

GRENACHE AND BLENDS

Guide



AUSTRALIAN WINE DISCOVERED

Free information, tools and
resources to discover and
share Australian wine



To access presentations, videos and
tasting tools, as well as other modules, visit
www.australianwinediscovered.com



Wine Australia
supports the responsible
service of alcohol.





GRENACHE AND BLENDS



AUSTRALIAN WINE DISCOVERED



Crafted from grapes grown under vast and diverse climates, across landscapes millions of years in the making, every glass of Australian wine tells a story.

Like those who came before us, our modern growers and makers continue to be passionate, resilient and creative; constantly driven to explore new ways to perfect old techniques. Our community is connected by a mutual respect and shared love of crafting exceptional wine, while protecting the natural wonders for future generations to enjoy. Applying modern thinking to our ancient lands, we take playful experimentation very, very seriously.

So, if you're looking for the taste of adventure, let Australian wine be your compass. Because in every bottle of Australian wine, you'll experience the wonders of Australia – a reminder of the adventure and diversity that defines our culture and our land.

GRENACHE THE REBIRTH OF A CLASSIC

While somewhat overlooked in the past, Grenache is a variety that truly expresses its terroir, capturing the unique combination of country, climate and culture.



FEATURE VIDEO

Now is a great time to play the *Grenache* loop video in the background as you welcome people.

Somewhat overlooked in the past, old-vine, low-yielding Grenache is now much-loved by consumers and critics alike. While production numbers are relatively small in Australia, we can expect to see more of this perfumed, lighter red wine in all its forms.

- Grenache was one of the original varieties planted in Australia and thrived in the warm, dry South Australian climate. But it was largely overlooked in the early years, used as a workhorse grape and forming the backbone of fortified wines and traditional blends.

- Today, growers recognise the beauty of the ripe, spicy, cherry and raspberry-scented characteristics that Grenache can yield. Australia boasts some of the oldest Grenache vines in the world, dating back to 1850. It's a rare resource that produces incredible wines with a classic balance of fruit, alcohol, moderate acidity and tannin that have a savouriness akin to Pinot Noir.
- As well as single-variety Grenache, Australian wineries have had success with Grenache, Shiraz, Mataro (Mourvèdre) blends, better known as GSM.



FUN FACT

Grenache has its own calendar day, held on the third Friday of September.
[#GrenacheDay](#)



TODAY WE'LL COVER

- The history of Grenache in Australia
- How it's grown
- How it's made
- The art of blending
- Where it's grown
- Characteristics and flavour profiles

TIME TO TASTE – This may be a good opportunity to give everyone a taste of a classic Australian Grenache. The full tasting comes later in the program.

?

DID YOU KNOW

Grenache is the French spelling of the Spanish word **Garnacha**.

?

DID YOU KNOW

Grenache is grown in 25 of 65 Australian wine regions.

THE HISTORY OF GRENACHE IN AUSTRALIA

Mid 1920s – Late 1960s

A popular choice for fortified wine production (which made up 80% of the industry in 1960).

1970s

Consumer preferences shift to table wines. Grenache production dramatically decreases.

1832

Grenache was one of the original varieties brought to Australia by James Busby, the 'father of Australian wine'.

Late 1830s

First Grenache vineyard planted in South Australia, thriving in the warm, dry conditions.



1988

Winemaker Charles Melton experiments with the classic GSM blend, creating the first batch of now legendary 'Nine Popes'.



1980s

Wirra Wirra winery removes Grenache from renowned 'Church Block' blend, replacing it with Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot.

1990s & 2000s

Winemakers begin to appreciate what old-vine, low-yielding Grenache can offer.

Today

The new, lighter styles of Grenache are much-loved by consumers and critics alike, so we can expect to see much more of this perfumed red wine in all its forms.

1832

The story of Grenache in Australia begins at the commencement of serious viticulture in the country, and its earliest plantings remain shrouded in mystery. While there is evidence to suggest the first Grenache vines in Australia arrived – along with several other varieties – with the First Fleet, the first documented planting is attributed to James Busby, who imported it in 1832. Born in Scotland, Busby was in his early 20s when his family emigrated to New South Wales in 1824. After teaching viticulture in Australia, he conducted a grand tour of the key wine regions of France and Spain in 1831, collecting vine cuttings and sending them to Australia packed in a mix of moss, sand and soil. 363 varieties survived the journey and were planted in Sydney's botanic gardens. Grenache was one of those survivors, and from New South Wales it found its way to South Australia.

LATE 1830s

Records suggest that the first Grenache vineyard was planted in the late 1830s in McLaren Vale. The variety took off, and in 1862 one of the leading wine critics of the time reported that Grenache was “thriving better than any other kind”. It had found its home in South Australia, where the warm, dry conditions mimicked those of its Mediterranean home.

