

GREAT SOUTHERN

Guide



Photo courtesy of Wines of Western Australia

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GREAT SOUTHERN



Photo courtesy of Wines of Western Australia

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.



Photo courtesy of Great Southern Wines

GREAT SOUTHERN RICH, VAST AND VARIED

Australia's largest wine region is as vast and isolated as it is diverse, with a reputation for high-quality wines.

- Home to five distinct subregions
- Western Australia's coolest wine region with favourable growing conditions
- Exceptional Riesling and Shiraz
- Increasing focus on sustainable vineyard practices
- A mix of traditional and minimal-intervention winemaking practices

FIRST TASTE – This may be a good opportunity to give everyone a taste of a classic Great Southern wine. The full tasting comes later.

GREAT SOUTHERN: RICH, VAST AND VARIED

Deep down at the very bottom of Western Australia lies Great Southern, Australia's largest wine region. It is as vast and isolated as it is diverse – a patchwork of coastal maritime land, gently undulating hills, open grazing country, eucalypt forests and granite outcrops, spanning 150 kilometres from north to south and 100 kilometres east to west. The region has grown substantially in its short history, and is now home to a sprawling network of growers and producers known for crafting high-quality wines increasingly judged as some of the nation's best.

Subregional state of mind

Great Southern comprises five official subregions – Albany, Denmark, Mount Barker, Frankland River and Porongurup – each of which has distinctive climatic and topographical characteristics.

TODAY WE'LL COVER

- The history of Great Southern
- Geography, climate and soil
- Viticulture and winemaking
- Prominent varieties



Renowned from the start

Great Southern's winemaking community formed in the mid-to-late 1960s and early '70s, and critical acclaim for a string of early releases showed the potential and propelled the region to national attention. Over the past decade, the wines have received widespread acclaim, in particular the Rieslings and Shiraz being among the most recognised and awarded in Australia.

First-class conditions

It is Western Australia's coolest wine region, with a largely Mediterranean climate although with some locations more impacted by proximity to the Southern Ocean. Soils vary by subregion but are moderately fertile overall, with heat summation and sunshine hours largely consistent, allowing a range of styles to flourish.

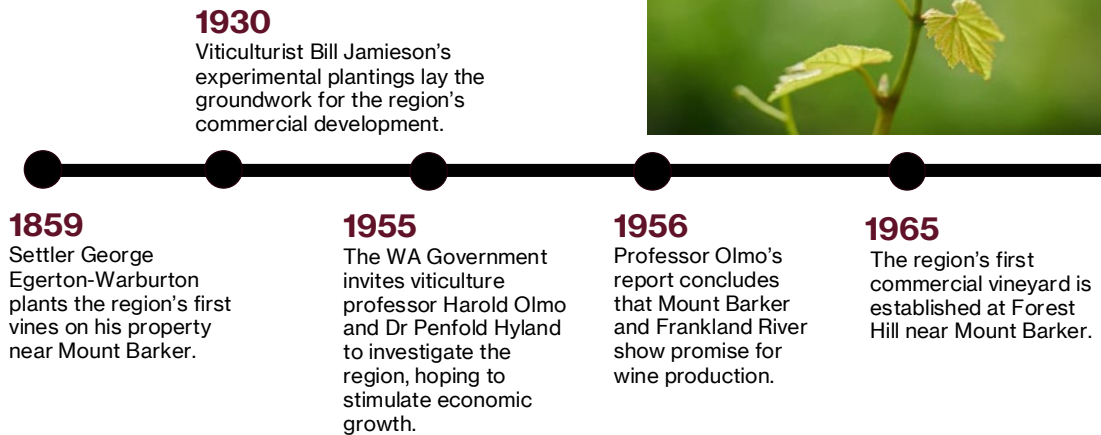
Classic and contemporary

Traditional grape varieties shine brightly, with Riesling and Shiraz the most recognised from the region. Cabernet Sauvignon, Chardonnay and Pinot Noir also thrive, along with a host of alternative red and white varieties that are gaining momentum. On the whole, the region's wines are full-flavoured, but more elegant and structured than their counterparts in warmer areas of the country.

Dynamic winemaking community

Tried and true approaches in both the vineyard and the winery remain common, but experimental young producers and progressive established producers are changing the game, shifting the focus towards more holistic farming practices and low-intervention winemaking techniques.

THE HISTORY OF GREAT SOUTHERN



HISTORY OF GREAT SOUTHERN

In the beginning

The area comprising what is now Great Southern is the traditional home of the Minang Noongar people of southern Western Australia.

1859

The very first official records of grape growing in the region began, with settler George Egerton-Warburton planting vines on his property near Mount Barker.

1930

Viticulturist Bill Jamieson's experimental plantings laid the groundwork for the region's commercial development.

1955

Prompted by Jamieson, the Western Australian Government invited University of California viticulture professor Harold Olmo and Dr Penfold Hyland from New South Wales to investigate the region. Their brief was to find opportunities to help stimulate the local economy and create opportunities for local farmers faced with a declining local apple industry, sinking wool prices and commercial whaling on the verge of collapse.

1956

Professor Olmo's report was published, revealing that both Mount Barker and Frankland River showed promise for producing traditional European-style table wines.

1965

Nearly a decade after Olmo's report, a five-acre trial vineyard – the region's first commercial operation – was established at Forest Hill near Mount Barker, made up of Riesling and Cabernet Sauvignon cuttings sourced from the Swan Valley.

Late 1960s

The early days of grape growing prove challenging due to adverse environmental conditions and inadequate technology.

