

AUSTRALIA'S OLD VINES

Guide



AUSTRALIAN WINE DISCOVERED

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resources to discover and
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AUSTRALIA'S OLD VINES



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.

UNIQUE WINES FROM UNSPOILT LANDS

- Australia has one of the most diverse wine scenes in the world, with more than 100 different grape varieties grown across 65 wine regions.
- The Australian wine community is renowned for its creativity and willingness to experiment.
- Australian wines are an authentic expression of the people who craft them and the country's varied soils and climate.
- Australia is home to a highly-skilled winemaking community, crafting premium wines that stand among the world's best.



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

UNIQUE WINES FROM UNSPOILT LANDS

- Australia has one of the most diverse wine scenes in the world. With more than 100 grape varieties grown across 65 wine regions, Australian wine today is an expression of the country's distinctive climates and soils, and the passionate communities that cultivate them.
- The Australian wine community is renowned for its creativity and willingness to experiment. Winemakers are curious by nature, perfecting old concepts and playing with new ideas to create outstanding wines.
- Australian wines are an authentic expression of the people who craft them and the unique regional characteristics of their origins. Winemakers take a down-to-earth approach, reflecting the beauty of Australia's ancient soils and varied climate. Many vineyards are cultivated by multi-generational wine families.
- Australia is home to a highly skilled winemaking community, crafting premium wines of exceptional quality. Its world-class vineyards and award-winning wines stand among the very best.



TODAY WE'LL COVER

- History of Australia's old vines
- The definition of 'old' vines
- Do old vines mean better wines?
- Australia's old-vine regions and material

HOME TO SOME OF THE OLDEST VINES, OLDEST GEOLOGY AND MOST COMPLEX TERROIRS IN THE WORLD

- Pioneering grape growers and winemakers
- Pre-phyloxera vine stock
- Early wine success
- The launch of Australia's multigenerational winemaking families



AUSTRALIA'S OLD VINES

Australia's rich winemaking and viticultural history dates back to the early 19th century, and the country boasts some of the oldest 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 grapevines are more than 150 years old.

The survival and stamina of these rare old-vine assets are thanks in large part to the special sites on which they grow, many of them historic in their own right. They're also a testament to the generations of dedicated winemaking families who have long cultivated and cared for them.

These unique vines and the grapes they produce have played – and continue to play – a pivotal role in Australia's grape and wine community. They're behind some of the country's most extraordinary wines and have helped shape some of Australia's classic wine styles. As these classic wines continue to pay homage to the country's winemaking past and look to the future, it's an exciting time, both locally and globally, for Australian wine.

FEATURE VIDEO

Now is a great time to play the '*History of Australian Wine*'



A BRIEF HISTORY

1832

- James Busby's significant collection of vine cuttings arrives in Australia

1788

- Australia's first vines planted in Sydney's Botanic Garden



1840s – 1870s

- A number of Australian vineyards planted during this time still produce grapes today – some of the oldest surviving and continuously producing vines in the world

A BRIEF HISTORY

Wine grapes are not native to Australia. They arrived with the first European settlers – and the First Fleet – in 1788. However, a more pivotal era for Australian winemaking occurred around the 1830s and 1840s, when a number of pioneers began importing many types of grapevine cuttings from Europe. From there, experimentation began, with Australian wine pioneers planting different varieties in different parts of the country. With patience and perseverance, they began to determine what worked and what didn't, and the Australian wine and grape community began to take shape.

Thankfully, these early vines arrived in Australia before phylloxera struck and destroyed many European vineyards. In fact, some of the original vines that were planted in Australia in the 1840s and 1850s are still producing grapes – and fine wines – today. Indeed, Australia has some of the oldest Shiraz, Grenache, Mourvèdre (also known as Mataro) and several other grapevine varieties in the world. Given the country's relative youth, that's quite an impressive feat.

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DID YOU KNOW

Phylloxera is an ongoing threat to vineyards across Australia. However, as Australia received phylloxera-free vines before they were decimated in Europe, and because many regions of Australia continue to be phylloxera free, the longevity of these old vines has been protected.

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DID YOU KNOW

Australian-made wine was available for sale domestically by the 1820s.

Emulation

Australia's pioneering winemakers were keenly aware of the classic wine styles in Europe, so many tried to echo those special styles on Australian soil. Some wines achieved great success, even back then. Wineries such as Penfolds, Yering Station in the Yarra Valley and Craiglee in Sunbury were winning wine awards as early as the late 1800s.

Multigenerational winemaking families

Along with more than 200 years of viticulture and winemaking in Australia are the families behind these vines and wines. Some of them have been growing grapes and making wine for five generations or more. These multigenerational families have an ingrained knowledge and respect for the craft of winemaking, and their longstanding dedication provides inspiration, leadership and custodial care for some of Australia's most precious vines and wines.



DID YOU KNOW

Gregory Blaxland is best known for being the first European to cross the Blue Mountains, as well as for his influence in establishing grain farming in Australia. However, he also made great strides with his viticultural work. In 1822, Blaxland became the first person to export Australian wine, and he was also the first winemaker to win an overseas award.



COMPLEMENTARY READING

THE STORY OF JAMES BUSBY: THE FATHER OF AUSTRALIAN WINE

Often championed as ‘the father of the Australian wine industry’, James Busby is responsible for many of Australia’s famed old vines and classic wines.