MID-1920s TO LATE 1960s

Grenache was seen as a reliable workhorse, producing high yields when given plenty of irrigation and maintaining good acidity even in warm climates. For this reason, it was a popular choice in Australia from the mid-1920s to the late 1960s, when the bulk of wine production was fortified. However, only rarely did the word Grenache appear on a wine label.

1970s

The shift to table wines from the 1970s onwards didn't help Grenache. In 1979, 72,000 tonnes of Grenache were harvested, which dipped to 15,000 tonnes in 2012. As the area under vine in Australia increased (plantings doubled in the 1990s), Grenache's percentage of total vineyard plantings decreased as no one was planting it. It now stands at just over 1% – around 1,500 hectares.

MID-1980s

The situation wasn't helped by the classic, warm regions of South Australia fading from view as people's attention turned to Australia's cool-climate wine regions. Even within South Australia, focus was on the bigger, more obviously fruity wines that could be obtained from Shiraz, and even Cabernet Sauvignon. A sign of the times came in the mid-1980s, when Wirra Wirra, one of McLaren Vale's leading wineries, removed Grenache from the blend of its 'Church Block' red (first made in 1972, with 70% Grenache), replacing it with Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot.

1988

As plantings nose-dived, Grenache was rarely seen as a solo act. But visionary winemakers including Charlie Melton recognised that Grenache combines well with other varieties, particularly in the classic Rhône combination of Grenache, Shiraz and Mataro (Mourvèdre), known as 'GSM'. They also realised old, dry-grown Grenache vines deserved renewed respect. Fortunately, this means some early vines are still thriving today.

*See complementary reading

TODAY – A STORY OF PASSION AND PERSEVERANCE

Despite being a widely planted grape, for decades Grenache received little respect in Australia. But as understanding of what old-vine, low-yielding Grenache could offer, its stocks shot up. Today, Grenache is breaking out with some superb single-variety wines from South Australia. Its future seems assured.

AUSTRALIA'S OLDEST VINES

Australia boasts some of the oldest continually producing vines in the world. Unlike many international wine regions, South Australia's wine regions weren't affected by Phyloxera, a tiny insect that can devastate vines.



SUGGESTED DISCUSSION POINT

Australia is home to some of the oldest still-producing vines in the world. What qualities does this bring to Australian Grenache?



DID YOU KNOW

The South Australian Government introduced a Vine Pull Scheme in the 1980s in response to an oversupply in grapes, paying growers to remove unproductive vines and exit the industry. While this led to the removal of many 100-year old Grenache vines, thankfully some survived and are still producing today.



COMPLEMENTARY PROGRAM

Australia's rich winemaking and viticultural history dates back to the early 19th century, and the country boasts some of the oldest Grenache grapevines in the world, grown in some of the oldest geology and most complex terroirs in the world. In fact, some of the country's treasured Grenache grapevines are more than 150 years old.

Learn more in the **Australia's Old Vines** program, available at www.australianwinediscovered.com



THE ORIGINAL CHAMPION FOR AUSTRALIAN GRENACHE

CHARLES MELTON

As one of the first people to recognise the value and tradition of old-vine Grenache blends, Charlie Melton is part of a group of winemakers responsible for retaining the viticultural heritage of the Barossa Valley.

FUN FACT

When looking for a name for his new GSM blend, Charlie named his now legendary wine 'Nine Popes' after the French appellation, Châteauneuf-du-Pape. Little did he know the more accurate translation is actually "The Pope's New Castle".



COMPLEMENTARY READING

THE BAROSSA VALLEY'S ADOPTED SON

If you ask a Barossa Valley local who's the proudest, most passionate advocate for their region, the name Charlie Melton will almost certainly come up. So, was it a long family history or a yearning passion for wine that led Charlie to this famed Australian wine region? Nope. Sydney boy Charlie only stopped in the Barossa Valley to get money to fix the broken-down Holden ute he was using for an epic Australian road trip.

TWO AUSSIE BLOKES AND A BROKEN-DOWN FLATBED TRUCK

Travelling around Australia is seen as something of a rite of passage for young Australians. In this spirit, Charlie and his mate jumped in their flatbed ute in 1973 to explore our great southern land. While the finer details of their journey have grown hazy over the years, we know the trip came to an abrupt halt when their truck broke down in the Barossa Valley. To fix it, they needed money – money they didn't have.

They needed to get work and so started looking for jobs. They quickly found two: one for a vineyard worker and one for a cellar hand, but they couldn't decide which of them should do which job. So they flipped a coin. Call it fate, call it luck, call it intervention from the wine gods, but it was decided by a coin toss that a young Charlie Melton would work as a cellar hand at Saltram. It was there that Charlie met fellow Barossa Valley legend Peter Lehmann. The two got along famously and Charlie quickly became Peter's protégé, following him when Peter started his own winery in 1979.