Mid-Late 1970s

Wines from Forest Hill, Plantagenet and Alkoomi capture handfuls of awards across the country. Regional development continues with vineyard plantings in Albany, Denmark and Porongurup.



Early 1970s

The first vintage of the Forest Hill plantings is released in 1972, and the Forest Hill Riesling is named the best West Australian white wine the following year.

1996

The Australian Geographical Indication (GI) "Great Southern" is created.

1997

Mount Barker is officially registered as the first GI subregion within Great Southern.

Late 1960s

The initial days of grape growing in Great Southern were characterised by experimentation and improvisation. Farmers became first-time vigneron, tackling frost, drought and locusts, and employing recycled and repurposed industrial hardware to get the job done. Early technology included old refrigeration equipment used for whaling and septic tanks purchased from a cement factory.

Some of the region's pioneers began establishing vineyards, including John Roche of the Frankland River Grazing Company, who planted five acres on his property in 1967. One year later, Ernie Mead planted five acres of vines at Mount Barker and convinced his neighbour Tony Smith to follow suit. With a small inheritance, Smith purchased a farm (named 'Bouverie' after his grandmother) and planted trial vineyards of Shiraz and Cabernet Sauvignon, establishing the foundations for what was to become Plantagenet Wines.

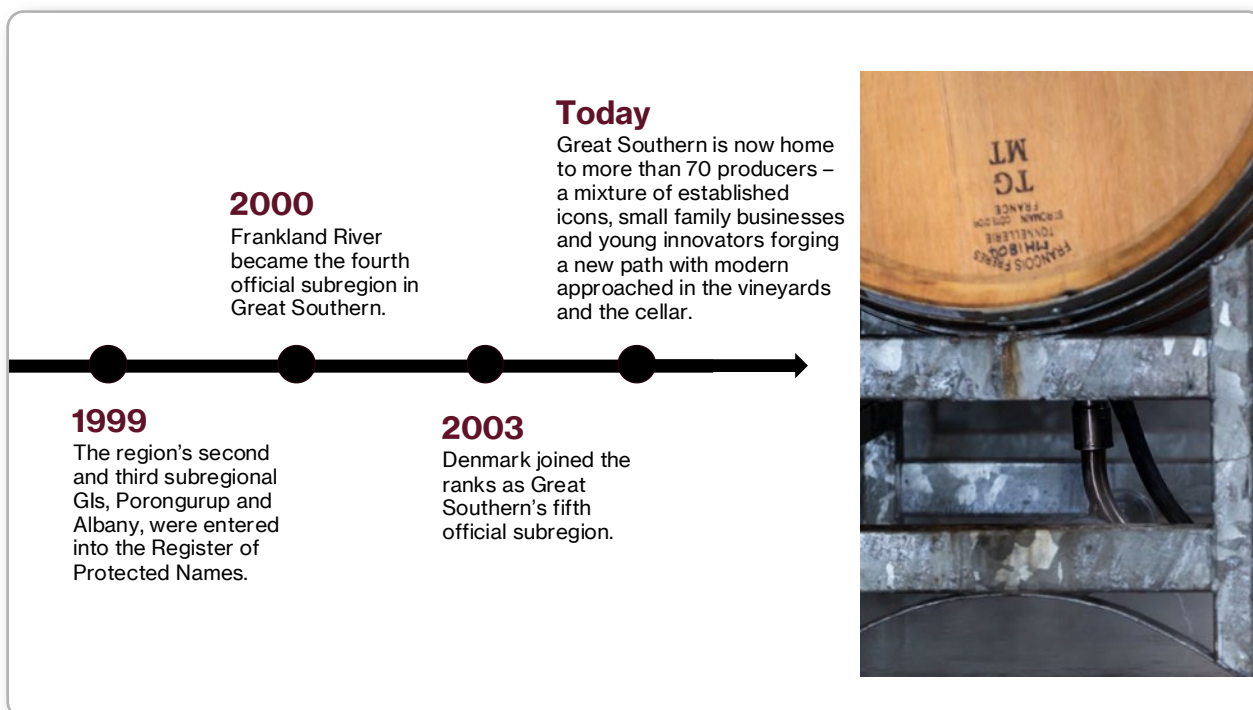
Early 1970s

Grapes from the 1965 Forest Hill Vineyard plantings were picked and vinified for the first time in 1972, with the 'Mount Barker Rhine Riesling' making a particularly big impression. But it was the 1973 Riesling release that struck a chord with critics and judges, and it was named the best West Australian white wine. That same year, the Mount Barker-Frankland River Wine Producers Association was formed as a regional lobbying body, which evolved into the Great Southern Wine Producers Association (GSWPA) that still exists today.



FUN FACT

The Bouverie property is still maintained by Tony Smith's family and continues to sell its fruit to Plantagenet.



Mid-to-late 1970s

Regional development continued, both inland and along the coast. In 1974, the first plantings occurred in the Denmark subregion along Mount Shadforth Road, followed by subsequent plantings of Shiraz, Cabernet Sauvignon and Riesling at Tinglewood in 1976. By 1978, vines had been established in the Albany subregion at the Redmond vineyard and at Jingalla in the Porongurup subregion.

Meanwhile, accolades continued to roll in for Great Southern wines. The 1975 Forest Hill 'Mount Barker Rhine Riesling' picked up nine trophies and 12 gold medals across the country. In 1977, both Plantagenet and Alkoomi won three gold medals for their Cabernets in Perth. The following year, in 1978, Betty Pearse and Tony Smith (secretary and president of the GSWPA,

respectively) formed the Western Australia Grapegrowers and Winemakers Association, WA's inaugural state-wide wine organisation.