When Scotsman James Busby was in his early 20s, he had no idea about viticulture or winemaking. But upon emigrating to Australia with his parents in 1824, he was appointed a teacher of viticulture at a male orphans school and published two books on the subject:

- **A Treatise on the Culture of the Vine and the Art of Making Wine (1825).**
- **A Manual of Plain Directions for Planting and Cultivating Vineyards, and for Making Wine in New South Wales (1830).**

Before this time, explorer Gregory Blaxland and wool pioneer Captain John Macarthur had obtained and planted vine cuttings in Australia. Macarthur and his two sons travelled through Europe collecting vines and planted their first vineyard in Australia in 1820. Blaxland sent the first Australian wine to England in 1822. But it was the months Busby spent travelling through Spain and France in 1831 that were of key importance to the establishment of the Australian grape and wine community.

Busby’s tour began in Cadiz, Spain, and ended in Aÿ, Champagne, France. He kept a meticulous record of each day’s travel and of the vine cuttings he collected on the way, which he later published into a book:

- **Journal of a Tour through some of the Vineyards of Spain and France (1833).**

During his travels, he listed and collected cuttings of more than 550 vines, of which 363 survived the trip back to Sydney. The names of Busby’s cuttings ranged from the mysterious (Sevent Noir, Passadoule Bougie) to the intriguing (Barbera Noir, Côte d’Or). Most importantly, they included many commonplace varieties we still grow today, such as (in Busby’s spelling) Carignan, Grenache, Mataro, Mourastrell, Blanquette, Muscat, Grenache Blanche, Măcabeo, Chasselas and Cinque Saut. In the heart of his catalogue are the core varieties of the northern Rhône Valley, Burgundy and Bordeaux.

Busby’s cuttings were originally planted in Sydney’s Botanic Garden (now called the Royal Botanic Garden, a major tourist attraction). A duplicate collection was planted at his property in the Hunter Valley, and subsequent cuttings made their way to various parts of New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia, as well as New Zealand, where Busby later moved. Many of Australia’s old vines and classic wines can be traced back to the original Busby collection.

OLD VINES DEFINED



LARGE VOLUME
OF PERENNIAL
WOOD



YIELD LIMITING
FACTORS



BALANCED
GROWTH



PROVEN SITE
SELECTION

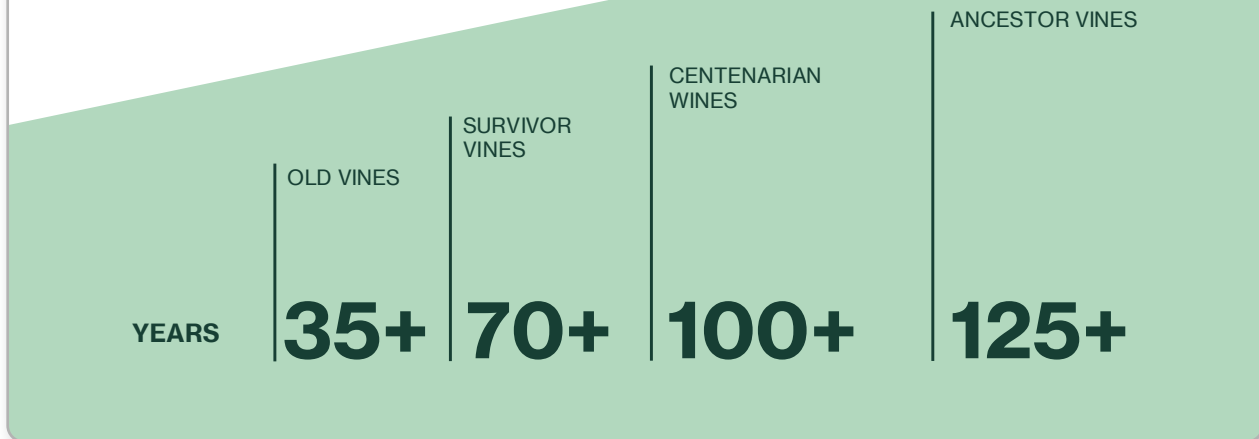
OLD VINES DEFINED

So what constitutes 'old' vines? In other words, how old is 'old'? The answer is not clear-cut and varies around the world – and even from region to region. There's also no universally accepted legal definition of old vines. However, it's important to note that grapevines can live in excess of 125 years. And after adolescence (their first 20 or so years), the vines' yields start to decrease.

BAROSSA

OLD VINE CHARTER

HOW OLD IS OLD



BAROSSA OLD VINE CHARTER

Australia's Barossa is an exceptional and diverse viticultural region, with a proud history of grape growing and winemaking that dates back to 1842. Acknowledged as a leading wine region, it's home to some of the oldest vines in the world.

To catalogue its vineyards, and to classify its old vines into four age groups, the Barossa region created the Barossa Old Vine Charter in 2009. The charter aims to recognise, preserve and celebrate the region's old vineyards. While the charter is specific to the Barossa, it's a good point of reference for all of Australia's old vines.

Old vines: 35 years or older

These vines have grown beyond adolescence and are fully mature, with a root structure and trunk thickness that encourage diversity of flavour and character.

They consistently produce high-quality fruit and wines of distinction and longevity.

