



THE
ATHENÆUM
PALL MALL LONDON

WINE COMMITTEE DINNER

Wednesday 24th May 2023 at 7pm



ANTIPODEAN WINES

from Tasmania, Western Australia, and New Zealand



Speakers: Dr Victoria Preston and Professor Neil Pearce

Chairman: Professor James Crabbe

Menu and Dinner Wines

'A' by Arras Premium Cuvée NV, ABV 12.5%



Crayfish and Crab Tartlette, Avocado with Lemongrass and Coriander

Prophet's Rock Riesling, 2020, ABV 12%

Flametree Chardonnay, 2020, ABV 13%



Rump of New Zealand Lamb, Minted Jersey Royals, Charred Baby Leeks and Rainbow Carrots, Roasted Garlic Sauce

'Rippon' Mature Vine Pinot Noir 2017, ABV 14%

Deep Woods Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon 2018, 14% ABV



Summer Berry Pavlova

Jansz Premium Rosé NV, ABV 12.5%



Coffee

Introduction

Welcome to the first Antipodean Dinner with wines from both Australia and New Zealand, though there have been separate events in the past covering wines from these countries. We have records of a Tutored Tasting of Australian Fine Wines & Dinner with Penfold Wines in 2009, New Zealand Wine Lunches in 2011 and 2016 and a South Australian Wine Dinner in 2018.

Wine is generally produced in latitudes 30 to 50 degrees in both the northern and southern hemispheres, and with some notable exceptions, the northern are often referred to as 'Old World' wines and the southern as 'New World', and many of the same grapes are used in both areas. Tonight, we will be drinking wines produced from Chardonnay, Riesling, Pinot Noir and Cabernet Sauvignon, all tasting markedly different from northern hemisphere wines owing to the different combinations of climate and 'terroir', as well as wine making practices found in the Antipodes.

Our Choice of Wines

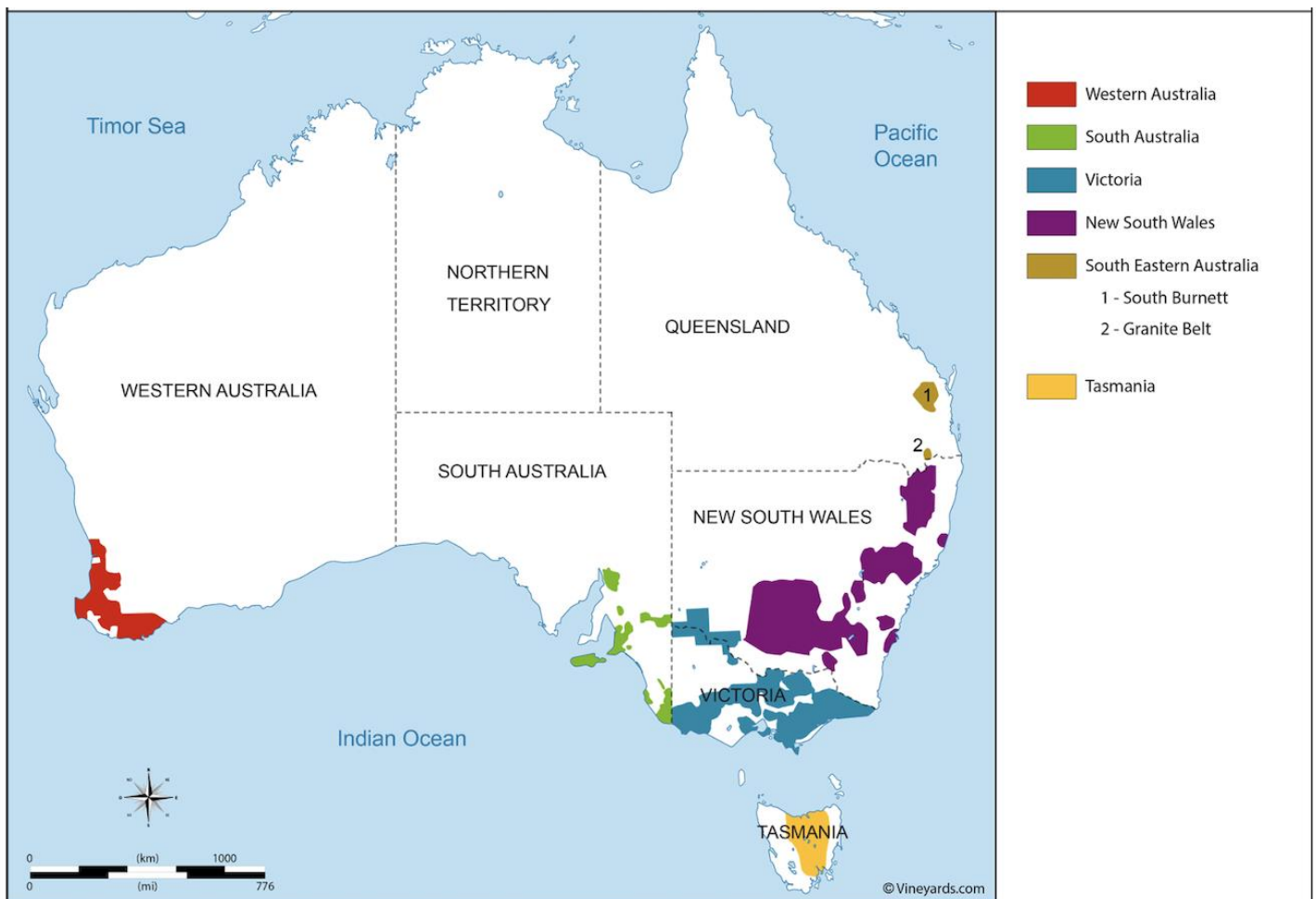
Our choices were led by our knowledge of the wines of Tasmania, Western Australia and New Zealand.