COMPLEMENTARY READING

FROM APPRENTICE TO MASTER

Charlie learnt a lot from Peter, particularly a respect for the region's vineyards and grape growers. The 1980s were a tough time in the region, with an oversupply of red grape varieties a big issue for growers and winemakers. Many 100-year-old Shiraz and Grenache vines were consequently pulled out. Although a relative newcomer to the area, Charlie couldn't stand idly by and watch the destruction of the region's heritage.

So in 1984 he purchased his first grapes to make wine under his own label. He wasn't alone. Now-famous Barossa wineries like St Hallett, Rockford, Bethany, Grant Burge, Heritage, The Willows Vineyard and Elderton also sprung into action. While Charlie has a lot in common with these Barossa greats, there is one key difference: Charlie built his name and reputation on blends of Barossa Grenache, not the more popular and common Shiraz.

THE ORIGINAL CHAMPION FOR AUSTRALIAN GRENACHE

If old-vine Barossa Shiraz had few friends in the 1980s, old-vine Barossa Grenache was even less popular. It was made into cheap fortified styles that were high on alcohol but low on complexity. Yet unlike most in the Barossa Valley, Charlie saw potential in the dry-grown old Grenache vines. While others neglected them, Charlie treated the vines with care and love. He focused on reducing yields in his vineyards, vastly improving the quality of the grapes produced. Taking inspiration from Châteauneuf-du-Pape, Charlie took the fruit from these vines and blended it with Shiraz and Mataro (Mourvèdre) to create what would become his flagship wine, 'Nine Popes'. Charlie loved the resulting wine but knew that if he labelled it as a Grenache/Shiraz/Mourvèdre (GSM) blend then his chances of selling it were next to zero. So he looked to the region that had inspired the wine and translated it into English. And so Châteauneuf-du-Pape became "Nine Popes", and a legendary Australian wine was born. Only one little problem: Châteauneuf-du-Pape more accurately translates to "The Pope's New Castle", not "Castle of the Nine Popes"! By the time Charlie realised his translation was off it was too late, and just like Charlie Melton in the Barossa, 'Nine Popes' was here to stay.

VITICULTURE

HOW GRENACHE IS GROWN IN AUSTRALIA

DRY GROWN

Copes well in hot conditions with no irrigation and harsh pruning.

HIGH YIELDS

Fruity, less complex wines.

LOW YIELDS

More concentrated flavour and character.



OLD BUSH (GOBLET) WINES

The vine

Many of the older Grenache vineyards in South Australia are not trellised. This ancient method of vine training results in a goblet shaped growth. They are typically thick vine canes that grow upright, allowing more airflow and sun penetration. Machinery cannot be used, requiring labour-intensive work during harvest and pruning.

Among newer vineyards, the most common trellising is bilaterally trained single-wire trellis with a catchwire. However, vertical shoot positioning and cane-pruned trellises are also used. The trellising type usually depends on the age of the vines and the preference of the vignerons.

Irrigation

Vineyards on shallow soils require irrigation, whereas many old vineyards, or those on deeper soils, are dry-grown. Grenache is commonly considered best when dry-grown and copes well in adverse conditions, with a high tolerance to wind and drought. Treat it mean (no water, harsh pruning, hot weather) and you get a small-yielding crop that can produce complex, character-filled wine. Lavish it with irrigation and let it grow wildly and you can be left with a jammy, thin red that's closer to rosé.

Yield

Grenache can be very high yielding. However, if over-cropped, the wine tends to be too simple and basic. In the Barossa Valley, for example, average yields are 6–12 tonnes per hectare, with the exception of the dry-grown, old vines that are much lower yielding, with some only producing 1–2 tonnes per hectare. Yield control has a major impact on wine quality. Generally speaking, the lower the yield, the more intense the concentration of tannin and flavour from the grapes, resulting in higher-quality and better-structured wines.



SUGGESTED DISCUSSION POINT

Good viticultural management is crucial to the quality of the end product. Higher yields combined with later harvesting (some raisination) leads to jammier, heavier wines. Whereas tight yield control and ripe harvesting (or even a tad early) elevates the freshness and vibrancy of Grenache and blends. So is it quality of the site and vines, or the winemaker that has a bigger impact on the end result?

HOW RED WINE IS MADE

FEATURE VIDEO

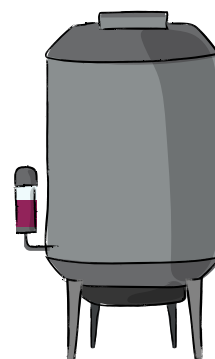
Now is an appropriate time to play the feature video, *How is red wine made?* While it's not specific to Grenache, it provides background context on the typical production process.



