

NEW SOUTH WALES



NSW WINE ~ SURPRISING DIVERSITY OF REGIONS

NSW WINE REGIONS AND THEIR VARIETAL HEROES

New South Wales offers a rich tapestry of 14 diverse wine regions. Each of these regions has their own story and varietal hero and is doing new and exciting things to promote themselves and find their niche in the wine industry.

Hunter Valley ~ Semillon

The Hunter Valley is Australia's oldest wine growing region. Vines were first planted in the area in the early 1820's from cuttings brought by James Busby, the father of Australian wine.

Today the Hunter Valley is home to some of Australia's most distinctive and outstanding wines. The most recognised of these is Hunter Valley Semillon, a truly remarkable wine that has been called 'Australia's unique gift to the world'. A standout in terms of quality and taste, Hunter Valley Semillon is the product of techniques, skills and processes that have developed over 150 years of winemaking in the Hunter Valley as well as through the inspiring work of famous winemakers and winemaking families such as the legendary Maurice O'Shea and the Tyrrells, Draytons and Tullochs.

From its early days, when it was known as Hunter River Riesling, the variety formed a unique bond with the Hunter Valley. So strong is this affiliation with its 'terroir' that the style has not been replicated anywhere else in the world. When young, Hunter Valley Semillon is deliciously crisp with abundant citrus aromas and flavours that pair magnificently with seafood. With age Hunter Valley Semillon develops its unique complex toast, vanilla and honey flavours, giving it depth and richness.

Since the beginning, Hunter Valley Semillon has attracted much attention with Tyrrell's Vat 1 Semillon recently being named an icon wine for Wine Australia's new regional heroes marketing strategy.

Riverina ~ Botrytis Semillon

The Riverina - with Griffith at its heart - is situated in south western New South Wales and is the largest producing wine region in New South Wales. However, it is a wine made in small scale production that has made the region world-famous: Botrytis Semillon.

The McWilliams family pioneered the region, establishing their Hanwood vineyard in 1912. But it was waves of European migrants after the first and second world wars that gave the Riverina - and its wine industry - a cultural identity not replicated anywhere else in Australia. Their descendants, all third or fourth generation family businesses, are the wineries driving the new face of Riverina premium winemaking and account for a significant proportion of Australia's export success winning accolades and recognition around the world, in particular, for their dessert wines. Those wineries include the likes of De Bortoli, West End, Nugan Estate, Casella, Lillypilly and Warburn.

Botrytis Semillon - made in the style of great Sauterne - was first made by Daren De Bortoli in 1982 with the Australian icon wine Noble One. Today the region boasts over 20 different Botrytis Semillon wines, each luscious and unique to their winery.

Mudgee ~ Cabernet Sauvignon

With a winemaking history stretching back to the 1858, Mudgee has long been a favourite with wine lovers who just keep on coming back to this picturesque region of rolling hills.

Mudgee (or "Nest in the Hills" as the Aborigines called it) is situated in the Great Dividing Range and stretches from the township of Dunedoo in the north down through the towns of Gulgong and Mudgee to Rylstone and Kandos in the South. These towns with their early Australian architectural facades, rolling hills and green valleys make Mudgee one of New South Wales's most stunning wine regions to visit.

Mudgee's reliable summer weather with hot days and long cool nights allows for slower ripening making Mudgee ideal for producing red wines with great intensity of colour and flavour. In addition, the region's rich volcanic soils with quartz assist to the produce wines of depth and character. As a result, Mudgee has established a reputation for big, concentrated red wines - in particular, Cabernet Sauvignon.

Mudgee has experienced dramatic growth since the early 1970's to become New South Wales's third largest grape producing region and also features more than 40 cellar doors including Logan, Lowe, Huntington Estate and Frog Rock. Some big names including the Oatley family, are investing heavily in the region, demonstrating their faith in Mudgee's consistently wines and driving the resurgence of the region.

Cowra ~ Chardonnay

The Cowra wine region covers 1,250 square kilometers of the beautiful Lachlan Valley including Cowra, Billimari and Canowindra and is home to over 40 vineyards from small boutique wineries such as Spring Ridge Wines, Mulyan, Wallington, Hamilton's Bluff, Windowrie and Swinging Bridge to larger players such as McGuigan and Cowra Estate.

The region is defined by warm days, cool nights and dry late summers - perfect conditions for ripening wine grapes. It was classic, flavoursome Chardonnay that first established Cowra as a quality grape-growing region and it is Chardonnay that continues to shine as Cowra's varietal hero today.

In recent years Cowra, like many New South Wales wine regions, has made environmental sustainability a priority with the mission 'To produce wine of regional character with the least environmental impact of any region in Australia'.

Orange ~ Sauvignon Blanc

The first vines were planted in Orange in 1980 and since then the region has earned the tag of "one Australia's most exciting new wine regions" boasting over 30 cellar doors including Bloodwood, Cargo Road, Mayfield and Philip Shaw. The cool-climate wines produced from the region's high altitude represent a fresh new offering to New South Wales wine.

Indeed, it would appear many see an exciting future for Orange as Philip Shaw (twice International Winemaker of Year) has decided to concentrate solely on developing wines from the region.