Dr Victoria Preston chose Tasmania, having had a holiday home there from 2018 to 2021, and spending many happy hours visiting vineyards and enjoying the local produce. She focuses on the sparkling wines of Tasmania as it has a relatively cool climate compared with other areas of Australia, which are beginning to suffer heat stress. As her favourite, Apogée, was no available in the UK, she organised a tasting among

friends on the Isle of Wight and her choices today reflect their favourites.

A lengthy discussion took place between the organisers of this event, as to whether it would make sense to compare Chardonnays and Shiraz/Syrah from Western Australia and New Zealand, but it was decided to choose wines that were complementary. Professor Simon Malloch, who is unfortunately unable to be with us today, selected wines from his native Western Australia that are ‘best in class’ and at attractive price points. Both these wines were recommended by Erin Larkin, a West Australian wine critic who works for Robert Parker’s *Wine Advocate*. For the New Zealand wines, Professor Neil Pearce also organised a tasting with friends and consulted one of New Zealand’s top sommeliers.

Map 1 – Australian Wine Regions

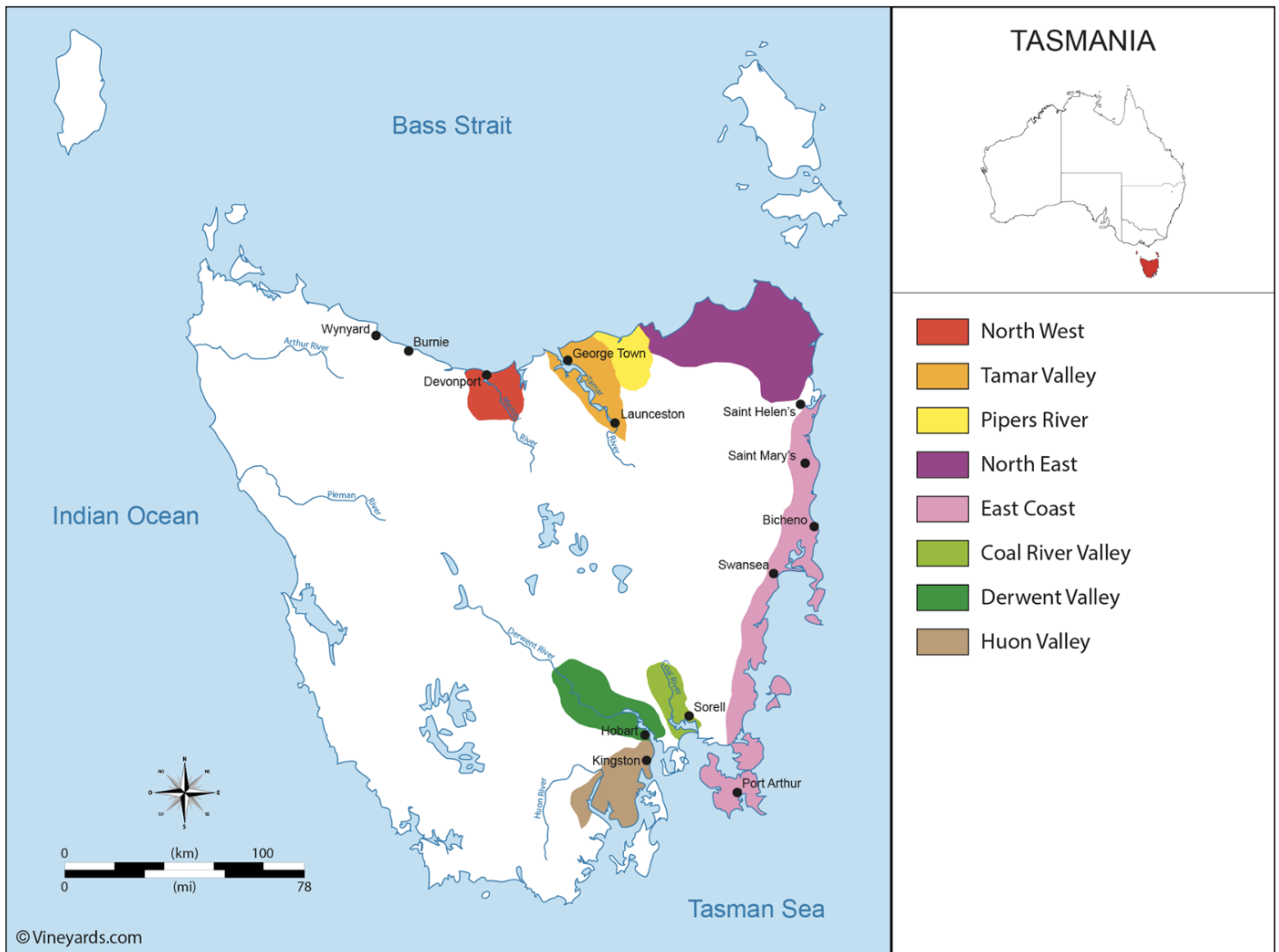


Australian Wine

Wine is produced in the majority of the states (see Map 1), with a concentration in Victoria and New South Wales. We have chosen to present wines from two, what might be called outlying regions - Tasmania, an island to the south-east of the mainland and Western Australia with its capital, Perth, separated from Melbourne by approximately 2,180 miles of dessert. That's about 52 hours of driving time!

The first vines arrived in New South Wales at the end of the eighteenth century on board the vessels of the First Fleet of Governor Phillip. Today Australia is an important wine producing country, both in terms of quality and scale. In 2022, the total vineyard area was 146,244 ha, and the total wine grape crush was 1.73 million tonnes (Wine Australia figures). Overall, red wine accounted for 55% and white wine 45%, with Shiraz representing 25% of the crush and Chardonnay 21% (Cabernet Sauvignon represented 14%, Merlot 6% and Sauvignon Blanc 5%). Australia has developed a comprehensive appellation system with over 60 designated wine regions. Its vast size and huge range of climatic and geographical conditions, makes it one of the most versatile wine-growing countries in the world. Australia has also played a major role in the globalization of wine. Many of its brands have a strong international presence, as do its well-trained and well-qualified wine professionals, who have spread their expertise to many corners of the world. In 2021-2 it was the 5th largest wine exporter in the world, with the USA representing 21% of its market and the UK 20%.

Map 2 – Tasmanian Wine Producing Regions



Tasmanian Wine