1996

The Australian Geographical Indication (GI) "Great Southern" was created, stretching 100 kilometres north to south and 150 kilometres east to west.

1997

Mount Barker became officially registered as the first GI subregion within Great Southern.

1999

The region's second and third subregional GIs, Porongurup and Albany, were entered into the Register of Protected Names.

2000

Frankland River became the fourth official subregion in Great Southern.

2003

Denmark joined the ranks as Great Southern's fifth official subregion.



DID YOU KNOW

Forest Hill's 1975 'Mount Barker Rhine Riesling' remains one of Western Australia's most awarded wines to this day.

Today

From humble beginnings, Great Southern has grown considerably in its relatively short history and cultivated a reputation for structured, elegant wines. While it has often been overshadowed by its more renowned neighbour, Margaret River, the region is finally commanding the respect and recognition it deserves. The rise in popularity of cool-climate styles has played a significant role in that success, along with an array of critically acclaimed single-vineyard releases, which are now considered Australian benchmarks.

Great Southern is now home to more than 70 producers – a mixture of established icons, small family businesses and young innovators forging a new path with modern approaches in the vineyards and the cellar. Riesling and Shiraz remain the hallmarks, though Cabernet Sauvignon and Chardonnay have received national attention throughout the history of Great Southern. Pinot Noir is an exciting variety for the cooler sites, gathering more focus and attention recently.

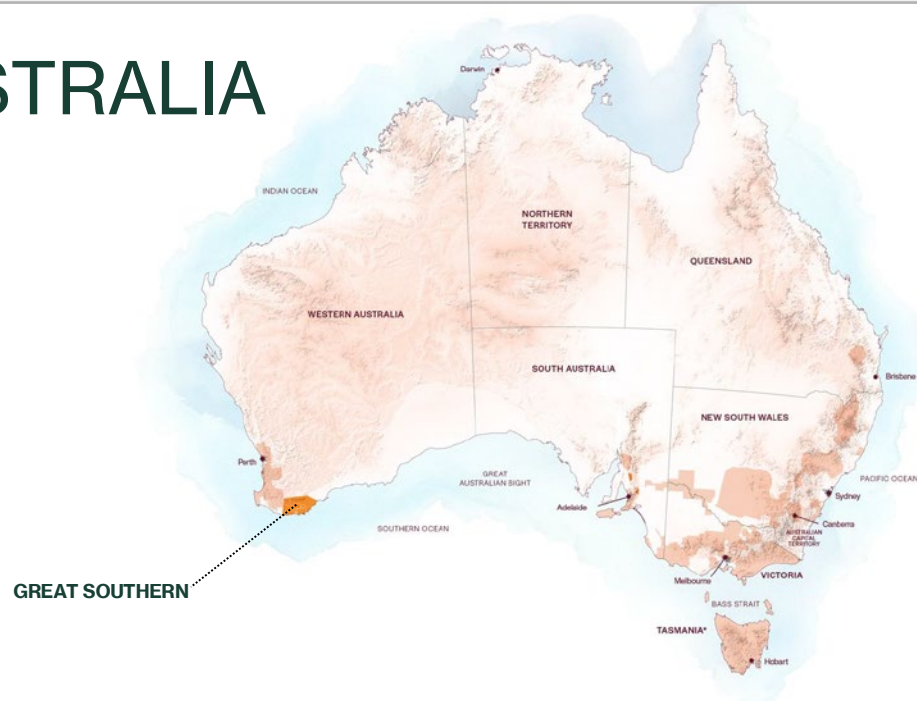
Today, the experimental spirit that defined the region's early days lives on – whether it be through trialling alternative varieties, blending, or searching for new sites. And given a substantial portion of the region has not yet been geographically classified, the opportunity for evolution and the creation of additional subregions points to an exciting future.



SUGGESTED DISCUSSION POINTS

- How might Great Southern have benefited from the foundational challenges faced by the region's early winemakers?
- What might the region's somewhat short commercial history mean for its approach to viticulture and winemaking?