Survivor vines: at least 70 years old

These old vines have reached a significant milestone and serve as a living example of the commitment of grapegrowers and winemakers who value the quality and structure that the vines impart on their wines.

Centenarian vines: at least 100 years old

These pre-phylloxera vines, planted generations ago, have impressively stood the test of time and matured with thick, gnarly trunks. They produce low yields of intensely flavoured grapes, which can translate into wines with strong character and concentration.

Ancestor vines: 125 years old or more

These vines contain genetic material that has helped populate the region with irreplaceable old stocks that underpin viticultural tradition. They are mainly dry-grown, low-yielding vines that produce grapes of great flavour and intensity. They are believed to be among the oldest-producing vines in the world.



DID YOU KNOW

The French term for old vines is ‘**vieilles vignes**’. You’ll often see this term or the English ‘old vines’ on wine labels, indicating that the wine within comes from notably old vines.



SUGGESTED DISCUSSION POINTS

- Old vines can add layers of complexity to wine, but can they become too old to produce quality fruit?



DO OLD VINES MAKE BETTER WINES?

- Old vines versus young vines
- Factors influencing old-vine wines
- Passion and place

DO OLD VINES MAKE BETTER WINES?

This question comes up a lot. And the answer is as complex as old-vine wines themselves.

Something isn't necessarily better just because it's old. Old vines don't automatically produce better wine than young – there are plenty of other factors involved, including climate, region and winemaking techniques. But if everything else is right, old vines can produce wines of great finesse, depth and balance. So vine age can be an indicator of potential quality, but it's not a guarantee.

It's also important to note that old vines often come from excellent sites that have allowed them to continuously grow and age. Depending on where the vines are planted, they may grow deeper, more-developed root systems, which can enable them to access more complex soils and micronutrients, as well as develop a stronger resistance to the struggles of vintage, such as drought stress and flooding rains. Old vines have less vigour, which means they grow fewer leaves and shoots, and the ratio of foliage to fruit is likely to be better balanced.

What's more, there's an emotional component to both making and drinking old-vine wines. First of all, the vines look impressive, with their thick trunks and beautifully textured bark. Plus, Australia has the largest selection of old-vine material in the world, which adds an enticing element of rarity. Some of these sites produce wine of extraordinary complexity and character. The old vines are certainly part of that. Given this rich history and romantic mystique, one could argue that these factors indeed make old-vine wines better. These wines are an expression of place: where Australia's been, where it is now and where it's going next.

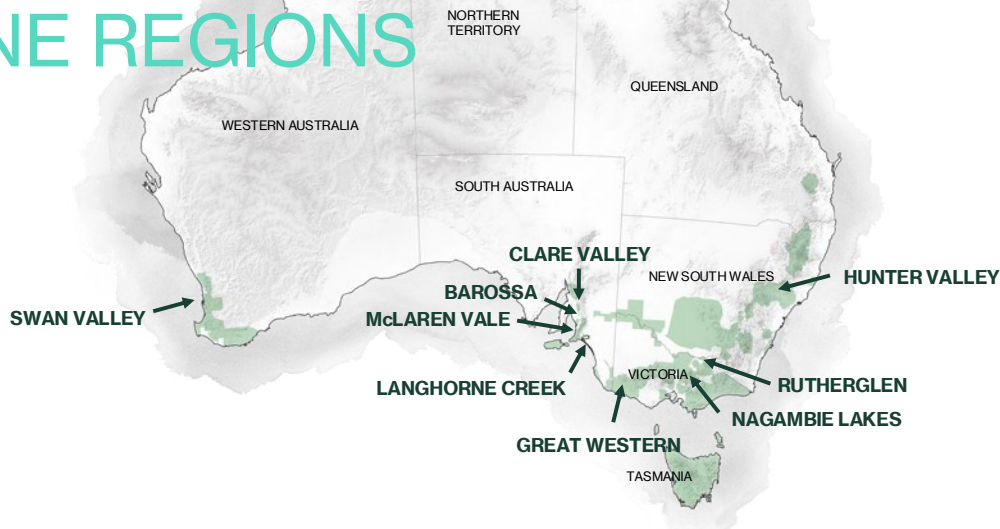
Ultimately, these vines have produced good fruit and good wine from a very early age. If they weren't able to produce special fruit, they wouldn't be around today.



SUGGESTED DISCUSSION POINTS

- How else might old vines equate to better wines?
- Could keeping old vines in production sometimes not make commercial sense? Why?

AUSTRALIA'S OLD-VINE WINE REGIONS



TIME TO TASTE – You may like to taste your selected mix of old vine wines as you work through the relevant sections below.



COMPLEMENTARY PROGRAMS

Discover more about some of Australia's most prominent wine regions, explore our regional programs, available at www.australianwinediscovered.com

AUSTRALIA'S OLD-VINE WINE REGIONS

Australia has the largest selection of old-vine material in the world. Scattered across the country in some of our most renowned wine regions, these vines have been nurtured for generations and are the basis for many memorable wines.

Among Australia's old-vine regions are:

- Barossa Valley.
- Hunter Valley.
- Langhorne Creek.
- Clare Valley.
- McLaren Vale.
- Other old-vine regions include Nagambie Lakes, Great Western, Rutherglen and Swan Valley.



BAROSSA

The Barossa is one of the most historic wine-producing regions in Australia, with a heritage – and vines – that date back to 1842. The region encompasses both the Barossa and Eden Valleys.