1. HARVEST



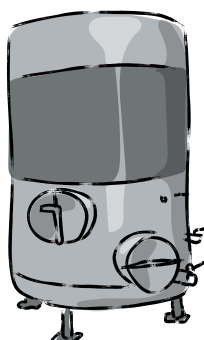
2. DESTEMMING AND CRUSHING



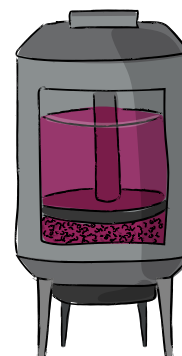
3. FERMENTATION



6. BLENDING



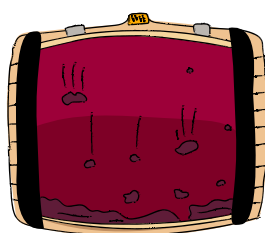
5. MALOLACTIC FERMENTATION



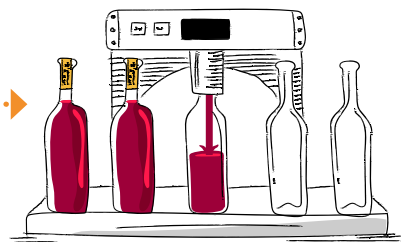
4. PRESSING



7. MATURATION



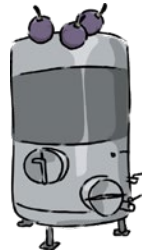
8. FINING AND FILTERING



9. BOTTLING

WINEMAKING:

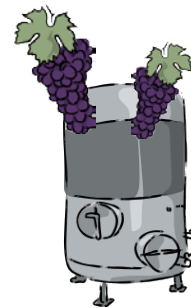
TECHNIQUES INFLUENCING GRENACHE STYLE



WHOLE BERRY
FERMENTATION



STEM INCLUSION



WHOLE CLUSTER
FERMENTATION

STEMS ARE
ADDED

BUNCHES
LEFT INTACT

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

Whole-berry fermentation:

Rather than crushing grapes prior to fermentation, whole grapes are kept separate while the bulk is crushed then added during fermentation. This helps slow the extraction of tannic components and adds a more intense berry flavour.

Stem inclusion:

Stems are added to a ferment that began with de-stemmed fruit to enhance the aromatic and textural qualities of the finished wine.

Whole-bunch (aka whole-cluster) fermentation:

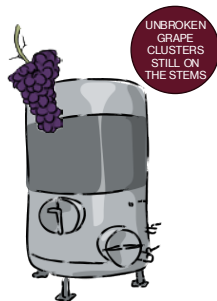
Stems are left in contact with the berries, which leads to a higher tannin content. Often used with lighter style reds, it enhances the aromatics and gives the wine more tannin structure, giving it better ageing potential.



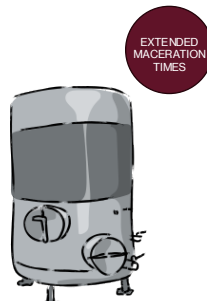
SUGGESTED DISCUSSION POINTS

- Why is oak commonly avoided in the Grenache winemaking process? What would be an instance where oak could be used to enhance the Grenache?
- What role does the fruit quality and winemaking approach play in creating different styles of Grenache?

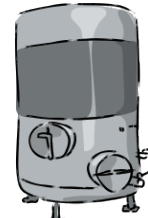
WINEMAKING: TECHNIQUES INFLUENCING GRENACHE STYLE



CARBONIC
MACERATION



EXTENDED SKIN
CONTACT



STAINLESS STEEL
TANKS



MATURATION

Carbonic maceration

Carbonic maceration is essentially intra-cellular fermentation. Fermentation begins with whole, unbroken grape clusters still on the stems. In an anaerobic environment, like a vat filled with carbon dioxide, the grapes will begin to ferment within themselves (using their own enzymes). This works until the ABV reaches about 2%. Then the grapes split open and the ambient yeasts on the grape skins will begin to kick-start regular alcoholic fermentation. Carbonic maceration imparts a unique character and leads to fruit-forward styles.

Post fermentation maceration/extended skin contact

Extended maceration times (10–40 days) gives a silky texture and more savoury characters.

Stainless steel tanks

Only the lowest-yielding, tightest Grenache can cope with oak. This is why many wineries opt for stainless steel or large, older (neutral) barrels, which impart less oak flavour.

Maturation

Large format oak or older oak barrique maturation can work well with Grenache, resulting in vibrant, elegant wines that are very drinkable and easy to match with a wide variety of foods.

Oak barrels allow the wine to breathe, making smoother wine that isn't overpowered by oak flavours. Older oak provides softer tannin structure for ageing Grenache wines.

Bottling and ageing

Most Australian Grenache is bottled with screw cap. The ageing potential varies depending on the different style. Some are made for early drinking (2–5 years), but it's not uncommon to find better-quality examples that can be cellared for 10+ years.