AUSTRALIA



WESTERN AUSTRALIA

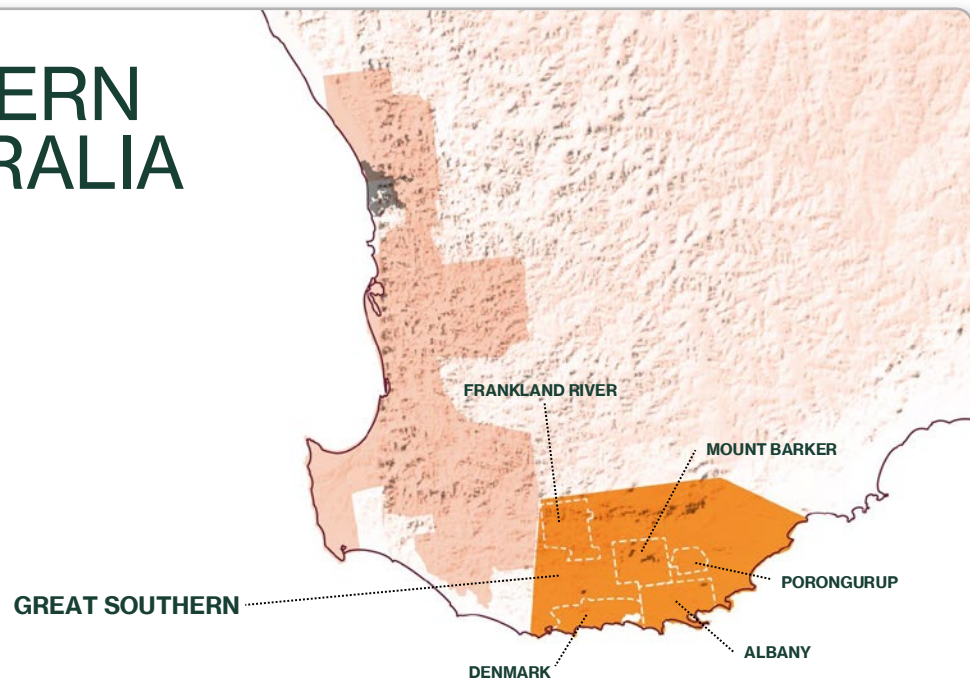




Photo courtesy of Great Southern Wines

GEOGRAPHY, CLIMATE AND SOIL

A STRIKING BACKDROP OF NATURAL LANDSCAPES

- Approximately 360km from Perth, in Western Australia's remote southwest
- Made up of five subregions
- WA's coolest region, with a variable Mediterranean climate that moves from maritime to continental
- Topographically diverse, with moderately fertile soils named after the predominant eucalypt species

GEOGRAPHY, CLIMATE AND SOIL

Geography

Located approximately 360 kilometres (224 miles) southeast of Perth, with an area that stretches roughly 100 kilometres north to south and 150 kilometres east to west, Great Southern is both Australia's largest wine region and one of its most isolated.

It is made up of five official subregions – Albany, Denmark, Frankland River, Mount Barker and Porongurup – all of which produce distinctive, cool-climate wines that reflect the rugged, diverse and dramatic natural environment.



DID YOU KNOW

Great Southern spans a whopping 39,007 square kilometres (15,060 square miles) in total, with only 16,712 square kilometres (6,542 square miles) covered by the five designated wine subregions.



THE FIVE SUBREGIONS OF GREAT SOUTHERN

Albany

Established in 1826, Albany was the first European settlement in Western Australia (Perth was founded in 1829), and is considered the major centre of Great Southern. The surrounding area is known not only for outstanding produce, but also for its spectacular scenery, shaped by coastal inlets and craggy granite outcrops. The low-lying subregion has a maritime climate, mediated by the Southern Ocean, which allows both red and white varieties to flourish, including Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Shiraz.

Denmark

A 45-minute drive west of Albany, Denmark is a coastal town on Wilson Inlet that boasts equally stunning surroundings. The subregion has a similar, albeit somewhat cooler, maritime climate, as well as steep hills and valleys that create a number of microclimates. White wines are the dominant force here – namely Chardonnay and Riesling. Pinot Noir also thrives here, and both Chardonnay and Pinot Noir are grown for sparkling base wine production due to the cooler climate conditions.

Frankland River

Frankland River is the largest, warmest and northernmost subregion in Great Southern and the furthest inland. It is a catchment zone for the Frankland, Gordon, Kent and Tone rivers, with an undulating landscape and a unique ancient valley formed over millions of years. Thanks to its isolated location, long sunlight hours, cool nights and rich gravelly loam soils, the subregion has developed a distinguished reputation for premium Riesling and Shiraz. Some of Western Australia's most recognised Cabernet Sauvignon-based wines are grown here.

Mount Barker

Located just over a half-hour's drive north of both Albany and Denmark, Mount Barker is the coolest of Great Southern's subregions, with a higher average elevation than its southerly neighbours. Temperatures fluctuate, with the growing season providing sunny days and cool nights. This bigger diurnal variation provides ideal conditions for both acid retention and long ripening in Riesling and Shiraz. The ancient gravel, loam soils along the Hay River host some of the region's most historic and recognised sites for Riesling and Shiraz.

Porongurup

Porongurup, Great Southern's smallest subregion, lies just east of Mount Barker and 50 kilometres (31 miles) north of the coastline. It is home to a national park and the Porongurups – a 12-kilometre-long (7.5 miles) range of ancient granite peaks, which has a profound influence on the soils. A nocturnal thermal zone, created by rising warm air, reduces the risk of frost and generates ideal ripening conditions for cool-climate varieties, especially Riesling, Chardonnay and Pinot Noir.



FUN FACT

Mount Barker was the site of the first vines planted in Great Southern in 1965, and the very first official subregion to be declared in Australia.



FUN FACT

Dating back roughly 1.2 billion years, the Porongurup Range is one of Australia's oldest mountain ranges.

Latitude

- Albany – 35° 02'S
- Denmark – 34° 37'S
- Frankland River – 34° 39'S
- Mount Barker – 34° 53'S
- Porongurup – 34° 68'S

Grapevines favour what can be described as 'temperate' climates, which predominantly fall within distinct latitudes of 30° and 50° from the equator. Great Southern sits at the warmer end of this range, but receives cooling breezes from the Southern Ocean, which help to moderate the overall climate.

Altitude

The vineyards in Great Southern's coastal subregions, Albany and Denmark, are sited roughly between 75m (246ft) and 150m (492ft). Heading north and further inland, across Frankland River, Mount Barker and Porongurup, the elevation rises and vineyards sit anywhere between 180m (590ft) and 380m (1,247ft).

Climate

Taken as a whole, Great Southern is the coolest wine region in Western Australia. The climate is largely Mediterranean, with cool to mild winters and warm summers, but varies greatly across subregions, creating multiple microclimates and mesoclimates.

As you move north, away from the coastal subregions of Albany and Denmark, overall temperatures increase and climatic conditions shift from maritime to continental. Heat summation and sunshine hours do not change greatly, so careful site selection allows the production of virtually every wine style.

