

BROKENWOOD

AUSTRALIAN CRAFT AT ITS FINEST

THE YEAR THAT WAS
2017



ICON RELEASE

2015 Quail Shiraz

Available in years where the Graveyard Vineyard Shiraz is not released.

Made from the best fruit from the Graveyard Vineyard in the Hunter Valley and the Wade Block 2 Vineyard in McLaren Vale.

Drinking well now but can also be cellared for many years.



ICON RELEASE

2011 ILR Reserve Semillon

*Named after our Chief Winemaker and Managing Director **Iain Leslie Riggs**, who joined in **1982** and was the driving force in extending the range to white wines.*

An aged white wine that receives no oak and is released at 6 years of age.

Drinking well now but will improve with further bottle age.



'BEST OF THE BEST' SEMILLON

2011 ILR RESERVE SEMILLON

DECANTER WORLD WINE AWARDS

Platinum Trophy: Best Australian White Single-Varietal

SYDNEY ROYAL WINE SHOW

Gold Medal

HUNTER VALLEY WINE SHOW

Silver Medal

DECANTER ASIA WINE AWARDS

Silver Medal

ROYAL ADELAIDE WINE SHOW

Silver Medal

WINE OF THE WEEK AU, HUON HOOKE

97 Points

THE REAL REVIEW, HUON HOOKE

95 Points



HALLIDAY WINE COMPANION 2018

97 Points *“Best of the Best”*

“When I first tasted this wine in October 2015 I made this note:

‘It has a lovely combination of lemongrass freshness with perfect first stage development of sweet fruit and incipient honey (which will take years to fully evolve).

• In the meantime, citrus rules the roost, allied with mouth-watering acidity.’

Fifteen months down the track, nothing more needs to be said.”

THE YEAR OF THE CHARDONNAY

2016 INDIGO VINEYARD CHARDONNAY

NATIONAL WINE SHOW OF AUSTRALIA

Trophy: Best White Wine of Show
Trophy: Best Chardonnay

NORTH EAST VICTORIA WINE SHOW

Trophy: Best Wine of Show
Trophy: Best White

BRISBANE WINE SHOW

Gold Medal

SYDNEY ROYAL WINE SHOW

Gold Medal

ROYAL ADELAIDE WINE SHOW

Silver Medal

HALLIDAY WINE COMPANION 2018

95 Points

DECANTER MAGAZINE

95 Points



2016 FOREST EDGE VINEYARD CHARDONNAY

NSW WINE AWARDS

Trophy: Best Chardonnay

ST MARTIN ORANGE WINE SHOW

Gold Medal

SYDNEY ROYAL WINE SHOW

Silver Medal

HALLIDAY WINE COMPANION 2018

94 Points



2015 INDIGO VINEYARD CHARDONNAY

HALLIDAY CHARDONNAY CHALLENGE

Regional Winner: Beechworth

HALLIDAY WINE COMPANION 2018

96 Points



BEST SHIRAZ OF SHOW

WADE BLOCK 2 VINEYARD SHIRAZ

2015 VINTAGE

ROYAL QUEENSLAND FOOD & WINE SHOW

Trophy: Best Single Vineyard Red of Show

Trophy: Best Shiraz of Show

Gold Medal

2014 VINTAGE

HALLIDAY WINE COMPANION 2018

95 Points



The aromas represent everything to love about McLaren Vale Shiraz, black fruit and Christmas Cake.

Perhaps with a thimble of Nan's brandy over the top.