Tasmania is a 26,410-square mile heart-shaped island state off the south-eastern tip of mainland Australia with a population of only 569,825 as of December 2021. There are three wine regions: Northern, Southern and East Coast, and seven distinct wine-growing areas: Tamar Valley is the biggest and oldest, Pipers River, which specializes in sparkling wine, North West, the youngest, Coal River Valley, where Pinot Noir and Chardonnay thrive, Derwent Valley, home to many biodynamic icons and Huon Valley, known for its fertile soils (see Map 2). The current wine renaissance has been building for some time but warming temperatures across Australia in recent years have meant that this

relatively cooler part of the country has in particular been able to benefit from riper fruit whilst retaining more natural acidity than most other states. In addition to sparkling wine, Tasmania also produces excellent Chardonnays and Rieslings and also Pinot Noirs and Cabernet Sauvignon. The current CRWL has a Stefano Lubiana Pinot Noir 2017 and Domaine A Cabernet Sauvignon Stoney Vineyard 2008.

The groundwork for Tasmania's vibrant wine scene today were planted in 1856 on a colony then known as Van Diemen's Land, when vines successfully took root. It wasn't until the 1960s that commercial winemaking took off, and not until the 1970s and 80s when Dr. Andrew Pirie, founder of Pipers Brook Vineyard and Jansz (and later in 2007 Apogée), embarked on the production of sparkling wine, which has since arrested the attention of sparkling wine lovers around the world. Today, sparkling wine comprises about 36% of Tasmania's entire production, about 4.5 million bottles.

The first Tasmanian Traditional Method sparkling wine, was produced in 1989 by Jansz, in a collaborative project with Louis Roederer Champagne. All Tasmanian sparkling wines undergo secondary

fermentation in the bottle, with the majority made in the traditional method, with a blend of Chardonnay and Pinot Noir. Some producers add a little Pinot Meunier, but there are only small plantings by comparison to the other two, and it doesn't seem to perform as well. Chardonnay sparkling wines are becoming more common too, but Blanc de Noirs are relatively rare.

Only about 4% of Tasmanian wine (18,000 cases) is exported. But this is likely to change as the value of exports continues to rise: about 115% year-over-year in 2021, with volume up 70% over the same period. The

U.S. and the U.K. are the biggest markets for Tasmanian wine; sales grew by 156% year-over-year, and the value grew 168%.

The Wine Growing Environments of Tasmania

We focus on the sparkling wines of Tasmania owing to its relatively cool climate compared with other areas of Australia, which are beginning to suffer heat stress. Tasmania experiences low summer and autumn rainfall, and the cool maritime climate allows the fruit to ripen steadily over a long season. The weather, soils and cool climate create particularly good growing conditions for Chardonnay and Pinot Noir and given the auspicious conditions for growing these grapes, the production of sparkling wine naturally follows.

