with his complex, elegant style that reveals a tightly wound core of freshness.



PINOT NOIR

RANGING FROM
LIGHT-BODIED TO MORE
MEDIUM WEIGHT, SILKY
AND TEXTURAL

PERFUMED
AND
MINERALLY



FLAVOURS

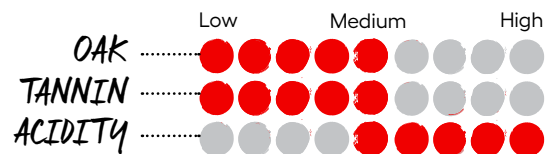
- Strawberry
- Cherry
- Violets
- Plum
- Earth
- Roses
- Savoury

MORE THAN
1/3 OF TOTAL
ANNUAL
CRUSH

PINOT NOIR

The Yarra Valley is considered as one of the pioneer areas for the development of modern Pinot Noir. A continental climate with warm days and cool nights allows winemakers to retain acidity in Pinot grapes, but still extract tannin, flavour and sugar ripeness. Some of the cooler-grown fruit goes into the production of sparkling wine.

While varying styles exist, Yarra Pinot is typically aromatic and minerally, ranging from light-bodied to more medium weight, silky and textural. Local winemakers commonly use whole-bunch and whole-berry fermentation to accentuate aromas such as rose petals, red-berried fruit, cherries and savoury notes. While that's a broad stroke, the beauty of Yarra Valley Pinot Noir is how it reflects the vineyard and individual influences more than any other grape. This allows a variation in perfume and aromatic styles, while some are more fruit-driven and others are earthy and savoury in their flavour structure.



Notable Pinot Noir producers include:

- Coldstream Hills
- De Bortoli Wines
- Oakridge
- Giant Steps
- Hoddles Creek
- Yering Station

CABERNET SAUVIGNON

BEST SUITED TO WARMER SITES IN NORTHERN YARRA VALLEY

AROMATIC AND ELEGANT



FLAVOURS

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

TYPICALLY BLENDED

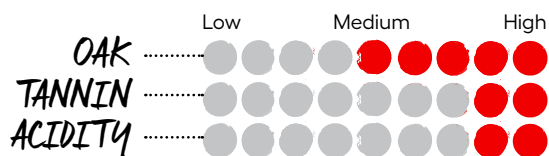
with small proportions of Cabernet Franc and Merlot

CABERNET SAUVIGNON

With few exceptions, this variety is best suited to the warmer sites of the northern Yarra Valley. Winemakers often blend it with small proportions of Cabernet Franc and Merlot. The style of Yarra Cabernet ranges from medium-bodied to full-bodied with silky tannins, to aromatic and floral with herbal characters. 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.

Notable Cabernet Sauvignon producers include:

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



SHIRAZ

BEST SUITED TO WARMER,
LOW-ALTITUDE SITES

RICH, FULLER-BODIED

styles labelled
Shiraz

MEDIUM-BODIED

with savoury, smoky
characteristics sometimes
labelled Syrah



FLAVOURS

- Pepper
- Blackberry
- Spice
- Plum
- Dark Cherry
- Chocolate
- Coffee

SHIRAZ

Like Cabernet, site selection is important for Shiraz, with the warmer, lower altitudes of the Yarra Valley better suited to Shiraz vines. Some Yarra Valley winemakers have recently focused on producing more medium-bodied Shiraz with savoury characteristics that are slightly smoky with savoury notes such as cured meats and olives, choosing to label them Syrah to differentiate them from richer, fuller-bodied Shiraz styles. Other producers are making bigger, bolder Shiraz that resembles the style of red we typically expect from the warmer regions of Australia.

Notable Shiraz producers include:

- Luke Lambert
- Punt Road
- Seville Estate
- Yering Station



+ ADVANCED NOTES

AN UNLIKELY BLEND: SHIRAZ VIOGNIER

This unlikely partnership (a red wine grape blended, and in some instances co-fermented, with a white wine grape) originated in France's Northern Rhône. Its success has spread to various parts of the winemaking world, including the Yarra Valley. Even in tiny quantities Viognier contributes a significant lift to the final wine, adding sheen and perfume.

FUN FACT

YOU SAY SYRAH, WE SAY SHIRAZ

Australia adopted the name Shiraz in the mid-19th century. This variety is called Syrah almost everywhere else in the world, but due to its enormous commercial success on the international market, producers from Australia have chosen to label their own wine Shiraz. Exactly how Syrah became Shiraz remains somewhat of a mystery. Some say it's because the original cuttings were incorrectly labelled, while others say it's simply the strong Australian accent...



ALTERNATIVE VARIETIES IN YARRA VALLEY



Climatic and soil diversity allows local producers to experiment with emerging and re-emerging varieties, often with promising results.

- Arneis
- Gewürztraminer
- Grüner Veltliner
- Pinot Meunier
- Gamay
- Brachetto
- Tempranillo
- Sangiovese
- Nebbiolo

ALTERNATIVE VARIETIES IN YARRA VALLEY

Climatic and soil diversity allows local producers to experiment with emerging and re-emerging varieties, often with promising results. This exploration is one of the most exciting aspects of the Yarra Valley today.

Notable producers include:

- Soumah
- Oakridge Wines
- Timo Mayer Wines
- Bobar
- Luke Lambert Wines



YARRA VALLEY

A RICH HISTORY, A FRESH REVIVAL AND A FUTURE OF INNOVATION

While the Yarra Valley is Victoria's oldest wine region, it's still relatively young when you consider its rebirth in the 1960s and '70s. This puts it in a unique situation: it has a rich viticultural history but has also had the chance to start afresh. The region was revived by a bold and innovative group of winemakers who set the standard for fine wine quality and imbued the region with a desire for perfection. Thanks to these pioneers and the proceeding generations of innovative winemakers, the Yarra Valley is today one of Australia's most exciting, dynamic and vibrant wine regions.

KEY POINTS TO REMEMBER

- Known as the birthplace of Victoria's wine industry, the Yarra Valley's history stretches back 180 years. But it wasn't until the 1970s that it really started to shine as one of Australia's foremost cool-climate regions, thanks to a second-wave of winemaking pioneers.
- A vast and diverse region divided into the Lower Yarra and Upper Yarra, with distinct altitudes, soils, rainfall and climates between them.
- One of Australia's coolest-climate regions, with a diverse landscape capable of making classic styles from a wide range of varieties.
- A hotbed of innovation and creativity, with winemakers reducing the amount of intervention from the winery while spending more time in the vineyard. This quest for differentiation and innovation has become a hallmark of the region, delivering some stunning results.
- While the cooler climate of the Yarra Valley has long been famous for producing award-winning Chardonnay and Pinot Noir, you'll also find world-class Cabernet Sauvignon and Shiraz coming out of this complex and intriguing region, not to mention a promising line-up of alternative varieties.

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 vigneron. 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.

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at www.australianwine.com

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