Today, the Barossa has fifth-, sixth- and seventh-generation grape-growing families who cultivate the vineyards and provide custodial care for Australia's largest collection of old vines. It shines as an inspirational example of the history and evolution of Australian wine.

The Barossa's multigenerational vineyards have survived wine-sector booms and busts to be among the oldest in the world. Dry-grown and low-yielding, these vines produce concentrated, long-living wines that are in high demand internationally. Today, dedicated winemakers and wine families continue to maintain pockets of these vines in Bethany, Langmeil, Krondorf, Greenock and the northern Barossa.

Barossa Valley is home to some of the world's oldest Shiraz, Mourvèdre and Grenache vines. It's also home to what's believed to be the oldest Cabernet Sauvignon vineyard still producing wine. And Eden Valley is home to some of the world's oldest Riesling and Shiraz vineyards.

Given the region's wealth of old-vine material, it's understandable that the Barossa has invested significant time and effort in tracking and preserving these valuable resources.

FEATURE VIDEO

Now is a good time to play the feature video, '*Barossa Shiraz*'.



BAROSSA

- Vines dating back to 1842
- Home to some of the world's oldest Shiraz, Mourvèdre and Grenache vines
- Barossa old-vine varieties:
 - Shiraz
 - Mourvèdre
 - Grenache
 - Cabernet Sauvignon
 - Riesling
 - Chardonnay
 - Semillon

Shiraz

For many people, Australian wine is inextricably linked with Shiraz, one of the Barossa's star performers.

Langmeil Winery has an 'old-vine garden', which was planted in the 1840s, while Kalleske Wines, a longstanding family vineyard, owns a precious 1.2-hectare (2.97-acre) plot planted in 1875.

The following table, with reference to the **Barossa Old Vine Charter**, indicates just how much rare, old-vine Shiraz the Barossa is still producing and the percentage of vines 'grown on their own roots' rather than on grafted rootstock.

OLD-VINE SHIRAZ PLANTED AND STILL IN PRODUCTION

Planting period	Area (hectares/acres)	Total variety area (%)	Own roots (%)
Barossa Ancestor Vine (125+ years)	12.54/30.99	0.16	88
Barossa Centenarian Vine (100+ years)	100.62/248.64	1.29	82
Barossa Survivor Vine (70+ years)	88.48/218.64	1.14	96
Barossa Old Vine (35+ years)	589.06/1,455.60	7.56	95

Some prime examples of the wines from these vineyards include:

- Bethany ‘LE’ Barossa Valley Shiraz (Old vine).
- Henschke ‘Mount Edelstone’ Eden Valley Shiraz (Centenarian vine).
- Elderton ‘Command Single Vineyard’ Barossa Valley Shiraz (Centenarian vine).
- Château Tanunda ‘The Château’ Barossa Shiraz (Centenarian vine).
- Langmeil Winery ‘The Freedom 1843’ Barossa Valley Shiraz (Ancestor vine).
- Henschke ‘Hill of Grace’ Eden Valley Shiraz (Ancestor vine).
- Poonawatta Estate ‘The 1880’ Eden Valley Shiraz (Ancestor vine).



SUGGESTED DISCUSSION POINTS

- What’s the significance – for both the winemaker and the consumer – of such a large percentage of old-vine Shiraz in the Barossa being ‘grown on its own roots’ rather than on grafted rootstock?

Mourvèdre (also known as Mataro)

The Barossa has what’s believed to be the oldest Mourvèdre vineyard in the world, planted in 1853 by Friedrich Koch. Eight rows of this original, pre-phylloxera planting still exist on the Old Garden Vineyard at Rowland Flat, and the now seventh-generation Koch family still tends them. The fruit goes into Hewitson’s famous and rare Old Garden Mourvèdre.

OLD-VINE MOURVÈDRE PLANTED AND STILL IN PRODUCTION

Planting period	Area (hectares/acres)	Total variety area (%)	Own roots (%)
Barossa Ancestor Vine (125+ years)	2.63/6.5	0.98	100
Barossa Centenarian Vine (100+ years)	5.39/13.32	2.02	100
Barossa Survivor Vine (70+ years)	12.2/301.15	4.56	98
Barossa Old Vine (35+ years)	45.5/112.43	17.02	91

Grenache

Cirillo Estate Wines is now home to what could possibly be the world's oldest surviving and continuously producing Grenache vineyard. The vineyard was originally planted in 1848 by the Graetz family. The prized fruit from these vines has gone into wines for well-known producers such as Rockford, Peter Lehmann, St Hallett and Torbreck.

Cirillo's own '1850 Ancestor Vine' Grenache Rosé and '1850 Ancestor Vine' Grenache also source fruit from 1850-planted Grenache vines.

Yalumba, Australia's oldest family-owned winery, also has access to veteran Grenache vines of more than 125 years old. These dry-grown vines produce very small quantities of exceptional grapes with intense flavour.