Other Awards of *Significance*



GOLD
SILVER

2017 ROSATO, *Beechworth*

NORTH EAST VICTORIA WINE SHOW
Gold Medal

ROYAL ADELAIDE WINE SHOW
Silver Medal



GOLD

2017 SEMILLON, *Hunter Valley*

ROYAL MELBOURNE WINE AWARDS
Gold Medal



GOLD
SILVER

2017 FOREST EDGE VINEYARD
SAUVIGNON BLANC, *Orange*

NSW WINE AWARDS
Gold Medal

ST MARTIN ORANGE WINE SHOW
Silver Medal



GOLD

2017 FOUR WINDS VINEYARD
RIESLING, *Canberra District*

CANBERRA AND REGION WINE SHOW
Gold Medal



SILVER

2017 CRICKET PITCH WHITE

NSW WINE AWARDS
Silver Medal



SILVER

2016 FOUR WINDS VINEYARD
SHIRAZ, *Canberra District*

CANBERRA AND REGION WINE SHOW
Silver Medal



GOLD

2016 SANGIOVESE, *Beechworth*

SYDNEY ROYAL WINE SHOW
Gold Medal



SILVER

2016 TEMPRANILLO, *Beechworth*

SYDNEY ROYAL WINE SHOW
Silver Medal

HALLIDAY WINE COMPANION 2018

★★★★★ OUTSTANDING WINERY, BEST OF THE BEST

A deservedly fashionable winery producing consistently excellent wines. Its big-selling Hunter Semillon provides the volume to balance the limited quantities of the flagships ILR Semillon and Graveyard Shiraz. Next there is a range of wines coming from the regions including Beechworth (a major resource is the associated Indigo vineyard), Orange, Central Ranges, McLaren Vale, Cowra and elsewhere. In 2017, Iain Riggs celebrated his 35th vintage at the helm of Brokenwood, offering a unique mix of winemaking skills, management of a diverse business, and an unerring ability to keep Brokenwood's high profile fresh and newsworthy. He has also contributed a great deal to various wine industry organisations. Exports to all major markets.



EXCEPTIONAL

97 Pts / 2011 ILR Reserve Semillon, *Hunter Valley, NSW*

97 Pts / 2015 Tallawanta Vineyard Shiraz, *Hunter Valley, NSW*

97 Pts / 2015 Rayner Vineyard Shiraz, *McLaren Vale, SA*

97 Pts / 2014 Wildwood Road Cabernet Sauvignon, *Margaret River, WA*

Brokenwood has been listed as a red five star winery every year since 2010 and our flagship ILR Reserve Semillon has ranked amongst the top 3.5% of ratings in 2014/16/18.



OUTSTANDING

- 96 Pts / 2016 IV-BC 76 'Supa' Chardonnay, *Beechworth, VIC*
- 96 Pts / 2015 Indigo Vineyard Chardonnay, *Beechworth, VIC*
- 95 Pts / 2016 Four Winds Vineyard Riesling, *Canberra District, NSW*
- 95 Pts / 2016 Semillon, *Hunter Valley, NSW*
- 95 Pts / 2016 Indigo Vineyard Chardonnay, *Beechworth, VIC*
- 95 Pts / 2015 Forest Edge Vineyard Chardonnay, *Orange, NSW*
- 95 Pts / 2016 Forest Edge Vineyard Pinot Noir, *Orange, NSW*
- 95 Pts / 2015 Indigo Vineyard Shiraz, *Beechworth, VIC*
- 95 Pts / 2015 Quail Shiraz, *Hunter Valley, NSW/McLaren Vale, SA*



HIGHLY RECOMMENDED

- 94 Pts / 2016 Forest Edge Vineyard Chardonnay, *Orange, NSW*
- 94 Pts / 2015 Maxwell Vineyard Chardonnay, *Hunter Valley, NSW*
- 94 Pts / 2015 Four Winds Vineyard Shiraz, *Canberra District, NSW*
- 94 Pts / 2014 Shiraz, *McLaren Vale, SA/ Hunter Valley, NSW/ Beechworth, VIC*
- 94 Pts / 2016 Tempranillo, *Beechworth, VIC*
- 92 Pts / 2015 Shiraz, *Hunter Valley, NSW*
- 92 Pts / 2015 Sangiovese, *Beechworth, VIC*
- 92 Pts / 2015 Tempranillo, *Beechworth, VIC*
- 91 Pts / 2015 Poppy's Block Semillon, *Hunter Valley, NSW*
- 90 Pts / 2015 Indigo Vineyard Pinot Noir, *Beechworth, VIC*
- 90 Pts / 2015 Pinot Noir, *Beechworth, VIC*



BROKENWOOD BREAKS GROUND ON NEW CELLAR DOOR

The next big Hunter Valley development is officially **underway!**

Brokenwood has broken ground on their highly anticipated Cellar Door complex, due to open in late **2018**.



BROKENWOOD WINES NEW "Home in the Hunter"

For Brokenwood Wines, one of the Hunter's most replicable wine labels, 2018 is going to be an exciting year, restaurant and café and of the year.

The latest Hunter Valley development is now underway with @Brokenwood starting its new cellar door complex.