Orange is one of the highest wine regions in Australia. Sauvignon Blanc thrives of the region's continental weather conditions, diversity of soil types and high altitude to produce Sauvignon Blanc of distinct varietal character and mouth watering acidity generally being riper, more floral in style bridging the divide between New Zealand and French styles.

Hand-in-hand with its booming wine industry, Orange boasts one of the most dynamic regional food movements in the country. Orange sees the promotion of its wine as inseparable from its food, produce and quality restaurants resulting its' dynamic Brand Orange project.

Canberra ~ Shiraz

Wine has been made in the Canberra District for 160 years. However, it's only made its real mark on the wine map in the last ten years with the cementing of its reputation for Shiraz and Shiraz Viogner blends.

Canberra, a cool-climate region, is known for producing Shiraz with elegant lifted flavours on par with the style of the Rhone Valley in France. The reigning NSW Wine of the Year is the Collector Shiraz, made from Murrumbatemen fruit. In 1998, another Murrumbateman Shiraz won the title - the widely applauded 1996 Clonakilla Shiraz Viogner.

The tranquil rural countryside around the ACT is home to 140 vineyards with more than 30 boutique cellar doors including Clonakilla, Helm Wines, Lerida Estate, Shaw Vineyard Estates, Mt Majura Vineyard, Lake George Winery and Lambert Vineyards.

Hilltops ~ Cabernet Sauvignon

Hilltops is one of New South Wales' most exciting new wine regions, with cool climate conditions allowing for the production of elegant Cabernet Sauvignon which is powerful, yet balanced, and a proven candidate for ageing.

The Hilltops wine region is located around the town of Young in southern New South Wales. It is part of the Murray-Darling Basin and includes the shires of Boorowa, Harden and Young. The first vines were planted as early as the 1860s. However, the modern era began in 1969 when Peter Robertson planted vines and produced his own wine on his property "Barwang", which McWilliams later purchased in 1989. Other vineyards followed in the 1970s and continue today, setting the stage for great wines from the Hilltops region in the future.

Tumbarumba ~ Chardonnay

Tumbarumba lies at the foothills of the Snowy Mountains and is New South Wales' coolest wine-growing region. Vines were first planted in 1982 and historically the fruit has primarily been used for sparkling wine with Chardonnay and Pinot Noir accounting for more than 75% of the land under vine.

However, over the past decade, we have seen table wines made individually from these two varieties come to the fore, with producers such as Hungerford Hill and Bidgeebong releasing wines of great distinction. The 2006 NSW Wine of the Year was the Hungerford Hill Chardonnay, marking the region's coming of age.

Gundagai ~ Shiraz

One of New South Wales's newest and smaller wine regions, Gundagai lies between Canberra and Wagga Wagga in south western New South Wales. The Snowy Mountains forms its backdrop to the south-east, with the Murrumbidgee River flowing west.

Its early viticultural history is very much a German affair with immigrants importing vines. Today, labels such as Bidgeebong are making an entrance on the wine scene with its full-bodied Shiraz.

Hastings River ~ Verdelho

Hastings River is a small, developing wine region. The main clusters of vineyards are located Port Macquarie and Wauchope. The region was first planted with vines in the 1860s but recent history of the area has been pioneered by the Cassegrain family with Verdelho being the highlight of local wines.

Hastings River's cellar door facilities, music events, regional restaurants, coastal attractions and great climate are serving to build interest in the local wine industry.

New England - Riesling

New England is New South Wales newest wine region only being promulgated this year and home to boutique wineries such as Blickling Estate, Richfield Vineyards and Toppers Mt Wines.

New England is unlike any other grape growing region in Australia due to its topographical diversity throughout the region from high altitude vineyards with a number of vineyards being above 1,000m, to cool climate vineyards along the spine of the Great Dividing Range to the lower and warmer vineyards on the western edges of the New England tablelands.

It's high altitude and cool-climate makes New England perfect for Riesling.

Perricoota - Shiraz

Perricoota is close the Victorian border, 800km south west of Sydney, and is centred on the towns of Moama and Echuca. The first vineyards were unsuccessfully planted in the region in the 1860s. Then, in the 1990s, new vineyards were developed but to date still remains one of New South Wales' smallest regions being best known for Shiraz.

Shoalhaven Coast - Chambourcin

Shoalhaven Coast wine region runs along the South Coast and boasts 15 cellar doors with a total production of 500 tonnes or approximately 400,000 bottles. As a new region, they are best known for Chambourcin, a French red wine hybrid variety with vibrant colour and fresh plummy fruit aromas. With a buoyant tourism market, thanks to the magnificent coastal beaches, the area has bustling cellar doors including Coolangatta Estate, Bawley Vale and Roselea.

Southern Highlands - Pinot Noir

An exciting new cool-climate region, the Southern Highlands region surrounds Mittagong and Bowral and is gaining much attention for its Pinot Noir. This region came to fruition in the 1990s when wine growers became interested in the region and the advantages of high altitude vineyards in which Pinot Noir in particular excels. There are now more than 60 vineyards in the Southern Highlands with over 250 hectares under cultivation. Wineries include new boutiques such as Fifth Chapter and Tertini.

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