GRENACHE AND BLENDING



**SINGLE VARIETAL
WINE**



BLEND
As blended material,
particularly with Shiraz and
Mataro (Mouvèdre) in GSM
blends



ROSÉ

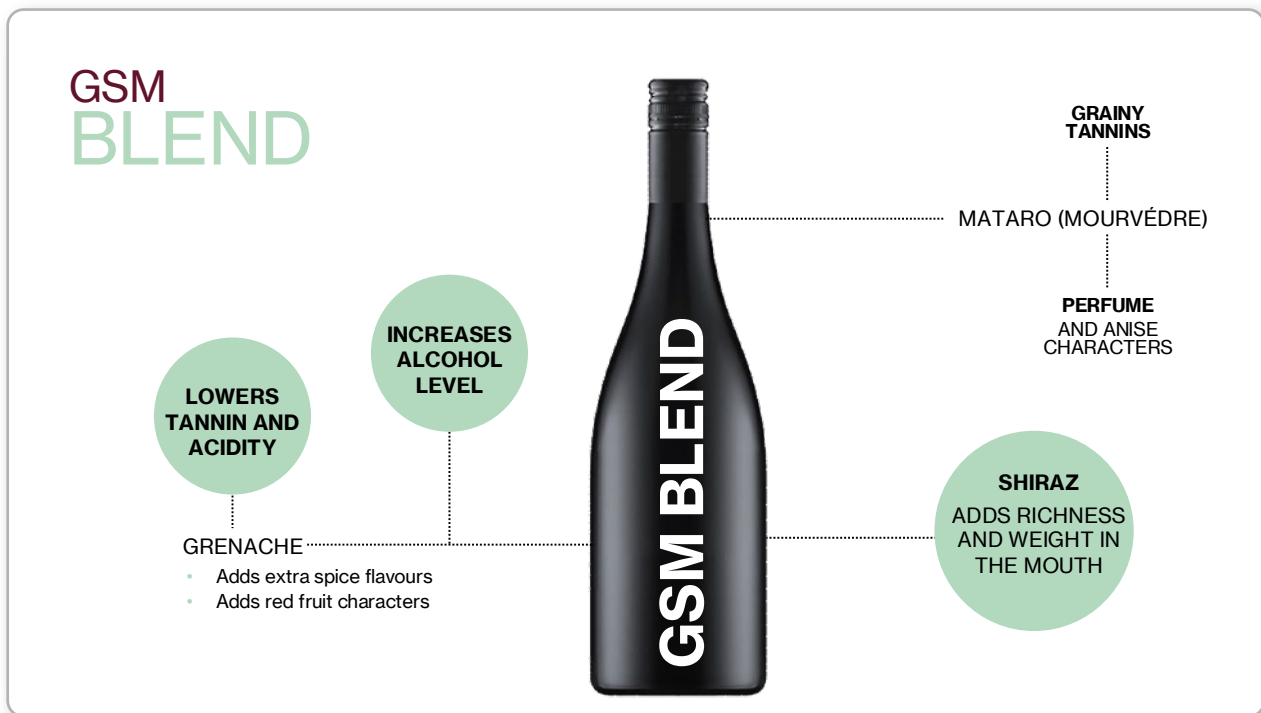


**FORTIFIED
WINES**
Especially Tawny
styles

The concept of ‘terroir’ combined with a dose of typical Australian modesty means winemakers will often say “wine is made in the vineyard” and “less is more”. While single-vineyard sites, single varietals and a hands-off winemaking approach certainly play an important role in Australia, some of our most well-renowned wines are a blend of different grapes, vintages and even regions. And Grenache is certainly no different. Blending is one of the tools a winemaker can use to create the style they are looking for.

Grenache is a versatile variety that can be used in several ways:

- As a single varietal wine
- As blending material, particularly with Shiraz and Mataro (Mourvèdre) in **GSM blends**
- In **rosés**
- In fortified wines, especially **Tawny** styles.



Grenache typically:

- Increases alcohol level
- Lowers tannin and acidity
- Adds red fruit characters
- Adds extra spice flavours.

If the wine is not made from concentrated grapes with a reasonable level of acidity, the alcohol in Grenache will often be too sharp and the wine may fall over early due to the lack of ageing potential. By blending it with Shiraz and Mataro (Mourvèdre), the natural level of acidity in the finished wine is improved, which extends its ageing potential and can create a more balanced wine. Grenache provides aromatic spiciness and delicacy, Shiraz adds richness and weight in the mouth, and Mataro (Mourvèdre) gives perfume and anise characters and grainy tannins.



ADVANCED NOTES

TO BLEND OR NOT TO BLEND?

While some purists may think blending leads to an inferior wine, iconic Australian blends are tasting better than ever. The freedom to blend at the winemakers' whim is producing modern Australian wine styles that are delighting palates around the world. The perfect blend assures an exciting future for the Australian wine community.