Mean January temperature

- 20.1°C (68°F)

Mean January temperature refers to the mean temperature of the warmest month. Warmth is needed to produce sugars and flavours in the grapes. If the weather is too hot or too cool, sugar and flavour production can stop or slow, and the production of anthocyanin (responsible for the colour in red wines) also slows down.

This varies slightly across the region, though the subregions of Mount Barker, Porongurup and Frankland River see identical or very similar January temperatures.

Growing season rainfall

- Regional average of 240mm

Calculated from October to April in Australia, growing season rainfall is a good indication of how much water is available to the vine. The southern areas of the region closer to the coast are more maritime in climate and experience higher rainfall than the inland subregions which receive a moderate level.

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 1991–2019 averages from the Bureau of Meteorology. GSR is calculated from October to April.



Photo courtesy of Swinney Vineyards, Frankland River

SOIL

Soil types vary considerably, but Frankland River, Albany and Mount Barker feature lateritic gravelly sands and loams over clay. Albany is home to sandy gravelly soils, while Porongurup consists of karri loams.

Soil

The predominant soils are similar to those of the Margaret River region – either lateritic gravelly sandy loams (Marri Country) or sandy loams deriving directly from granite and gneissic bedrocks. They are typically brown to grey-brown in colour, with the percentage of clay varying from one location to another; in Frankland River, the soils tend to be ironstone-rich and red in colour. Fertility is moderate, as are typical yields.

Soil types are often named after the main eucalypt species in the area. Marri loams make up the soil in Mount Barker, for instance, while the vines are planted in deep karri loams in Porongurup.



SUGGESTED DISCUSSION POINTS

- What are the key differences between Great Southern's five subregions in terms of geography, climate and soils?
- Has the vastness of the region and the diversity of growing conditions helped or hindered Great Southern's progress as an Australian wine region?

GRAPE GROWING IN GREAT SOUTHERN

- Conditions are favourable for a multitude of grape varieties
- Site selection is key, with producers taking a terroir-minded approach
- Vineyards are labour intensive, with workforce and water shortages posing substantial challenges
- Sustainable farming practices are a growing focus
- **Harvest:** mid-February to late April



Photo courtesy of Great Southern Wines

VITICULTURE AND WINEMAKING IN GREAT SOUTHERN

GRAPE GROWING

Due to its sprawling dimensions, favourable climate and diverse topography, Great Southern provides optimal conditions for growing premium grapes and a multitude of varieties. Site selection has been critical to the region's growth and success, with producers both large and small taking a terroir-minded approach and focusing on fruit quality above all else. As a result, the overall calibre of wines is very high, characterised by distinctive regional signatures.

Vineyard management

As with most cool-climate regions, vineyards in Great Southern are quite labour intensive. This is especially true in the higher-vigour coastal regions of Albany and Denmark, where many of the smaller family operations need to carry out shoot thinning and canopy management to minimise disease risk and optimise sunlight exposure, as well as hand-picking.

As you move further inland to Mount Barker and Frankland River, the scale of viticulture increases as the soils, terrain and climate become more favourable to mechanisation, although there's still a profusion of smaller growers throughout the region. Frankland River is the engine room where there are larger-scale vineyards, with fertile but well-drained river valley soils, and relatively low disease pressure, allowing increased mechanisation – almost a necessity due to scarcity of casual labour due to fairly extreme geographical isolation.

Irrigation

Denmark and Albany are cool, humid and wet enough to allow certain sites to be dry-grown, but rainfall decreases drastically as you head inland, hence most vineyards, especially larger ones, employ drip irrigation during critical stages of the growing season. Rainfall in the region has decreased significantly compared to long-term averages in the last 20 years, making water availability possibly the biggest challenge the region faces, both currently and into the future. In dry years, most vineyards struggle to catch and store enough water.

Harvest

Harvest generally occurs from mid-February through to late April. Chardonnay and Pinot Noir, particularly when used for sparkling wine, are the first two varieties to be picked in early-to-mid February, followed by Sauvignon Blanc and Riesling in mid-March. The fuller-bodied red varieties are the last to be picked, with Shiraz coming off the vines in early April and Cabernet Sauvignon in mid-to-late April.

Sustainable practice

As with most regions around Australia, sustainable vineyard practices are a growing focus, due to demand driven by some of the smaller, new-age producers focused on natural or minimal-intervention wines. Although conventionally farmed vineyards predominate, there are significant players farming organically or biodynamically, with an increasing number in transition.

WINEMAKING IN GREAT SOUTHERN

- Highly dependent on subregion, grape variety and desired style
- Retention of primary fruit character is a top priority
- Fermentation with both cultured and wild yeasts
- Maturation vessels vary, with larger oak formats on the rise
- New generation of innovative winemakers experimenting with low-intervention techniques



Photo courtesy of Great Southern Wines

WINEMAKING

Winemaking differs substantially across Great Southern, depending on the subregion, grape variety and desired style. Producers employ a combination of traditional and experimental techniques, with the number of smaller, avant-garde winemakers steadily increasing and focusing on minimal intervention. The consumer preference for lighter, more fruit-forward and elegant wines that are lower in alcohol plays to Great Southern's strengths and continues to shape the evolution and refinement of winemaking in the region.

Fermentation

While the use of cultured yeasts is common practice, wild fermentation with indigenous yeasts is more and more popular when it comes to white grape varieties like Riesling or Chardonnay, and gaining traction with Shiraz among red grapes.