Our choices, House of Arras and Jansz are both located near Pipers River in the Tamar Valley in central northern Tasmania, and some 15km apart. Andrew Pirie, Honorary Research Associate at the Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture and the University of Tasmania, notes that most of the top Tasmanian sparkling wine sites are based on basalt or dolerite rocks, and

not limestone such as those that underlie the vineyards of Champagne, and South-East England. In the Tamar Valley there is a rich variety of basalt-derived soil called a 'ferrosol' owing to its high iron content. The iron alters the clay structure making it more friable and porous. This leads to the good drainage that is a characteristic of privileged vineyard sites around the world. Vines growing under mild hydric stress, especially late in the season after the berries change colour, send more of the sugars produced to the fruit, giving the best flavour, whilst shoot growth is arrested by the dry conditions.

'A' by Arras Premium Cuvée NV, ABV 12.5%

We've just enjoyed 'A' by Arras Premium Cuvée NV, a white sparkling wine from the House of Arras, created in 1995 by one of Australia's award-winning sparkling winemakers Ed Carr, who produces 20,000 cases of traditional sparkling wine annually. Recently, the House of Arras was named the world's best sparkling wine by Decanter, for its E.J. Carr Late Disgorged 2004, beating all comers, including those from Champagne. Arras has a range of vintage and non-vintage cuvées, with an average tirage age (ageing on the lees) of between four and 10 years. The character of the mousse (fine or pronounced) is determined by the amount of carbon dioxide allowed to build up in the bottle during the second fermentation.

With its gentle mousse, 'A' by Arras displays aromas and flavours of citrus, nougat and ripe peach combined with a toasty richness. The grapes of this Pinot Noir-based blend are sourced from six different regions on the Island and the wine spends three years ageing on the lees and six months in the bottle. Cellaring 2-3 years.

Jansz Premium Rosé NV, ABV 12.5%

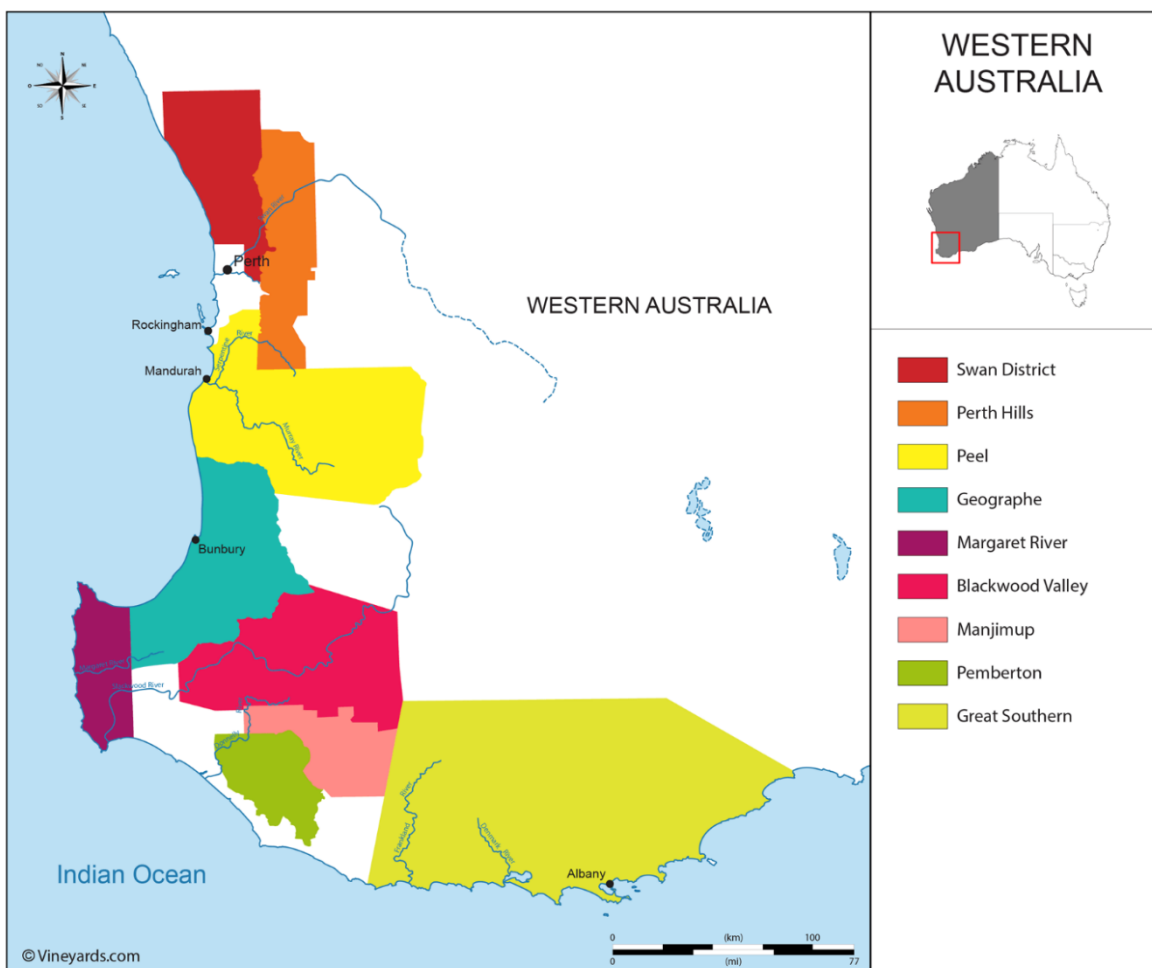
With the desert we are drinking a Jansz NV Premium sparkling rosé. The fruit used in this wine is selected from cool climate vineyards across Tasmania. Production methods include handpicking, gentle whole bunch pressing, cool fermentation, wild yeast, malolactic fermentation in French oak barriques, long-lees aging and complex assemblage, with the batches kept separate during winemaking to maximize blending options. Secondary fermentation takes place in the bottle.