Brokenwood breaks ground on new cellar door complex. A new cellar door, restaurant and café is due to open in late 2018 for Hunter Valley winery Advertisement theshout.com.au

Hunter Valley's growing visitor numbers. The building will feature a mixed palette of natural materials and will house a range of flexible spaces, all themed around the enjoyment of great wine. Gone is the traditional long central bar. Instead, Brokenwood has opted for customer focused wine pods.



The Advertiser Cessnock
9 November at 16:55

Have you noticed the work underway at Brokenwood Wines?



Brokenwood breaks ground on new cellar door
Work has started on the construction of Brokenwood Win...
cessnockadvertiser.com.au

Wine pods herald new era for vineyard

BY LISA ROCKMAN

BROKENWOOD Wines is hoping to break new ground in the Hunter Valley with a state-of-the-art cellar door complex.

"This is a significant moment in Brokenwood's history," chief winemaker and managing director Iain Riggs says.

"Our current cellar door was built in the '70s so this new venture means a lot to us, but most importantly it will allow for more fun and exciting wine experiences for our customers."

Architecture and design duo Eduardo and Maria Villa from Sydney's Villa & Villa are designing the cellar door and Integrated Project Group will manage the construction. It is expected to be completed at the end of 2018.

The building will feature a mixed palette of natural materials and will house a range of flexible spaces, all themed around the enjoyment of wine. Gone is the traditional long central bar - instead, Brokenwood has opted for customer-focused wine pods.

"We decided to make custom-built round wine pods where approximately 15 people can stand or sit which will allow our staff to give a more intimate experience," Riggs explains.

"It essentially splits our customers up into smaller groups and will allow us to engage in

a more effective way. No one in the Hunter Valley is using pods at the moment, but our board chairman saw them at Fairview Wines in South Africa and suggested we look at them."

Guests will be able to relax by a fire with a rare drop thanks to an Enomatic wine dispenser that will allow previously not-for-tasting and museum wines to be readily available. Brokenwood will also feature a selection of wines on tap, which they have been successfully trialing in bars around the country.

A wine museum will feature floor-to-



NEW ERA: An artist's impression of Brokenwood Wines' new cellar door complex. The building will house a range of flexible spaces. Picture Supplied

ceiling glass overlooking the working barrel shed and private dining no able for hire. And, in a nod legends past, a lookout and will be dedicated to long-st manager, the late Keith Bar There will also be a visit available. The Cellar Door house both a cafe and a rest as the Terrace.

"Our entertainment terr revolving calendar of event guest chefs and food trucks will be available for parents

front lawn while kids play or explore our on-site veggie patch," Brokenwood general manager Geoff Krieger said.

Aida Riggs: "We want this new space to offer a revolving calendar of activity so that every time our customers visit us they get a different fun experience to the last. We want to keep it fresh and interesting."

"We would have loved to have a food offering on-site in the past but we didn't have the facilities available. Each year we run a number of wine club dinners at some of Australia's best restaurants as a way to bring the fun and enjoyment of food and wine pairing to our members. We will still hold these events, but we will now also have a regular place they can visit when in the Hunter Valley, with something new and exciting to try every time."

"We thought it only fitting to offer a variety



Aussie Wine News
@AussieWineNews

Following

#aussiewine news from @Winetitles - @Brokenwood Wines breaks ground on new cellar door complex ow.ly/HlzW30gtMgw

12:30 PM - 10 Nov 2017

- Largest range of wine glasses in the Hunter Valley
- Original artworks - all well priced
- Amazing selection of colourful glass coasters, vases and ornaments
- Amusing collector teapots
- Jewellery, seasonal scarves and handbags
- Australian and Hunter Valley T-shirts and souvenirs

Over 2,000 colourful eclectic products to choose from... Come and enjoy a friendly Hunter Valley Experience!

25 | DECEMBER 2017



Chief Winemaker and Managing Director, Iain Riggs said,

“This marks a significant moment in Brokenwood’s history. Our current Cellar Door was built in the 70’s so this new venture means a lot to us, but most importantly it will allow for more fun and exciting wine experiences for our dedicated customers”.

FOR MORE DETAILS VISIT
BROKENWOOD.COM.AU/NEWS

MEDIA ARTICLES

Decanter Magazine, December 2017

Steven Spurrier's Fine Wine World

"My own top top-scoring Shiraz was Brokenwood, Graveyard, Hunter Valley 2013: Superb colour, very good vineyard expression, all in control with Hermitage depth and great length."

