
Exploring New Zealand & Australia

AUSTRALIA:

- Vines only arrived in Australia in late 1700s, but production took off in mid-1800s, with many of today's biggest brands launched in this time frame
- Phylloxera hit Victoria in late 1800s, which cleared the way for rise of South Australia
- Subsequent control of phylloxera means some of world's oldest vines (150+ years)
- First half of 20th century dominated by fortified dessert wines
- Late 20th century brought lots of new technology and modern viticultural/winemaking techniques with a major focus on dry, table wine production at value price points
- Very large, generally very warm country: irrigation necessary almost everywhere
- Blending across multiple vineyards traditionally very popular

NEW ZEALAND:

- Southern- and easternmost winemaking country; broken into North and South Islands
- Vines first planted in early 1800s, though production increased very slowly
- Strict temperance movement through most of 1900s: no single-bottle retail sales, no restaurant sales, mandate for bars to close at 6pm; laws finally relaxed in 1960s
- Boom of vineyard plantings and wineries in 1980s (including rise of Sauvignon Blanc)
- Overall very sunny weather but a general cooling influence due to ocean
- Less bulk, more quality wine production due to less available land

1) Pewsey Vale Dry Riesling '12 – Eden Valley, Australia

- Eden Valley is a region in South Australia: 300 meters up into the hills from Barossa
- Eden Valley is famous for its Riesling, which is dry and generally very minerally
- Pewsey Vale vineyards were first planted in 1847 by an Englishman; 115 years later this area became the center of Australia's Riesling renaissance
- Pewsey Vale known for being among first to bottle under screw cap as well as for releasing some of their wines with considerable age (The Contours bottling)



2) Kumeu River Estate Chardonnay '09 – Kumeu, New Zealand

- Kumeu is a sub-region of Auckland on New Zealand's North Island; despite being fairly far north, it's kept cool by influence of Tasman Sea
- Auckland is best known for Chardonnay, followed by Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon
- Kumeu River Estate owned by a Croatian winemaking family that emigrated to NZ; well known for their Chardonnay, with a style that takes inspiration from Burgundy, including using native yeasts, mixed barrels, malolactic fermentation and aging on lees

3) Jansz Premium Brut Rosé NV – Tasmania, Australia

- Australia's first sparkling wine made in traditional (Champagne) method: secondary fermentation in bottle followed by aging on its lees
- Tasmania is Australia's coolest wine region, hence known for its sparkling wine
- Located in Tasmania's Tamar Valley, Jansz focuses exclusively on sparkling wine
- This is a blend of mostly Pinot Noir with Chardonnay

4) Airlie Bank Shiraz Viognier '09 – Yarra Valley, Australia

- Yarra Valley is in the state of Victoria, which is relatively cool for mainland Australia
- Australians borrowed the northern Rhône's proclivity for blending a bit of Viognier with Syrah (Shiraz) in order to balance the fruit and tannins as well as set color
- Airlie Bank is a second label of Australia's popular Punt Road brand; their winemaker, Kate Goodman, works with multiple growers to source the best fruit from Yarra Valley

5) Tim Smith MGS '10 – Barossa Valley, Australia

- Barossa Valley is perhaps Australia's most famous: it's a warm, sunny valley set back from the coast in South Australia, with vineyards arranged around the North Para River
- Barossa Valley is best known for its rich, inky Shiraz
- MGS = Mataro (Mourvèdre), Grenache and Shiraz: a typical blending trio in the southern Rhône that has become popular in Australia as well
- Tim uses mostly Mataro, drawing winemaking inspiration from French AOP Bandol

6) Mud House Pinot Noir '10 – Central Otago, New Zealand

- Central Otago is the world's southernmost wine region; it sits in an alpine basin, receiving plenty of sunshine, warm days and cool nights
- New wine region (first commercial production in 1987) gradually being broken down into distinct sub-regions
- This is sourced from a single vineyard that averages six hours of sunshine per day in the Bendigo sub-region
- Pinot Noir is the main grape of Central Otago, known for vibrant fruit and good acidity