The aim of blending is to create a wine that consistently outshines the sum of its parts. It may be the aroma, colour, acidity, tannin or alcohol level that the winemaker is trying to balance; at each stage the winemaker adds a level of texture and complexity.

Blending also helps a winemaker maintain consistency. Once they find their magic formula, it's the winemaker's job to replicate that year after year. This is no easy feat when working with grapes across different vintages, often grown under different conditions. A hotter-than-usual summer or a poorly timed pre-vintage drenching affects the grapes and ultimately the percentage of each wine used in the final blend.

The emergence of Grenache and other popular blends in Australia inspired winemakers to begin experimenting with classic and alternative varieties. Tempranillo blended with old vine Touriga Nacional in McLaren Vale. Nebbiolo blended with Barbera in the Adelaide Hills. Sangiovese with Cabernet, Nebbiolo and Shiraz in the King Valley. Even Shiraz and Pinot Noir blends have seen a revival in the Hunter Valley. It's an exciting time for Australian wine.



SUGGESTED DISCUSSION POINTS

- Why is blending such an important part of winemaking?
- What qualities does Grenache bring to a red wine blend, compared to other varieties?
- How has Grenache impacted the emergence of wine blends in Australia?

AUSTRALIAN GRENACHE REGIONS



AUSTRALIAN GRENACHE REGIONS

Grenache is a variety that relishes warm climates and improves as the vines age, which is why the Barossa Valley and McLaren Vale, two of Australia's oldest regions, produce some of the best Grenache. Both are located close to the South Australian capital of Adelaide – and it's a lively debate as to which region consistently produces the better wine!



DID YOU KNOW

LABELLING LAWS

Rules apply to all variety claims stipulating the minimum amount of a single grape that a wine must contain for that wine to be labelled as a single variety. An 85% rule applies in Australia, which means at least 85% of the wine must be from the grape in question.

This percentage varies from country to country – for example, it's 75% in the US and 85% in the EU.





BAROSSA VALLEY

- Strong food and wine culture
- A rich viticultural history
- World-renowned wines
- Innovative winemaking

Strong food and wine culture

The Barossa is home to legions of home gardeners and orchardists, the deservedly famous Barossa Farmers Market and some of Australia's most renowned restaurants. Combined with a temperate, Mediterranean climate that lends itself beautifully to the production of extraordinary wines, it's a recipe for culinary adventure.

A rich viticultural history

With a rich vine and wine history dating back to 1842, the Barossa Valley is one of the most historic wine-producing regions in Australia. The region was pivotal in the evolution of Australian wine in the 1970s and 1980s, bringing fine Australian wine to a global audience.

World-renowned wines

The diverse range of wines from the region have won over the world's wine lovers, from wine writers and sommeliers to wine geeks and novices. Shiraz is the Barossa's star performer, but Grenache, Mourvèdre (Mataro), Riesling and Semillon all have a long and distinguished history of producing exceptional wines.

Innovative winemaking

Today, there's a generation of winemakers who are changing the face of wine in the Barossa Valley. Some come from families that have been part the region's fabric since the 1800s. Others have been drawn from afar to explore the rich tapestry of soils and terroirs that make the region so renowned. They are exploring innovative grape varieties and experimenting with grape growing and winemaking styles.



BAROSSA VALLEY

Latitude

- 34° 52'S

Climate

- Cool, wet winters and warm, dry summers, with high maximum temperatures, high sunshine days, and low humidity and rainfall. A combination of dry, sunny days and cool nights ensures consistent, timely ripening.
- Ranges from warm on the valley floor to cooler at higher altitudes in the surrounding hills.
- Grenache needs warm, dry conditions such as those found in the Barossa Valley.

Mean January temperature (MJT)

- 21.9°C

MJT refers to the mean temperature of the warmest month.

Growing season rainfall (GSR)

- 220mm (8.7in)

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



FUN FACT

The original name was actually spelled “Barrosa” after the Barrosa Ridge in the Spanish region of Andalusia. However an error in the registration process meant “Barossa” stuck.

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.



SOIL

Barossa soil types vary greatly, ranging from deep sandy loams to clay and red-brown earths. Grenache is typically grown in the deep, rich, fertile black soils of the Barossa Valley floor.

Grenache prefers well-drained soils and marginal growing conditions to produce optimum colour and flavour, but it's a relatively adaptable variety and thrives on a range of soils in the Barossa Valley.

Notable Barossa Valley Grenache producers include:

- Cirillo Estate Wines: 'The Vincent' and '1850s' – quite possibly the oldest Grenache vines in the world
- Charles Melton: 'Nine Popes' – benchmark and historic blend
- Yalumba: 'The Tri-Centenary' and 'Old Bush Vine'
- John Duval: 'Annexus'



DID YOU KNOW

The Barossa Valley is one of two regions in the Barossa zone. The other smaller but still-prominent region of Eden Valley is renowned for producing dry Riesling that's become a classic Australian wine style.