Decanter Panel Tasting: Cool-climate Australian Chardonnay

Average score: 95 Points

2016 Indigo Vineyard Chardonnay,
Beechworth VIC

Roger Jones Top Three

"A superb wine showcasing how good Beechworth is for Chardonnay. Young at present but will evolve into a pretty perfect wine."



STEVEN SPURRIER'S fine wine world

Decanter's long-standing consultant editor and 2017 Decanter Man of the Year hand-picks fine wines for drinking now and recommends others to lay down, all priced from £25 upwards

From the cellar

Académie du Vin de Tokyo 30th

1986 I visited Japan for the st time and the following year saw the creation of Académie du Vin de Tokyo, a branch of my Paris wine school. September I was present at a dinner for 80 guests at the Park Hyatt to celebrate its 30th anniversary. With the exception of a deliciously oyster Joseph Drouhin, saune ter Cru Cloc des ouches 2015 with the st fish course, the 4r other wines were 1 from 1987. We arted with a outard, Millésime lanc de Blancs champagne from the Ôte des Bar region - ry bubbles, still full of elegant vigour. Then hâteau Montrose, i-Estèphe (2CC),

whose deep colour showed no browning at all, the style being recognisably Montrose from the 1980s; classic claret from the past. Next, with roasted duck breast, was Ridge, Monte Belle served from magnams, young-looking but less dense than the Montrose, showing the warmth of California and ripe yet controlled flavours from old vines. Finally, with baked grape and almond tart, Château d'Yquem was poured from an imperial (six litres) acquired direct from the chateau: burnt orange bouquet and burnished gold flavours, incredibly rich texture backed by vibrant acidity - a superb end to a great evening.



For the cellar

Mamba Riedel Decanter Awards

Roger Jones, owner of the Michelin-starred restaurant The Harrow at Little Bedwyn in Wiltshire, is not only a superb chef but totally passionate about wine - particularly those from Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. He hosted a tasting of 40 Rieslings and 67 Shirazes from Australia before a sold-out dinner, each guest picking their top five wines in each category. My top two Rieslings were both from Clare Valley - my favourite, also voted best Riesling overall by tasters on the night, was Grosset, Polish Hill, Clare Valley 2016 (£32.99, Liberty), which I noted as 'classic, understated, lots of potential to 2030'. Jim Barry, The Florita,

Clare Valley 2012 (£31.99, Negotiants UK) was my runner-up. Turning to the Shirazes, Penfolds, RWT, Barossa 2010 (£100, Treasury Wine Estates) was the tasters' favourite on the night, ranked in fourth place by me, my notes being 'big smoky nose, lots of power and grip'. My own top-scoring Shiraz was Brokenwood, Graveyard, Hunter Valley 2013 (£39.99, Negotiants). Superb colour, very good vineyard expression, all in control with Hermitage depth and great length. "This just piped Penfolds, St Henri, South Australia 2010 (£70, Treasury Wine Estates), my second favourite.



COOL-CLIMATE AUSTRALIAN CHARDONNAY

Outstanding 95-97pts



Brokenwood, Indigo Vineyard, Beechworth, Victoria 2016

Decanter average score: 95/100pts Individual judges' scores: Giles Cooke MW 95 Roger Jones 96 Anthony Rose 95 £35 Excl Wines

Brokenwood was established in 1970 by Sydney-based solicitors Tony Albert, John Beeston and James Halliday. The original block in Hunter Valley was destined to be a cricket ground for the local community, but was instead planted with Cabernet Sauvignon and Shiraz. Today, 17 different wines are produced under the Brokenwood brand, encompassing regions all over Australia. After witnessing the success of Beechworth Chardonnay from Giacoboni winery, Brokenwood acquired the Indigo Vineyard, and they became neighbours in 1990.

Giles Cooke MW Subtle, nutty and complex. A weighty palate, well integrated, mouthwatering flavours of honey, ginger and hazelnuts.

Roger Jones Real purity of flavour: precise fruit, fresh and energising, at present young, but will evolve and excite over time.

Anthony Rose Lovely, intense, rich stone fruit and good concentration; tight, youthful, complex, almost Puligny-like. Although youthful and medium-bodied, with its salty, dry finish, it shows excellent potential.