Some prime examples of the wines from these vineyards include:

- Kalleske 'Old Vine' Barossa Valley Grenache (Survivor vines)
- Burge Family Winemakers Barossa Valley Garnacha (Grenache) (Survivor vines)
- Teusner 'Avatar' Barossa Valley Grenache Mataro Shiraz (Survivor vines)
- Cirillo Estate '1850 Ancestor Vine' Barossa Valley Grenache (Ancestor vines)

OLD-VINE GRENACHE PLANTED AND STILL IN PRODUCTION

Planting period	Area (hectares/acres)	Total variety area (%)	Own roots (%)
Barossa Ancestor Vine (125+ years)	7.55/18.66	1.09	100
Barossa Centenarian Vine (100+ years)	23.49/58.05	3.39	100
Barossa Survivor Vine (70+ years)	93.51/231.07	13.51	98
Barossa Old Vine (35+ years)	302.98/748.67	43.76	94

Cabernet Sauvignon

Penfolds famous Block 42 at the Kalimna Vineyard boasts Cabernet Sauvignon vines planted in 1888, thought to be the oldest Cabernet vines still producing wine. The fruit from this block produces the Ancestor Vine Block 42 Cabernet Sauvignon wine.

OLD-VINE CABERNET SAUVIGNON PLANTED AND STILL IN PRODUCTION			
Planting period	Area (hectares/acres)	Total variety area (%)	Own roots (%)
Barossa Ancestor Vine (125+ years)	4.44/10.97	0.24	100
Barossa Centenarian Vine (100+ years)	4.65/11.49	0.25	100
Barossa Old Vine (35+ years)	121.1/299.24	6.44	91

Riesling

The Barossa's Eden Valley has a proud Riesling tradition and boasts some of the oldest Riesling vineyards in the world. Pewsey Vale, for example, has a block of Riesling that dates back to 1961. Pewsey Vale 'The Contours' Eden Valley Riesling falls into the charter's old-vine category.

OLD-VINE RIESLING PLANTED AND STILL IN PRODUCTION			
Planting period	Area (hectares/acres)	Total variety area (%)	Own roots (%)
Barossa Centenarian Vine (100+ years)	6/14.83	0.83	100
Barossa Survivor Vine (70+ years)	16.24/40.13	2.24	98
Barossa Old Vine (35+ years)	321.47/794.37	44.28	94

Chardonnay

It wasn't until the early 1970s that Chardonnay truly gained a foothold in the Australian wine market. Still, the Barossa is home to a small amount of old-vine material.

OLD-VINE CHARDONNAY PLANTED AND STILL IN PRODUCTION

Planting period	Area (hectares/acres)	Total variety area (%)	Own roots (%)
Barossa Old Vine (35+ years)	37.63/92.99	6.33	83

Semillon

The Barossa has old Semillon vines dating back to the early 1900s.

OLD-VINE SEMILLON PLANTED AND STILL IN PRODUCTION

Planting period	Area (hectares/acres)	Total variety area (%)	Own roots (%)
Barossa Ancestor Vine (125+ years)	3.75/9.27	0.99	100
Barossa Centenarian Vine (100+ years)	1.98/4.89	0.52	100
Barossa Survivor Vine (70+ years)	26.4/65.24	6.97	94
Barossa Old Vine (35+ years)	84.65/209.17	22.36	88

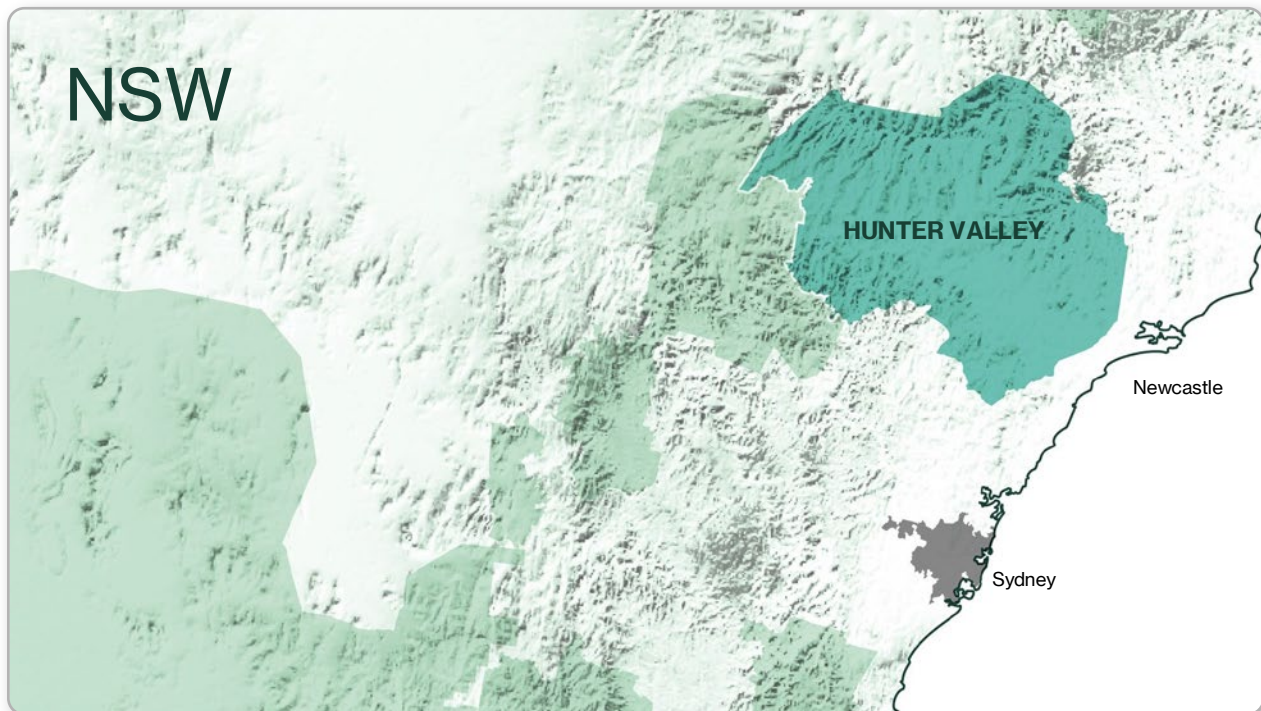
Some prime examples of wines from these vineyards include:

- Château Tanunda 'The Château' Old Vine Barossa Valley Semillon (Old vine).
- The Willows Vineyard Single Vineyard Barossa Valley Semillon (Survivor vine).



DID YOU KNOW

Eight of the 13 oldest wine companies or continuously operating brands in Australia are South Australian, including names like Penfolds, Orlando Wines, Seppeltsfield and Yalumba, Bleasdale, Normans, Sevenhill Cellars and Oliver's Taranga Vineyards. Yalumba is of particular note because it's the nation's oldest family-owned winery and a founding member of Australia's First Families of Wine (AFFW), a unique collaboration of companies with custodianship of some of the country's finest vineyards. Four other South Australian wineries are members: Taylors Wakefield, d'Arenberg, Henschke and Jim Barry Wines.



HUNTER VALLEY

The Hunter Valley is Australia's oldest producing wine region, with vineyards dating back to the 1860s and some of the oldest vine stock in the world.

Shiraz

The Hunter Valley has a significant amount of old vines (mainly Shiraz) growing on its original *vitis vinifera* rootstocks, making the region unique. Some Shiraz vines in the Hunter Valley are more than 120 years old and still produce phenomenal wines.

Semillon

As with many European grape varieties, Semillon arrived in Australia in the 1830s and found a comfortable home in the Hunter Valley. From its earliest days in Australia, it proved a popular vine with winemakers. Its vigour, ease of propagation, high yields and resistance to disease made Semillon an easy and well-liked vine.

Chardonnay

Although the exact origins of Australia's first Chardonnay vines are subject to debate, it arrived in the country as a vine cutting in the early 1800s.



HUNTER VALLEY

- Vineyards dating back to the 1860s
- A significant amount of old vines (mostly Shiraz) growing on its own roots
- Tyrrell's Wines, which has been Australian-family-owned since 1858, is known for its six 'Sacred Sites' old-vine blocks
- Charles King planted Shiraz in the Old Hill vineyard at Mount Pleasant in 1880, making those vines some of the oldest in the Hunter Valley

PROMINENT WINERIES AND VINEYARDS

A number of multigenerational families and famous wineries in the Hunter Valley, steeped in the region's winemaking traditions, have a deep connection to the old vines.

Tyrrell's Wines' 'Sacred Sites'

Family-owned since 1858, Tyrrell's Wines has identified six 'sacred sites' – blocks across four vineyards that are more than 100 years old and still producing fruit and growing on their own roots. These include one block of Chardonnay, two blocks of Semillon and three blocks of Shiraz:

- **4 Acres Vineyard:** This 1.05-hectare (2.6-acre) Shiraz vineyard dates back to 1879. In a typical year, 4 Acres produces a little more than one bottle per vine.

- **Johnno's Vineyard:** Planted in 1908, this site was originally named the Long Flat vineyard but was renamed in 2002 after fifth-generation family member John Tyrrell. Semillon (2.06 hectares/5.1 acres) and Shiraz (0.73 hectares/1.8 acres) are planted here.
- **HVD Vineyard:** The Hunter Valley Distillery Company, which formed when demand for spirits was high, planted this vineyard in 1903. With its oldest-planted vines from 1908, it is believed to be the oldest Chardonnay vineyard in the world. Famed Penfolds later leased it in 1933 and then bought it in 1948. Murray Tyrrell bought it in 1982. HVD is home to 4.29 hectares (10.6 acres) of Semillon and 1.1 hectares (2.7 acres) of Chardonnay. Tyrrell's HVD 'Old Vines' Chardonnay is part of the winery's Sacred Sites range.

Stevens Vineyards: Neil Stevens owns two iconic Hunter Valley vineyards: Glenoak and Old Hillside. On the Old Hillside block, a 3.3-hectare (8.2-acre) patch of Shiraz is home to the oldest still-producing vines in the Hunter. This 'Old Patch' was planted in 1867, making it more than 150 years old. In the 1990s, Bruce Tyrrell struck a deal with the Stevens family to make the wine with grapes from this vineyard. Then in 2017, the Tyrrell family purchased the Stevens Shiraz Vineyard, which includes the Old Patch block, from Neil and Bernadette Stevens. The Hunter Valley has 11 blocks of vineyards with more than 100-year-old vines on their own roots, and the Tyrrell family now has seven of them.



FUN FACT

The deal between Bruce Tyrrell and the Stevens family was sealed with a handshake.