White wine grapes are fermented in a combination of stainless steel and neutral oak, depending on the variety and desired style, whereas reds are mostly handled in open-top stainless steel vessels. Whole-bunch fermentation is on the rise as well, especially with Shiraz and Pinot Noir, both of which benefit from the structured tannins and lifted aromatics that arise from contact with stems and whole berries.

Maturation

Retention of primary fruit characters is a top priority now more than ever. Producers throughout the region are transitioning from small to large-format oak vessels as a result, relying less on new oak and largely avoiding the use of American oak altogether in order to retain purity and freshness.

White wines are matured in a combination of stainless steel tanks and older oak, for anywhere up to 10 or so months. More and more producers are experimenting with extended lees contact in order to enhance texture and complexity. Reds, meanwhile, are usually aged between 12 and 18 months in oak before bottling, depending on the variety.

Minimal intervention

A raft of younger, alternative winemakers are shaking up the scene by taking a hands-off approach and trialling a number of growing trends and stylistic techniques that allow the fruit and terroir to express themselves more fully. These include: a shift away from temperature control; less fining and filtration; experimentation with skin-contact wines and unorthodox blends; and lowering the use of additives and sulphur, with additions made only at the time of bottling.



SUGGESTED DISCUSSION POINT

- Compared to other regions in Australia, why might site selection be especially important in Great Southern?
- Why have more sustainable vineyard practices become prominent in recent years? How have these affected the winemaking process in the region?
- What impact do whole-bunch fermentation, maturation on lees and the transition to larger-format barrels have on wines?

GREAT SOUTHERN TOP 5 VARIETIES



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



Photo courtesy of Great Southern Wines

TASTE OF GREAT SOUTHERN NOTEWORTHY VARIETIES

TASTE OF GREAT SOUTHERN

Despite what's top in terms of tonnage, Great Southern's most well-renowned wines are:

- Riesling
- Shiraz
- Cabernet Sauvignon
- Chardonnay
- Pinot Noir

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

GREAT SOUTHERN RIESLING

EXQUISITE AGEING
POTENTIAL

**SINGLE VINEYARD
RELEASES**
RANK AMONG
AUSTRALIA'S BEST



**THE
REGION'S
STAR
WINE**

TYPICAL FLAVOURS

- Lime
- Lemon
- Green apple
- White flowers
- Chalk
- Stone fruit
- Mineral

RIESLING

Riesling is widely considered the region's hero white wine. Great Southern is known for producing exceptional Rieslings of great intensity, typically in the citrus spectrum with an underlay of herbs and minerals. Fresh and nervy in their youth, they tend to age superbly, seldom reaching the peak of their maturity in less than 10 years.

Linear bone-dry styles are common, with some single-vineyard releases consistently ranking among Australia's best. Wild fermentation, riper fruit spectrum, higher residual sugar, neutral oak and extended ageing on lees are becoming increasingly common with single-vineyard releases.

Noteworthy Riesling producers include:

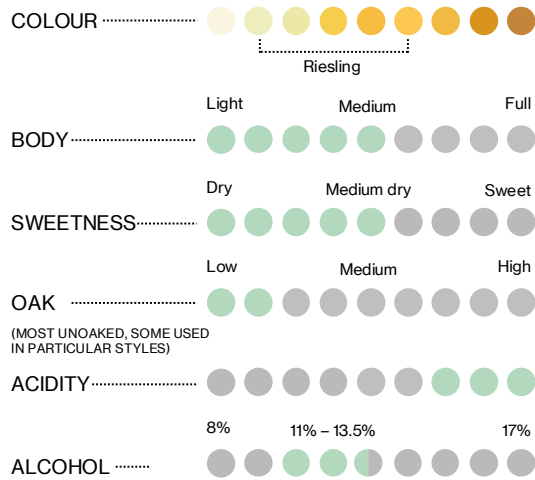
- Frankland Estate.
- Plantagenet.
- Alkoomi Wines.
- Castle Rock Estate.
- Forest Hill Vineyard.
- La Violetta.



DID YOU KNOW

Australia is second only to Germany in terms of total plantings of Riesling. Until the Chardonnay boom struck in the 1990s, Riesling was Australia's most widely planted white wine grape.

RIESLING CHARACTERISTICS



GREAT SOUTHERN CHARDONNAY

SUITED TO THE
REGION'S COOL
CONDITIONS

STYLES VARY
FROM UNWOODED TO
BARREL FERMENTED

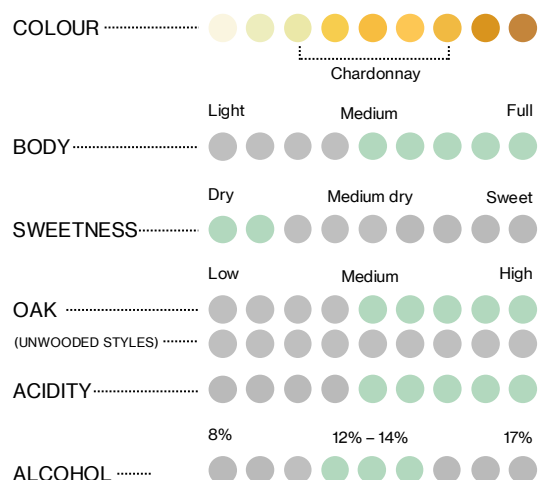
ELEGANT
AND
STRUCTURED
WINES



TYPICAL FLAVOURS

- Grapefruit
- Nectarine
- Peach
- Toast
- Flint

CHARDONNAY CHARACTERISTICS



CHARDONNAY

Elegant, tightly structured, grapefruit-accented Chardonnay that ages well is produced in the region. Styles vary, although the majority are barrel-fermented, but typically the wines are intense without being as heavy as other Australian paradigms. Wines of the south can be a little finer and more elegant, while those of the north are slightly more powerful.