Drink 2017-2026 Alcohol 12.5%

Dawson James, Derwent Valley, Tasmania 2015

95 GC 95 RJ 96 AR 95 £36-£37.99 (2011) Christopher Kelton, Evie, The Drink Shop, White Wines Peter Dawson and Tim James, winemakers at Thomas Hardy & Sons for two decades, embarked on a winemaking retirement project. Focusing on Chardonnay and Pinot Noir only, grapes are grown on the highly regarded Meadowbank vineyard, some 60km northwest of Hobart in the Derwent valley at an elevation of 70m above the river. This microclimate is optimal for capturing sunlight and the ripening of the fruit. Their first vintage was only in 2010.

GC This has subtle hints of lemon barley. It's restrained, nutty and complex, with crisp energy on the palate, showing some developed characteristics.

RJ A beautifully restrained, lingering wine with fruit that gently comes to play on the palate. It has precise stone fruit, simply seamless.

AR A fine, polished Cornish cream and vanilla oak veneer on the nose is followed by firm, grapefruit-style, cool climate fruit that veers between peachy ripeness and lemon-crisp acidity, all with a hint of vanilla oak and finishing on a steely Chablis-esque mineral note.

Drink 2017-2023 Alc 12.2%

My top three

Roger Jones

Brokenwood, Indigo Vineyard, Beechworth, Victoria 2016 A superb wine showcasing how good Beechworth is for Chardonnay, with its proximity to the Alpine area providing cool summer nights. First planted in 1999. Precise fruit, purity of flavour, fresh and energising. Young at present but will evolve into a pretty perfect wine. **96 Drink 2017-2026**

Bay of Fires, Tasmania 2016 It may have a commercial tag, but this is an exceptional, good value, early-drinking Chardonnay. **94 Drink 2017-2022**

Dawson James, Derwent Valley, Tasmania 2015 Two great friends producing stunning wines year on year from a unique vineyard. Beautiful, restrained fruit gently comes to play on the palate with precise stone fruit. It's pretty seamless. **96 Drink 2017-2023**

Halliday
Australia's bestselling wine magazine



WE REVEAL OUR 50 GREAT REDS

Selected & reviewed by James Halliday & Campbell Mattinson
+ Shiraz Wine icons Barossa Valley Italian reds Tasmania

August
September
AUS \$9.95
NZ \$12.95



wine icons

FROM GRAPES TO GREATNESS

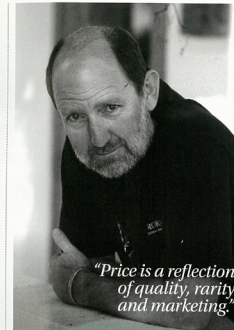


How do you determine greatness in wine? We put this to three winemakers who produce some of our most covetable reds.

WORDS PATRICK HADDOCK

At a recent tasting of Henschke Hill of Grace, we were confronted with greatness. The wine borne of the phenomenal 2012 vintage was profound. It was great not just because of its balance and length, but perhaps made even greater by vine age, the understanding of the vineyard and its pedigree and lineage sifting up more than just a glass of wine. So much so that when winemaker Stephen Henschke talked about the vineyard, the heritage, his ancestors and the sacrifices made, he was moved to tears. "It has a true sense of place," Stephen said. "A living place that expresses the colour, aroma and flavour of environmental and human expression: a place of history, heritage and wonder; a place of the past, present and future; a sacred place. And every year it comes alive and gives us a new and extraordinary experience." "Greatness" is defined as eminence or distinction, but it's hard not to be subjective when referring to greatness in subjects that evoke such a personal response. We are told what makes great art or music; yet how are these conclusions reached? It primarily comes down to a number of experts unanimously agreeing on what constitutes this grand title. But when it comes to wine, how do we perceive greatness in such a subjective and nebulous subject?