Jansz Tasmania was founded in 1986 as a joint venture between Louis Roederer and Tasmania's Heemskerk Vineyards with the goal of

focusing on sparkling wine, cultivated in biodiverse and organic vineyards, and produced using traditional methods. Jansz was acquired by the Hill Smith Family in 1998, who continued its winegrowing and making philosophy and expanded its estate vineyard to include Pipers River in north eastern Tasmania, and Pontos Hills in south eastern Tasmania.

The wine exhibits a delicate mousse with aromas and flavours of strawberries, rose petals and brioche, rich and creamy on the palate. Turkish Delight and rose petal floral aromas combine with a textured fine mousse creaminess and strawberries to leave an elegant vibrancy and freshness. Owing to the fineness of its mousse, it is an excellent food wine with both savoury canapés and desserts. Cellaring 2-3 years.

Map 3 – Western Australian Wine Producing Regions



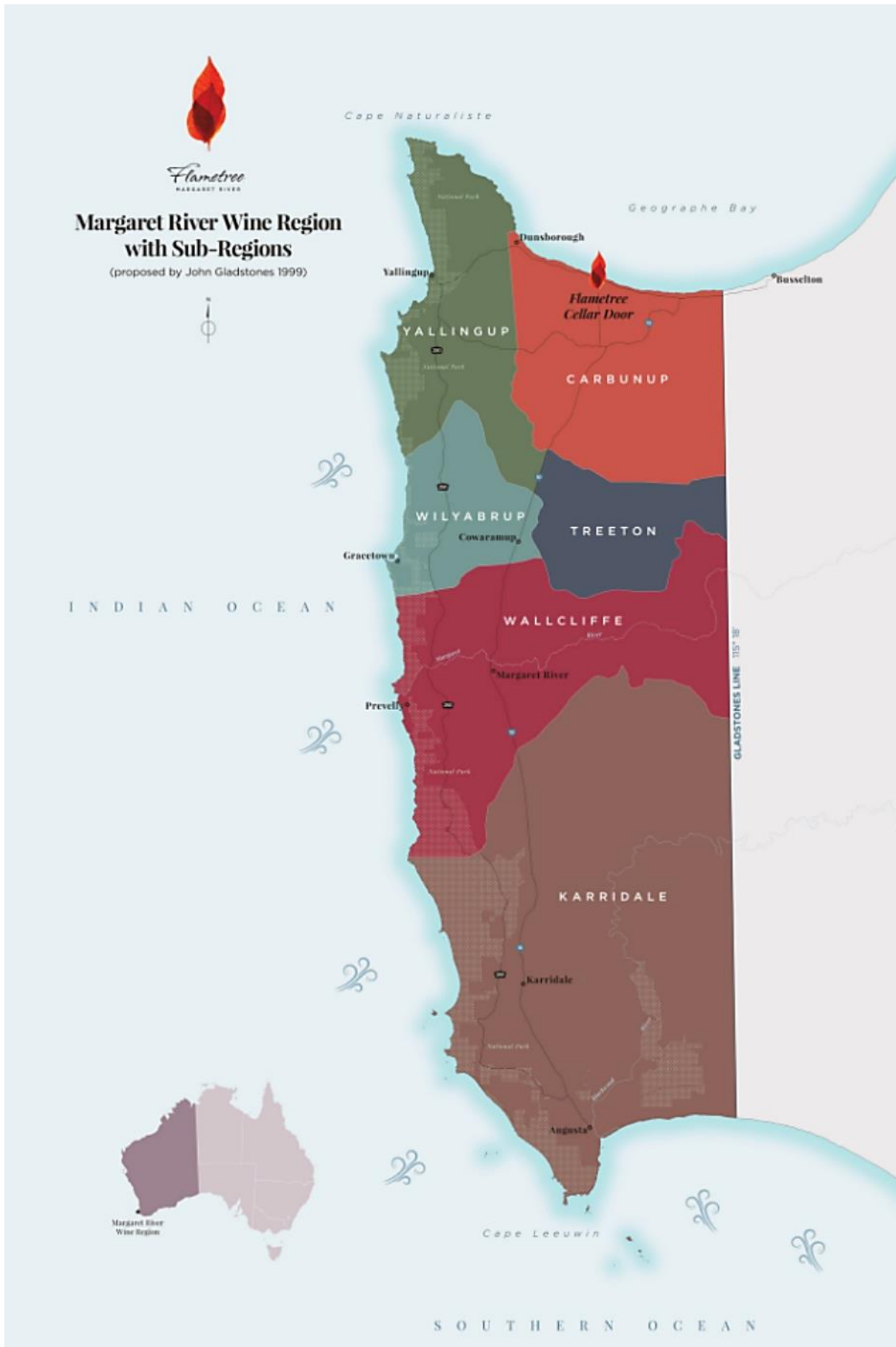
Western Australian Wine

Western Australia currently produces about 5% of Australia's wine. The best-known wine producing area is Margaret River, but excellent wines are also made elsewhere and it is definitely worth exploring areas beyond, such as Swan District, Perth Hills, Peel, Geographe, Blackwood Valley, Manjimup, Pemberton and Great Southern (see Map 3). The Margaret River wine region lies in the south-western tip of the Australian continent. It covers about 212 000 hectares (ha), with the eastern boundary following the line of longitude 115°18' E. This line, running southwards from the township of Vasse to the Southern Ocean east of East Augusta, is known as the 'Gladstones Line', after Dr John Gladstones, a scientist and wine enthusiast.

Although there are some early records of wine production in Swan Valley in the 1820s and Margaret River in the 1850s, widespread interest in viticulture did not develop in the state until the 1960s. In 1978, the region led by Dr Cullen, was among the first in Australia to adopt a regional certification of wines. By the late 1980s, there were around 350ha of vines and owing to major expansion during the 1990s, the Margaret River region production grew to yield more than 40% of Western Australia's wine grape tonnage. Current estimates of vineyard areas show they have expanded to cover about 6,000ha.

The dominant white varieties are Chardonnay, Semillon, Cabernet Sauvignon, Shiraz and Merlot. The best wineries are well known in export markets as the wine style is distinctly different from the rest of the country. The state produces approximately 20% of the country's fine wine with the Bordeaux red blends of the Margaret River region particularly prominent.

Map 4 – Margaret River Sub-Regions



The Wine Growing Environments of Margaret River

Oceans from the north, west and southern borders of the region, create a strong maritime influence over the climate, with low temperature variability. The coastal influences and relatively low elevations mean that spring frosts are uncommon. The maritime influence leads to a long maturation and the development of fine wines.