Noteworthy Chardonnay producers include:

- Singlefile.
- Castle Rock Estate.
- Howard Park.
- Marchand & Burch.
- Alkoomi Wines.
- Harewood Estate.

GREAT SOUTHERN PINOT NOIR



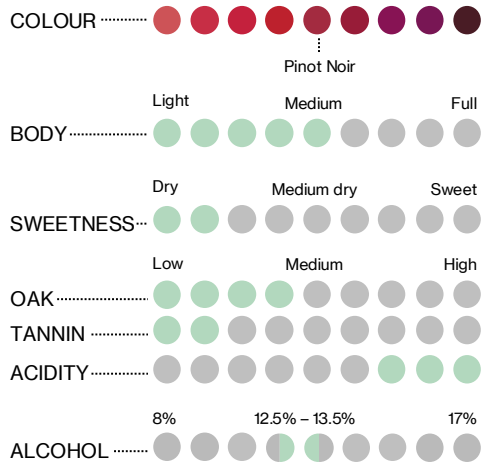
PINOT NOIR

Until recently, Pinot Noir was regarded as the preserve of the southern area around Denmark and Albany, but some exciting wines have appeared from Mount Barker in slightly cooler years. More so than other varieties, the quality of Great Southern Pinot Noir depends largely on vintage conditions. The wines are generally light, precise and attractively perfumed.

Noteworthy Pinot Noir producers include:

- Castle Rock Estate.
- Castelli Estate.
- Marchand & Burch.
- Larry Cherubino Wines.
- Galafrey.

PINOT NOIR CHARACTERISTICS



GREAT SOUTHERN CABERNET SAUVIGNON

THRIVES ACROSS
THE REGION

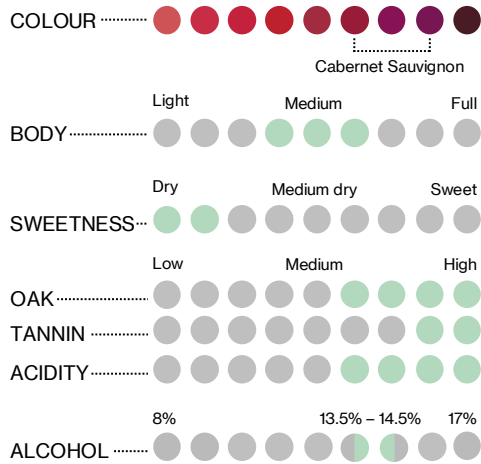
DEEPLY COLOURED
AND INTENSELY
FLAVOURED



CLASSIC
VARIETAL
CHARACTERISTICS

- TYPICAL FLAVOURS
- Blackberry
 - Bay leaf
 - Mulberry
 - Blackcurrant
 - Dried herbs
 - Tobacco

CABERNET SAUVIGNON CHARACTERISTICS



CABERNET SAUVIGNON

Cabernet Sauvignon thrives across the region, producing long-lived wines of deep colour, intense flavour and powerful structure – though they are not as full-bodied as those from Margaret River. A spectrum of red, black and blue fruit flavours are common depending on site and season, as are notes of bay leaf, dried herbs and cassis. They have classic Cabernet sensibilities with an austerity in youth that rewards patience.

Noteworthy Cabernet Sauvignon producers include:

- Forest Hill Vineyard.
- Rosenthal Wines.
- West Cape Howe.
- Houghton.
- Poacher's Ridge.
- Plantagenet



DID YOU KNOW

Cool-climate wines typically contain lower alcohol and higher acid levels, which allows certain varieties to age gracefully in the cellar.

GREAT SOUTHERN SHIRAZ

RESTRAINED USE OF
NEW FRENCH OAK
WITH OTHER PRODUCERS OPTING
FOR NO NEW OAK

MEDIUM BODIED
SMOOTH AND SPICY IN
CONTRAST TO BOLD REDS
FROM WARMER CLIMATES



THE
REGION'S
MOST
RENOWNED
RED WINE

TYPICAL FLAVOURS

- Blackberry
- Black cherry
- Plum
- Liquorice
- Pepper
- Spice and florals

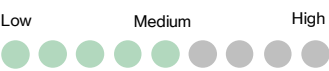
SHIRAZ CHARACTERISTICS

COLOUR 

Shiraz

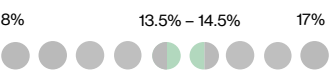
BODY 

SWEETNESS... 

OAK 

TANNIN 

ACIDITY 

ALCOHOL 



SHIRAZ

Shiraz is Great Southern's most widely planted red variety and produces a range of very high-quality styles. Frankland River and Mount Barker are the hero subregions for Shiraz production. The long growing season and gravelly soils help draw out riper and complex characters in the wines.

Generally speaking, the wines are complex, silky and medium in body, displaying characters of blue and black berries, plum, liquorice, spice and florals, with a fine tannin profile. Many producers stay away from the heavy-handed use of new oak, allowing the fruit to shine through.

Noteworthy Shiraz producers include:

- Castelli Estate.
- Plantagenet.
- Swinney.
- Frankland Estate.
- Duke's Vineyard.



COMPLEMENTARY READING

To learn more about Australia's noteworthy wines, check out the wide range of variety programs at www.australianwinediscovered.com

BEST OF THE REST

The diversity of soil types and climatic conditions in Great Southern means winemakers are able to grow and produce an array of styles, using a mixture of classic and emerging grape varieties.