For some it's a price-driven thing. But while spending \$300 or more on a bottle of wine might be a sure-fire way to define greatness, it's hardly a romantic notion. For others it's about terroir or specificity of site. Terroir may be the single most relevant factor when determining greatness - think of the best wines in the world: Domaine de la Romanée-Conti, Chateau d'Yquem... They're the ultimate in site-specific wines. In Australia, Hill of Grace and Brokenwood's Graveyard Shiraz are just two that rely on particular sites that we in the media often refer to in lofty terms such as "wines of place". Vintage and vine age also play a part. A great vintage will profoundly enhance Mother Nature's dispensations as winemakers harness the elements from one auspicious year. After speaking with Stephen Henschke, Brokenwood's Iain Riggs and Yalumba's Robert Hill-Smith, the general consensus was that greatness has to have third-party endorsements or be critically appraised by opinion leaders who are regularly exposed to wines of extremely high quality. Price does of course come into it, the wines referenced here command a high price tag and, with the exception of debut wine The Caley, they all have a track record for consistent excellence. Each year as demand rises, so too does the price tag. Sometimes a great wine is also simply the one that suits your mood at that moment in time - it's fundamentally pleasing to drink.



"Price is a reflection of quality, rarity and marketing."

Iain Riggs. Brokenwood Graveyard Shiraz. \$250

What do you think constitutes greatness in wine? In Australia, we vary from Europe slightly in our definition of greatness because as a young wine country, we value drinkability up there with expression of terroir. Due to its long history, Europe will rate terroir and style ahead of "is this a good drink?" The Australian exception to the rule would be Penfolds Grange - no one in their right mind would drink it before 20-plus years' bottle age. Greatness to me is about the multi-layers of varietal, style, drinkability, terroir - and that includes "hand of man" - and complexity. You can have a great young wine as well as a great old one.

What makes Graveyard so special? It's a combination of all aspects of grape-growing and winemaking. Although given a good year, winemaking influence should be negligible. Decisions in the vineyard in the Hunter Valley take precedence. Part of the magic of the Hunter is the direct link to vines brought out between 1788 and 1822, then topped up with the Bubby collection from 1822 onwards. Vines are on 1000 metres on a soil composed of...

shiraz and all but two hectares on own roots. It's an east-facing slope, perfect for vines in the Hunter, a curved bowl shape and well-drained. There are some sections impacted by the high saline subsoil moisture. Finally, low yield and vines that crank along year after year.

How do you think greatness is relevant to price? Price is a reflection of quality, rarity and marketing. To me, marketing includes not only our own promotion of Graveyard Shiraz as being a unique single-vineyard wine, but also third-party endorsements. It has been at the top of the Langton's Classification for 25 years. The consumers buy into, and become part of, the story of the wine, so it isn't a case of "can be better" but "has to be better".

Is greatness in wine purely subjective or do you think there is unanimous understanding of perceived greatness? Greatness can be based on objective-like measures such as peer review and wine show results. I say objective-like because scores are themselves subjective. Within the wine community, greatness is generally agreed on. We all accept there is "light and shade" with any wine due to the vagaries of climate. No wine is exempt from this - Bordeaux, Barolo or Hunter Valley shiraz.

In some parts of the globe, is greatness dictated by price or quality? I'd suggest history, so it has to be dictated by quality. Always.

Stephen Henschke. Henschke Hill of Grace Shiraz. \$825

What do you think constitutes greatness in wine? Purity of fruit, attractive aromas, layers of flavour and complexity, excellent structure and balance, and a long finish. Most importantly, a great wine shows a sense of place and food friendliness.

What makes Hill of Grace so special? The Hill of Grace vineyard is eight hectares, but just four are planted to shiraz. Each shiraz parcel is fermented separately before blending into the best possible expression of the site and season. The original Grandfathers block, currently 127 years old, is the oldest parcel. These original, dry-grown shiraz vines were planted by our ancestors on their own roots in the early 1800s in a beautiful valley opposite the Grandenberg Church in the strongly continental Eden Valley region. We continue to source from these beautiful ancestor vines as they produce an aromatic expression of shiraz with wonderful structure and balance that will live in the bottle for more than 50 years.

Some would say site is the important factor to attain greatness. Does this sum up the Hill of Grace vineyard? Site plays one of the most important roles. The Hill of Grace vineyard was at one time part of the original Parrot Hill village and was planted along the Parrot Hill creek, an area sought after by the early pioneering families in the Barossa area. The large trees and vigour of vegetation there indicated

"Price is a reflection of quality, rarity and marketing"

REGIONAL
GUIDE
& MAP



- SO MUCH TO SEE AND DO
- 1 TRUE BBW LOCAL WITH TASTY CRAFT BEER
 - 4 OLIVE PRODUCERS WITH FREE TASTINGS
 - 6 CHEFS REVEAL THEIR GREAT CLASSICS

TIP-TOP TALENT

MEET SOME WINEMAKERS WHO ARE BETTER WITH WINE THAN THEY ARE WITH WHEELBARROWS!