Both the Flametree Winery and the Deep Wood Estate are located in geological area known as the Leeuwin Complex which is made up of deformed granite and gneiss rocks. The diversity of landforms and elevations across the region reflects the influence of different erosional and depositional processes. In places this produces duplex soils with topsoil layers that are typically sandy, interspersed with primary rock with clay layers at depth. Flametree sources all of its grapes from independent growers with the Chardonnay coming from Wallcliffe and Karridale. Deep Woods has its own vineyards with the Cabernet Sauvignon planted in Yallingup (see Map 4).

Flametree Chardonnay 2020, ABV 13%

Owned by the Towner family, Flametree Wines were established in 2007. Winemaker, Cliff Royle selects fruit from independent growers throughout the Margaret River region to produce fine wines with distinctive aromas, flavour, structure and depth. This is reflected in the 5 red-star rating consistently achieved from James Halliday, Australia's leading wine writer, since 2011.

Professor Simon Malloch notes, "I chose the Flametree as a price-point appropriate example of the Chardonnay for which Margaret River is famous. The 2020 vintage produced some powerful wines and I think the Flametree will show well."

This delicious wine is pale yellow in colour with a golden rim. The citrus, grapefruit and floral aromas are well supported by subtle French oak. There is a fresh and zingy sensation on the palate with flavours of lemon and lime and just a hint of grapefruit and green apple. An enduring sensation on the palate, combines with a great balance of acidity and minerality and considerable length for its type. As it opens up in the glass, notes of stone fruit emerge. Cellaring 6 years.

Deep Woods Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon 2018, 14% ABV

Deep Woods Estate was established in 1987 and is now one of Margaret River's leading wineries. Following the arrival of Julian Langworthy, head winemaker in 2011, accolades have been flooding in with over 60 Gold Medals and 15 Trophies, including Australian winemaker of the year in 2019. The Deep Woods 2020 Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon was awarded 'Best in Show' with 97 points at the Decanter World Wine Awards in 2022.

Professor Simon Malloch notes, "I chose the Deep Woods too as a price-point appropriate representative of probably the best type of red (Cab Sauv) Margaret River offers, and 2018 is the best of the recent Cab Sauv vintages (some say the best ever). On that note, let me add that when I tasted the Deep Woods at home I noticed that it didn't need airing for too long."

This 100% Cabernet Sauvignon is deep crimson in colour with purple tinges. Crafted from vines planted in Yallingup Hills with the dual maritime influence of the Indian Ocean and Geographe Bay and with deep sandy gravels over clay. A wine that drinks well young but will

improve with cellaring. At the moment, it is fruit forward with an overwhelming sense of pure blackberry and the tannins are not quite yet fully integrated but have considerable development potential. The aromas follow through on the palate with an added fillip of ripe, dark plums and cherries. Overtime the wine's trademark violet and graphite aromas are likely to develop, with dried herb, cedar and cocoa complexity overlaying the intense, yet pure, cassis fruit. Cellaring 20 years.