ADVANCED NOTES

BAROSSA'S OLD VINES

- Barossa is home to the world's oldest continuously producing Grenache, Shiraz, Mataro (Mourvèdre) and Cabernet Sauvignon vineyards, with one Shiraz planting dating back to 1843.
- One of the oldest Grenache vineyards in the world is found in the Barossa Valley at Cirillo Estate, planted in 1850 and still producing wine to this day.
- Low-yielding old vines go through the ripening process more consistently, producing grapes that are full of intensity and flavour and contributing to great complexity, structure and balance.
- Old vines do present their challenges, often needing lots of nurturing and producing extremely low yields.
- Their deep roots are a great asset. They aren't affected by short rainstorms in wet vintages. And in times of drought, they can tap into water reserves in the subsoil.
- While vine age is often seen as an indicator of quality, it's certainly not a prerequisite. However, vineyards that consistently produce great wine are often taken care of and therefore get the opportunity to become old vines.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

McLAREN VALE

A map of South Australia with a textured, topographical background in shades of beige and brown. The outline of the state is shown in a dark brown line. A small, irregularly shaped area in the southeast, representing the McLaren Vale wine region, is highlighted in a darker orange-brown color. A dotted line connects the text 'McLAREN VALE' to this highlighted area.



McLAREN VALE

- The birthplace of wine in South Australia
- Diverse natural beauty
- Grenache a star performer
- Boutique wineries with a creative spirit
- Environmentally conscious

The birthplace of wine in South Australia

Home to some of the world's oldest grape vines.

Extreme natural beauty

Nestled between rolling mountains and white, sandy beaches, this dramatic landscape hosts a charming collective of villages offering a smorgasbord of fine wine, food, art and nature.

Grenache a star performer

Grenache has long been known as the jewel in McLaren Vale's crown. The region is also renowned for Shiraz and Cabernet Sauvignon, as well as newer arrivals such as Nero d'Avola, Fiano and Vermentino.

Boutique wineries with a creative spirit

Although it has thousands of hectares under vine and the demand for its wines at an all-time global high, McLaren Vale retains the innovative spirit it was born with. Much of that spirit stems from the fact that "the Vale" still has many boutique wineries that continue to push the boundaries in search of perfection. It's a classic region that's determined to stay contemporary.

Environmentally conscious

A large percentage of local producers farm organically, biodynamically or employ sustainable farming methods.



McLAREN VALE

Climate

McLaren Vale has a Mediterranean climate, characterised by warm summers, mild winters, winter-dominated rainfall, low relative humidity and relatively high evaporation.

However, the proximity of Mount Lofty and Gulf St Vincent play an important role in moderating the climate and are largely responsible for many meso- and microclimatic differences. Local winds blow down from both the slopes and in from the Gulf to cool and dry the vines. This climatic variation throughout the region means there are small parcels of land each making distinct wines.

Latitude

– 35° 19'S

Mean January temperature (MJT)

– 21.3°C

Growing season rainfall (GSR)

– 226mm (8.9in)



SOIL

McLaren Vale is one of the most geologically diverse regions in the world. Red-brown sandy loams, light clays interspersed with lime, distinctly sandy soils – all this and more can be found in the same region.

McLaren Vale is one of the most geologically diverse regions in the world, with over 40 unique geologies present that vary in age from 15,000 years to over 550 million years.

There is a wide variety of soil types, a reflection of the varied terrain. Red-brown sandy loams, light clays interspersed with lime, distinctly sandy soils – all this and more can be found in the same region. Combined with climate, old vines and innovative winemaking, it lays the foundations for outstanding viticulture.

Notable McLaren Vale Grenache producers include:

- Kay Brothers
- d'Arenberg
- Wirra Wirra
- S.C. Pannell



FUN FACT

The James Halliday Grenache Challenge

In 2017, the inaugural James Halliday Grenache Challenge gathered Grenache wines from around Australia for a competitive tasting to celebrate and elevate the variety. Now an annual fixture, it's yet another indication that Grenache is coming out of the shadows and into the limelight.

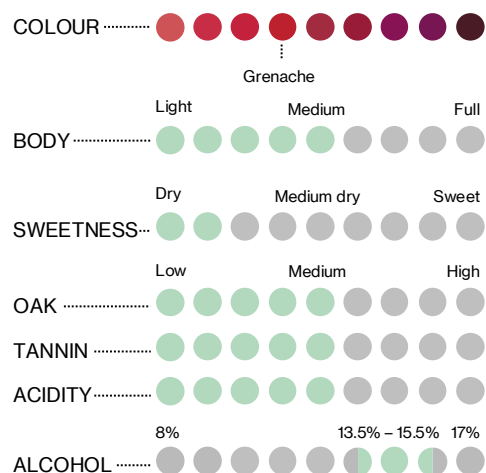


SUGGESTED DISCUSSION POINT

While South Australian Grenache gets all the glory, Grenache is also grown in the Clare Valley and Langhorne Creek, as well as Heathcote and cooler regions such as Frankland River. What sorts of different styles are these regions producing? And what role does climate play?