WORDS: BRENDA CHRISTIAN PHOTOS: CHRIS EILFELS

WHEN YOU THINK of pioneering women and wine, Champagne probably springs to mind. Bollinger, Domberg, Laurent-Perrier, Veuve Clicquot are all heavy-weight Champagne houses that owe their success to women. In the 19th century, these widows kickstarted a feminist revolution in the male-dominated wine business when they audaciously took over the reins of the Champagne houses following the deaths of their husbands. And they were super successful at it to boot.

Fast forward a few centuries (and swap hemispheres) and women don't have to wait for widowhood to have a prominent role in the Australian wine industry. Although to be fair, the gender divide still exists, with figures from the 2014 census showing women are still in the minority in the wine industry, but the Hunter Valley appears to buck this trend as women make their presence known in every aspect of the wine biz, from matriarchs like Fay McLintock and marketing dynamo Sally Scarborough, Jess McElsh, Jane Tyrrell and Ebony Thinker, to managers Christina Tulloch and Manda Duffy.

But what's that I hear you say? It's all well and good to point out those in marketing and management but what about the jobs that are really hard yakkor? Well, Wine Country women are no shrinking violets, they've also muscled in on the macho male-only clubs of yesterday, carving careers in the vineyards and wineries. Viticulturalists Liz Riley, Kai Barry, Louise Fisher, Isabella Kelly and Jenny Wright are prancing and ploughing the vineyards next to the blokes.

And yes, that male-biased position of winemaker has also well and truly been breached with award-winning winemakers Liz Jackson, Gwyn Olsen, Xanthe Hatcher and Kate Sturgess – to borrow from Annie Lennox – “taking it for themselves”.

Yep, women are an intrinsic part of Wine Country and no matter what their role, they're all dedicated to promoting the region and its wines, along with their male counterparts. We don't have space to interview all of the women in Wine Country but we did sit down with four winemakers from this close-knit community to get an insight into their lives.



ABOVE LEFT TO RIGHT: STURGES, SCHWARTZ, HATCHER, KATE STURGES AND GWYN OLSEN

Brokenwood's Assistant Winemaker Kate Sturgess, listed as one of the Hunter's pioneering female winemakers.

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CONTACT MARKETING@BROKENWOOD.COM.AU

WINE WOMEN



KATE STURGES
Assistant winemaker Brokenwood Winery

Kate, 26, studied viticulture and oenology in Adelaide then worked vintages in McLaren Vale, the Grampians, the Hunter Valley and the Okara Valley in Canada, before taking up the position of assistant winemaker at Brokenwood in Coonamburra. She then moved to the Hunter Valley with her partner, a breeder of King Charles Cavalier spaniels, to work at Brokenwood.

As a child, what did you want to be when you grew up? I guess it depends on what your parents said. I fluctuated between Olympic diver, vet and architect but I decided in year 10 I wanted to be a winemaker so that was quite easy.

Most challenging aspect of working in the wine industry? I have been really lucky to have had some excellent mentors, both male and female, to help me get my start. As a result, sometimes the hardest thing for me is to resist the impulse that not everyone has had such support and that a lot of the women I admire have had to work very hard and fight a lot of battles to get on to this point. Realising how I can help other women get recognised and involved in the industry is something I really try to keep front of mind.

What is the best wine you've ever made? Haha, that's like asking who someone's favourite child is! The wine that I have learnt the most from is probably the 2009 Brokenwood Tailwinds Semillon, which has gone on to do quite well in some wine shows as well. The great thing about winemaking, though, is that every wine is different and each has their own challenges and rewards.

Your guilty wine pleasure? Whenever there is a bottle of our Tailup Vineyard Chardonnay open in the lab I always try to take it home to finish off.

Most surprising wine and food combo? A truffle at Brokenwood at the start of each vintage. In natural oysters with our Semillon to place of a seagon of lemon. It works a lot better than I expected and is addictive!

WINE WOMEN
LEARN MORE ABOUT THESE WINEMAKERS AT WWW.COONAMBURRA.COM.AU

BROKENWOOD

AUSTRALIAN CRAFT AT ITS FINEST