Map 5 – New Zealand Wine Producing Regions



New Zealand Wine

The first vines were planted in 1819, and the first wine produced in 1836. For well over a century, most immigration was from Britain and few of the settlers showed any interest in producing wine. This was made by the small number of immigrants from European countries with wine traditions, particularly Croatians from the Dalmatian coast.

150 years after the first vines had been planted, New Zealand wine production was still small, geographically restricted to mainly Auckland, with some production in Hawkes Bay.

Since 1970, everything has changed and some claim that “New Zealand has done in 50 years, what took France 500 years”. Many factors have influenced these developments, including the changing social attitudes, increased interest in wine from New Zealanders travelling in Europe, and government investment in viticulture.

Perhaps the key factor was the expansion of grape growing and winemaking beyond Auckland and Hawkes Bay, with grapes planted in large quantities in Gisborne, north of Hawkes Bay, and then increasingly to the South, not only in Marlborough, but also in Central Otago. These moves were facilitated because New Zealand wine production was dominated by several large companies that were prepared to take risks. For example, Gisborne was developed by Montana and Corbans in the early 1970s, when they recognised its potential for growing grapes for Auckland-based wine producers. Marlborough opened in 1973 when the Chief Executive of Montana bought large amounts of land. Initially, the region produced reasonably good Muller Thurgau, but it was not until about 1984 that it was discovered that it produced unique and world-class Sauvignon Blanc - Cloudy Bay was established in 1985.

The move to new regions was largely planned and corporate-dominated with a few exceptions, including the leading Pinot Noir areas initially in Martinborough and then in Central Otago in the 1980s, which are still mainly occupied by small-scale producers. However, the choice of grapes was not nearly so systematic. The big change came in 1986 when the government considered that there was a surplus of Muller-Thurgau and funded “the great vine-pull”. This resulted in the removal of a large amount of this grape, and its replacement with a wide variety of other European, mostly French fruit. A process of experimentation led to the recognition that Marlborough was the place for Sauvignon Blanc, Central Otago and Martinborough for Pinot Noir, Gisborne and Hawkes Bay for Chardonnay, the South Island for Riesling, and more recently that the Hawkes Bay, particularly Gimblett Gravels, can produce world-class Syrah. There is still huge potential for exploring the use of new grapes. One recent example is the discovery that Hawkes Bay can produce excellent Syrah, comparable to that from the Rhône Valley, but winemakers are only just beginning to explore the potential of grapes from other European countries.

The Wine Growing Environments of New Zealand

New Zealand is opposite Spain on the globe, but the climate is more similar to central and northern France. With the exception of Central Otago and Nelson, all of the New Zealand wine regions are on the East Coast, with a protective line of hills to the West (see Map 5). Thus, they have low rainfall, are well-drained, and have the highest summer temperatures and the highest degree-days (a measure of the number of degrees over ten degrees centigrade times days during the growing season). They are also, to the surprise of many visiting European winemakers, mostly on flat land rather than hills, something they can manage because of the excellent drainage. The key regions also have

many similar characteristics to the relevant areas of France, particularly with regards to the range of temperature, as well as in optimal yields of the relevant grapes.

New Zealand also provides many exceptions that show that *terroir* is more than just soil. The Wairau Valley in Marlborough has a very wide range of soil types, but all produce the classic Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc (Kevin Judd, the original Cloudy Bay winemaker states that it is all about climate, not soil), and other regions of New Zealand also produce excellent Sauvignon Blancs in the Marlborough style, often winning awards. Also, the wines that “go together” in France (e.g. Pinot Noir and Chardonnay in Burgundy) don’t necessarily align in New Zealand. The regions that produce the best Pinot Noir also produce excellent Sauvignon Blanc, whereas Central Otago is recognised as not being a good place to produce Chardonnay, whereas Martinborough is. Even though New Zealand is considered too cool to grow good Cabernet Sauvignon, there are some excellent examples from microclimates in Waiheke Island and Hawkes Bay. There is also, of course, an important role for the winemaker. Gisborne produces most of the Chardonnay, but perhaps the best New Zealand Chardonnay is from Kumeu River in West Auckland. Greywacke, on the CRWL, and made by Kevin Judd, formerly of Cloudy Bay, and Dog Point Sauvignon Blanc, are produced from the same grapes using similar equipment, and are both fantastic, but taste completely different. An examination of the climate data suggests that probably the best wine regions of New Zealand have been discovered, but there is still considerable potential within these regions. For example, only about 5% of the land with wine-producing potential in Central Otago is currently under vines.

Both of the New Zealand wines selected for this evening are from Central Otago. This is the world’s most southern commercial wine region. It is New Zealand’s only important inland wine region, with the surrounding

mountains protecting the land from rain from either direction. Milford Sound is only 100km to the West and is one of the wettest places on earth, while Central Otago is extremely dry, producing poor farmland, but excellent terroir for wine production.