Mount Pleasant

Famed winemaker Maurice O'Shea founded Mount Pleasant in 1921. Now part of McWilliam's (a six-generation winemaking family with more than 140 years' experience), Mount Pleasant features two very special vineyards:

- **Old Paddock:** This Shiraz vineyard was planted in the 1920s; the fruit goes into Mount Pleasant's higher-end reds.
- **Old Hill:** O'Shea purchased this block in 1921 from the King family. Charles King planted Shiraz here in 1880, making these some of the oldest vines in the Hunter Valley.

Drayton's Family Wines

The Drayton family is one of the oldest wine families in Australia, with more than 160 years of winemaking expertise. Some vineyards date back more than 100 years, forming the basis of their Heritage Vines wines. This pioneering family of the Hunter is now in its sixth generation.



LANGHORNE CREEK

One of the best-kept secrets in Australian viticulture, Langhorne Creek in South Australia is also one of the country's oldest wine regions. The area has a proud history of family-owned and operated vineyards and wineries, and today it's home to sixth-generation grape-growing families, including the Potts family of Bleasdale, the Folletts of Lake Breeze, the Case family of Kimbolton and the Adams family of Brothers in Arms. Brothers in Arms winery are today the custodians of the world's oldest family-owned Cabernet Sauvignon vines. Planted in 1891, they continue to flourish at the Metala vineyard.



LANGHORNE CREEK

Home to the world's oldest family-owned Cabernet Sauvignon vines, planted in 1891 at the Metala vineyard.



Credit: FPT/Adam Bruzzone

Metala

The historic Metala vineyard was planted in 1891. The plantings consisted of 21 rows of Shiraz, 1.6 hectares (3.9 acres) of which are still producing, and 14 rows of Cabernet, 0.81 hectares (2 acres) of which are still producing. An additional 2.19 hectares (5.4 acres) of Shiraz was planted in 1894, all of which are still producing premium fruit. These blocks are known as the Old Blocks and the Cellar Block, respectively.

Bleasdale

As for other old vines in Langhorne Creek, in 1850, pioneer Frank Potts bought 100 hectares (247.1 acres) of fertile land in what is now Langhorne Creek. A few years later, he planted another 12.1 hectares (30 acres) of Shiraz and Verdelho and launched Bleasdale winery.



CLARE VALLEY

In South Australia's Clare Valley, the grape and wine community dates back to 1852, when Austrian Jesuits established the Sevenhill winery.



CLARE VALLEY

Wendouree Cellars' claim to fame is its prized old-vine Shiraz. First planted in 1893, these dry-grown vines are still producing beautiful fruit today.

Wendouree Cellars

It's at the region's historic Wendouree Cellars that you'll find more prized old-vine Shiraz. These dry-grown vines, first planted in 1893, are still producing grapes today, generations after AP Birks founded the winery as a hobby in the late 19th century. Wendouree also boasts some very old Malbec vines, which were planted in 1898.

The grapes are handpicked, produced in artisan winemaking style and bottled on-site. Wendouree produces only a very limited amount of wine annually, which goes to an exclusive customer mailing list.

AUSTRALIA'S OTHER OLD-VINE REGIONS AND SITES

- Tahbilk in Nagambie Lakes, the oldest winery in Victoria, boasts the oldest Marsanne vines – planted in 1927 – and the largest single acreage of Marsanne in the world.
- The famed Nursery Block at Best's Wines in Great Western is believed to hold the most extensive collection of pre-phyloxera plantings in Australia – and possibly the world.
- Because of the scarcity of its Pinot Meunier plantings, Best's winery makes this wine only in the best vintages.
- Rutherglen, once a gold mining town, famed for its fortified wines.



OTHER OLD-VINE REGIONS

Nagambie Lakes

In Nagambie Lakes, Tahbilk, one of the country's oldest wineries, boasts the oldest Shiraz vineyard in Victoria – planted in 1860. These vines yield tiny amounts of fruit but produce rich, concentrated wines. Tahbilk also has Victoria's oldest Marsanne – planted in 1927 – and the largest single acreage of Marsanne in the world, at just under 40.47 hectares (100 acres).



FUN FACT

Tahbilk is known as tabilk-tabilk – 'place of many waterholes' – in the Daungwurrung language. It's a name that aptly describes the area's landscape.

McLaren Vale

As one of South Australia's most prestigious and picturesque regions, McLaren Vale is also home to many old Grenache vines that date back as far as the late 1800s – and they are still producing great fruit today.

Mourvèdre has a long history in the region. However, few old-vine plantings remain.

Great Western

Great Western, a sub-region of the historic and highly regarded Grampians region in Victoria, is home to what's believed to be the world's oldest Pinot Meunier vines at Best's.

Best's

Best's Wines is celebrated for its rich vineyard resources. In April 1866, founder Henry Best planted what would become some of the oldest vines in Australia – basically, every variety he could access at the time. This Nursery Block is believed to have the most extensive variety of pre-phylloxera plantings in Australia – and possibly the world. Today, it contains 32 grape varieties.

Best's Pinot Meunier vineyards were first planted in 1868, comprising about 85% Pinot Meunier and 15% Pinot Noir. These days, Best's Old Vine Pinot Meunier has a cult following because of the scarcity of the variety's planting. The winery makes the wine only in the best vintages; in other years, the fruit goes into Best's Concongella Collection Young Vine Pinot Meunier.

In addition to the Pinot Meunier, 15 rows (about 0.4 hectares, or 1 acre) of Shiraz vines that Henry Best planted in 1868 are still yielding excellent grapes.