GRENACHE

CHARACTERISTICS AND FLAVOUR PROFILES



FLAVOURS

- Strawberry
- Earth
- Cherry
- Dark raspberry
- White pepper
- Spice

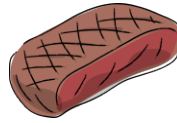
TIME TO TASTE – Now is an appropriate time to taste and discuss your selected mix of wines.

Grenache is sometimes referred to as 'warm climate Pinot Noir'. Its skill is in making lighter-coloured, perfumed, elegant red wines, not lacking flavour, but with freshness, vibrant fruit and balanced structure. In this sense, Grenache is in fashion because Australia's current wine trend is to move away from dense, opaque, sweetly fruited red wines towards lighter, more drinkable reds with a prettier personality. The result is supple, elegant reds that are highly food compatible and very drinkable. Now that winemakers are recognising Grenache's talents for graceful reds, fewer are trying to force it into an unnatural style.

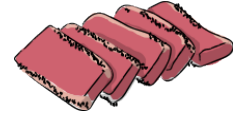
FOOD PAIRINGS



CHARCUTERIE



GAME



**DARKER
MEATY FISH
SUCH AS TUNA**



**GRILLED & BBQ
MEAT**



**LIGHT TO
MODERATELY SPICED
DISHES & CURRIES**



**SOFTER, WASHED
RIND CHEESES**

Grenache is an ideal wine to enjoy with food. The medium-high alcohol, fruit characters, medium tannin and low acidity mean it works well with a range of dishes from game through to mild curry and pasta.

GRENACHE A BRIGHT FUTURE FOR AN OLD CLASSIC



There is palpable excitement around Grenache at the moment, with a new wave of modern winemakers producing wines that are bringing worldwide attention back to this perennially evolutionary Australian variety. And after so many years of underappreciated service to the wine industry, it's a gratifying development – one that will pave the way for a new generation of wine lovers to make the acquaintance of an iconic Australian wine.

KEY POINTS TO REMEMBER

- Australia is home to some of the oldest Grenache vineyards in the world, with continually producing vines dating back to the 1800s.
- Grenache has a long history as a workhorse red variety and was once used extensively in fortified wine production.
- Single-varietal Grenache is currently in fashion, but the variety forms the backbone of classic red blends, partnering beautifully with Shiraz and Mataro (Mourvèdre) for GSM. Grenache is also used successfully in the production of fortifieds and rosé.
- Grenache is perfectly suited to the hot, dry climate of South Australia's Barossa and McLaren Vale regions, world-renowned for their old-vine Grenache.
- If over-cropped, the wines can be simple and basic – keeping yields low results in higher-quality and better-structured wines.
- Australian Grenache is characterised by medium tannin and acidity, as well as high alcohol content. Aromatics include strawberry, earth, cherry, dark raspberry, white pepper and spice. Grenache is a light, fruit-forward variety that works as well on its own as it does in a blend.

Suggested timings

This module is designed to be taught in one to three hours. How long you spend on each topic – or whether you cover it at all – will depend on your attendees as well as time allocation. Below are two different examples of how you may wish to divide your time.

ONE-HOUR CLASS

Topic	Time
Welcome and introduction	5 mins
The history of Grenache in Australia	5 mins
How it's grown	2 mins
How it's made	3 mins
The art of blending	5 mins
Where it's grown	10 mins
Characteristics and flavour profiles (including tasting)	25 mins
Summary and class close	5 mins

THREE-HOUR CLASS

Topic	Time
Welcome and introduction	10 mins
The history of Grenache in Australia	15 mins
How it's grown	10 mins
How it's made	5 mins
The art of blending	10 mins
Where it's grown	25 mins
Break	15 mins
Characteristics and flavour profiles (including tasting)	55 mins
How to serve and enjoy	10 mins
Summary and class close	15 mins

SUGGESTED WINES TO TASTE

These are just suggestions – you can select whichever wines best suit your tasting and audience. Wines may or may not be available in your area.

- Cirillo 'The Vincent' Barossa Valley Grenache
- Yalumba 'Samuel's Collection Bush Vine' Barossa Grenache
- SC Pannell McLaren Vale Grenache
- Yangarra McLaren Vale Grenache
- Ochota Barrels 'Fugazi Vineyard' McLaren Vale Grenache
- Jauma 'Ralph's Vineyard' McLaren Vale Grenache
- d'Arenberg 'The Custodian' McLaren Vale Grenache
- Charles Melton 'Nine Popes' Barossa Valley GSM
- Henschke Johann's Garden Barossa Valley Grenache blend



THANK YOU