Prophet's Rock Riesling 2020, ABV 12%

In general, the best Rieslings come from the South Island, particularly Waipara, north of Christchurch and Central Otago. Riesling has perhaps a greater range of styles than almost any other grape, ranging from sweet, or late harvest, to completely dry. If you like a small or even large amount of sweetness in your Riesling, those from Waipara, for example Pegasus Bay, in North Canterbury can be recommended. However, if you prefer your Riesling to be completely dry, then there is something special about the schist stone in Central Otago that imparts a searing minerality. Prophet's Rock Riesling is a classic example of this style, grown on schist rock, which has strong minerality and a long complex finish. The dryness enables the flinty and fruit flavours of Central Otago to come through.

Prophet's Rock Riesling is slowly and gently whole grape-pressed, followed by long slow fermentation in the barrel and aged on yeasts prior to bottling. There are intense aromas of lemon, lime, and grapefruit with green, crunchy apple and hints of chamomile. The palate is lively and fresh with citrus, green apple, and subtle nectarine flavours and a zingy acidity and a chalky mineral note on the long finish. Cellaring 5-10 year.

Rippon Mature Vine Pinot Noir 2017, ABV 14%

Pinot Noir from Central Otago and Martinborough is New Zealand's second great wine style. The Central Otago and Martinborough vineyards

and winemakers are relatively unusual in New Zealand since they largely consist of small-scale producers, albeit, many are owned by European winemakers, rather than coming under the four large corporations that own the vast majority of New Zealand wine production. Wine production began in Martinborough and Central Otago in 1980, with the potential of Pinot Noir only being recognised in the 1990s. In 1990, Central Otago still only grew about 1% of New Zealand Pinot Noir.



Image 1 – Rippon Vineyard in Central Otago

Rippon is one of the original five vineyards in Central Otago, which are geographically dispersed, with many pockets of potentially great wine-production having not yet been explored. Rippon Vineyards is biodynamically farmed in a spectacular location on Lake Wanaka (see Image 1). It is relatively unique, being distant from the other current central Otago vineyards, and with little potential for expansion in the Lake Wanaka area. In the 1990s, the potential for great Pinot Noir was

established and the vineyard now produces predominantly Pinot Noir, as well as small amounts of Riesling, Sauvignon Blanc, and other varieties.

Rippon's north-facing escarpment forms the meeting point of terminal moraines and coarse gravels, all based in schist, on which some of the region's earliest vines were planted. The grapes are fermented with indigenous yeasts and given extended *lees*-aging. The first time Professor Neil Pearce tried this wine, the first word that came to mind was "velvet". This is a classic Central Otago Pinot Noir which not only has a fantastic nose, but is also full-bodied, lacking the "thinness" of some other Pinot Noirs. It has a silky, smooth-honed texture and a long, focused run of fine tannin, with red fruit notes, particularly the darker cherry flavours. Cellaring: 5-10 years or more.

MEMBERS AND GUESTS

George Anderson Esq

Ann Anderson

Dallas Ariotti

Dr John Ballard

Malcom Holbrook Esq

Colin Barrow Esq

Janet Bazley

Maria Airey

Dr Samuel Begin

Dr Arabella Begin

Professor Kathleen Burk

Professor Paul Ciclitira

Deborah Middleton

John Clark Esq

Alistair Cliff Esq

Professor John Collinge

Dr Katie Sidle

Dr Paul Collins

Professor Paul Corris

Elizabeth Corris

Jason David Cozens Esq

Haruko Fukuda

Professor James Crabbe

Margaret O'Rorke

Dr Avijit Datta

Eamonn Doran Esq

Dr William Doran

David Fielding Esq

Sir Stephen Bubb

Prof. Elizabeth Fisher

James Ross Esq

Pallab Kumar Ghosh Esq

Prof. Laurence Gormley

Simon Atkinson Esq

Mark Hanley-Browne Esq

Dr Stephen Hancock

Dr Timothy Harry

Sandra Harry

Prof. Adrian Heagerty

Caroline Collins

Stuart Hibberdine Esq

Dr Michael Howse

Valerie Howse

Dr Andrew King

Deborah Hopster

Nicholas Lacey Esq

Teresa Lundquist

Professor Daniel Larkin

Kate Larkin

Dr K P E Lasok

Karen P E Lasok

Prof. David R London

Dr Elisabeth Macdonald

Richard Mair Esq

R John Manuell Esq

David Harris Esq

Colin Menzies Esq

David Barnett Esq

Nick Meyer Esq

Paul Rivers Esq

John Neilson Esq

Ian Bartlett Esq

Professor Neil Pearce

Prof. Deborah Lawlor

Dr Victoria Preston

Christopher Preston Esq

Dr Sohaila Rastan

Professor Peter Rigby

Julia Rigby

Raviraj Saravanamuttu Esq

Martin Smedley Esq

Helen Smedley

Lawrence Turner Esq

Sue Jeffery

Marguerite A Van Reenen

Monika Schuster

Prof. Charles Watkins

Dr Andrew Fox

Simon R Wethered Esq

Andrew White Esq

Edmund Neuberger Esq

David T M Wilson Esq

Claire Wilson

Victoria Wilson

Mike Shaw Esq

Prof. P W R Woodruff

James Wright Esq

Philippa Wright