Other noteworthy varieties include:

- Sauvignon Blanc.
- Grüner Veltliner.
- Gewürztraminer.
- Malbec.
- Mourvèdre.
- Grenache.



SUGGESTED DISCUSSION POINTS

- Do the wines of Great Southern have defining regional characteristics as a whole, or are they shaped more by their respective subregions and single sites?
- Riesling is grown in many regions across Australia. What distinguishes Great Southern Riesling?
- What are the differences between Great Southern's cool-climate Shiraz and Shiraz from warm-climate regions, such as the Barossa Valley or the Hunter Valley?

GREAT SOUTHERN REMOTE AND REWARDING

A dynamic, sprawling region on the rise
with a bright future ahead.



Photo courtesy of Great Southern Wines

In spite of its enormity, diversity and isolated bearings – or perhaps because of them – Great Southern has managed to forge an identity all of its own over the course of its relatively short winemaking history. The intrepid spirit of the growers and winemakers, as well as their steadfast commitment to quality, have given rise to an impressive and ever-expanding stable of benchmark wine styles. With so much more room to explore and potential for growth aplenty, the future for this dynamic region looks very bright, indeed.

KEY POINTS TO REMEMBER

- Grape growing in Great Southern dates back to 1859, but it wasn't until the mid-1960s that the region's winemaking community started taking shape. A handful of award-winning releases in the '70s put the region on the map, and it has continued to expand and solidify its reputation in the decades since.
- Great Southern is renowned for elegant, structured, cool-climate wines, many of which possess excellent ageing potential. Riesling and Shiraz are the cornerstones, but the region is also known for Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Cabernet Sauvignon, as well as a range of other varieties.
- Located roughly 360 kilometres southeast of Perth, Great Southern is Australia's largest wine region, comprising five subregions – Albany, Denmark, Mount Barker, Frankland River and Porongurup – and spanning 100 kilometres north to south and 150 kilometres east to west.
- Growing conditions are favourable overall, but they vary considerably due to the region's expansive proportions, making site selection particularly important. As you move north from the coast, the elevation increases and the broadly Mediterranean climate – WA's coolest – shifts from maritime to continental, though soils are moderately fertile throughout.
- Today, the region is home to more than 70 producers – a combination of established names, small family operations and young up-and-comers. Terroir and primary fruit retention are key focal points, with increasing numbers incorporating sustainable vineyard practices and minimal-intervention techniques.

Suggested timings

This program is designed to be taught in one to two 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 Great Southern	5 mins
Geography, climate and soil	10 mins
Viticulture	5 mins
Winemaking	5 mins
Noteworthy varieties (including tasting)	25 mins
Summary and class close	5 mins

TWO-HOUR CLASS

Topic	Time
Welcome and introduction	5 mins
The history of Great Southern	10 mins
Geography, climate and soil	15 mins
Viticulture	10 mins
Winemaking	10 mins
Break	10 mins
Noteworthy varieties (including tasting)	50 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.

Riesling

- Frankland Estate Isolation Ridge Riesling
- Plantagenet ‘Angevin’ Riesling
- Singlefile Great Southern Riesling
- Willoughby Park ‘Ironrock’ Riesling
- Willoughby Park ‘Kalgan River’ Riesling
- Trevelen Farm Estate Riesling
- Castle Rock Porongurup Riesling
- Castle Rock ‘Estate A&W’ Riesling
- Forest Hill Vineyard ‘Block 1’ Riesling
- Cherubino ‘Laissez Faire’ Riesling
- Gilberts ‘Single Vineyard’ Riesling
- Dukes Vineyard ‘Magpie Hill Reserve’ Riesling

Chardonnay

- Rockcliffe ‘Nautica’ Chardonnay
- Singlefile ‘Family Reserve’ Chardonnay
- Wignalls ‘Single Vineyard Premium’ Chardonnay
- Harewood Estate ‘Reserve’ Chardonnay
- Castelli Estate Chardonnay
- Forest Hill Vineyard ‘Block 8’ Chardonnay

Pinot Noir

- Wignalls Pinot Noir
- Castle Rock Estate Pinot Noir
- Harewood Estate ‘Flux-V’ Pinot Noir
- Harewood Estate Denmark Pinot Noir
- Galafrey ‘Dry Grown Vineyard’ Pinot Noir

Cabernet Sauvignon

- Alkoomi 'Black Label' Cabernet Sauvignon
- Plantagenet 'Aquitaine' Cabernet Sauvignon
- Willoughby Park 'Ironrock' Cabernet Sauvignon
- Castelli Estate Cabernet Sauvignon
- Rosenthal Collector Cabernet Sauvignon
- Forest Hill Vineyard 'Block 5' Cabernet Sauvignon

Shiraz

- Plantagenet 'Lancaster' Shiraz
- Willoughby Park 'Ironrock' Shiraz
- Trevelen Farm 'Frankland Reserve' Shiraz
- Alkoomi 'Black Label' Frankland River Shiraz

Other

- Singlefile Great Southern Sparkling
- Harewood Estate 'Flux' white blend
- Larry Cherubino 'Stone's Throw Apostrophe' white blend
- Harewood Estate 'Flux-II' Pinot Gris
- Larry Cherubino 'Laissez Faire' Fiano
- West Cape Howe Tempranillo
- Singlefile Great Southern Malbec
- Castelli Estate 'Il Liris' Cabernet Shiraz Malbec

THANK YOU