Rutherglen

Also in Victoria (near the New South Wales border) is Rutherglen, a former gold mining town. Both the region and its wineries are rich in history. Vines came to Rutherglen with the gold rush of the 1850s, and when the area ran out of gold, it became a major centre for red and fortified wines.

Indeed, winemaking has been a family tradition in Rutherglen since the 1850s – wineries such as All Saints, Morris, John Gehrig and Chambers Rosewood were all established in 19th century. Today, fourth, fifth and sixth-generation winemakers produce outstanding, award-winning wines, from crisp whites and rich reds to the region's renowned fortified wines.

Among Rutherglen's notable old vines:

- All Saints prides itself on its old vineyard blocks, which were planted just after World War I. These blocks are home to the winery's Midflat Shiraz and Old Muscat.
- Pfeiffer Wines' Sunday Creek Vineyard includes some of the oldest Pinot Noir vines in Australia, planted in 1962.
- Some of Chambers Rosewood's gnarled, low-yielding old vines date back more than 100 years and produce fruit with highly concentrated flavours.



SUGGESTED DISCUSSION POINTS

- What would be some of the benefits of having the winemaking tradition pass from generation to generation?

OLD VINES NEW WAYS

- Home to a rich winemaking history, with some of the oldest geology and most complex terroirs in the world, Australia's vineyards are cultivated by multigenerational winemaking families. Australian wine is an expression of place: both where we are, and where we're going next.



OLD VINES. NEW WAYS.

With almost two centuries of viticulture and winemaking, Australia has a rich vine, wine and family history to explore. It boasts distinguished sites, the wealth of some of the oldest vines on the planet, and multigenerational families who nurture, promote and share these very special assets.

Australia's abundance of old-vine material means there's a history and a story to the country's wines before you even start drinking them. But more than just museum-worthy assets, these historic vines continue to play an important role in some of today's best and most complex Australian wines.

Along with its old-vine heritage, Australia also has a long and proud tradition of wine production. Add to this rich history a yearning to explore and innovate, and a diverse patchwork of wine regions across many climates, and you have the makings of an extraordinary wine country like no other.

KEY POINTS TO REMEMBER

- Scattered throughout its wine regions, Australia is home to some of the oldest grapevines in the world – and the largest selection of old-vine material in the world.
- Australia's viticultural and winemaking traditions date back nearly to the time the country was being settled and taking shape.
- Old vines have distinct characteristics, including lower yields, well-developed roots and a romantic history and mystique that can impact the taste of and passion for finished wines.
- Old vines have been producing good-quality, consistent fruit for many years; that's why they're still here.

Suggested timings

This program 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
Old Vines defined	5 mins
Do old vines make better wines?	5 mins
Australia's old-vine regions (including tasting)	40 mins
Summary and class close	5 mins

THREE-HOUR CLASS

Topic	Time
Welcome and introduction	10 mins
Old vines defined	10 mins
Do old vines make better wines?	10 mins
Australia's old-vine regions (Barossa, Hunter, including tasting)	60 mins
Break	20 mins
Australia's old-vine regions (Langhorne Creek, Clare Valley, minor regions, including tasting)	60 mins
Summary and class close	10 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.

Reds

- Best's 'Old Vine' Great Western Pinot Meunier
- Hewitson 'Old Garden' Barossa Valley Mourvèdre
- Kalleske 'Old Vine' Barossa Valley Grenache
- Thistledown 'The Vagabond Old Vine' McLaren Vale Grenache
- Tyrrell's 'Stevens Single Vineyard' Hunter Valley Shiraz
- Kaesler 'Old Vine' Barossa Valley Shiraz
- Bethany 'LE' Barossa Valley Shiraz
- Cirillo '1850 Ancestor Vine' Barossa Valley Grenache Rosé
- Cirillo 1850 Ancestor Vine' Barossa Valley Grenache
- Woodstock 'The Stocks' McLaren Vale Shiraz
- Dandelion 'Red Queen of the Eden Valley' Eden Valley Shiraz
- Henschke 'Mount Edelstone' Eden Valley Shiraz
- Langmeil Winery 'The Freedom 1843' Barossa Valley Shiraz
- Henschke 'Hill of Grace' Eden Valley Shiraz (Ancestor vine)
- Wendouree Clare Valley Malbec
- Elderton 'Command Single Vineyard' Barossa Valley Shiraz
- Penfolds 'Block 42' Barossa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon

Continued on next page...

Whites

- Tyrrell's 'HVD' Hunter Valley Semillon
- Tyrrell's 'HVD' Hunter Valley Chardonnay
- Tahbilk '1927 Vines' Nagambie Lakes
Marsanne
- Pewsey Vale 'The Contours'
Eden Valley Riesling
- Chateau Tanunda 'The Chateau Old Vine'
Barossa Valley Semillon
- The Willows Vineyard 'Single Vineyard'
Barossa Valley Semillon

A scenic view of a vineyard in Australia. The foreground is filled with lush green grapevines. In the middle ground, there are rows of grapevines planted in neat, terraced rows on a hillside. A dirt road winds through the vineyard. In the background, there are rolling hills and a few small buildings. The sky is blue with large, white, fluffy clouds.

THANK YOU

AUSTRALIAN WINE DISCOVERED