



Spin the Bottle

## The Barossa

Each month, we explore a recognised wine region – taste the wine, check out the cellar doors, sample the food and bed down for a night or two. This month: South Australia's Barossa.

STORY BY PETER BOURNE

THE BAROSSA has it all – a pioneering history, produce-driven food and highly acclaimed wines. First settled in the 1840s by forward-thinking German Lutherans fleeing religious persecution, the Barossa is justly famous for its shiraz. This is thanks to two very special wines: Henschke Hill of Grace and Penfolds Grange.

Of course, the Barossa's temperate climate suits shiraz, with bold, potent styles from the valley floor and spicy, savoury drops from nearby Eden Valley, where some vineyards sit above 500 metres. But cabernet sauvignon also shines at these cooler sites – and in cooler years, in the lower and warmer Barossa Valley. Shiraz's Rhône partner, grenache, gets a look-in, too, while GSM blends (grenache/shiraz/mourvèdre) are enjoying a surge in popularity among wine growers.

It's not all about red wines. Riesling and semillon are the region's traditional white grapes, with recent plantings of Rhône white varieties such as viognier and marsanne showing well.

Although the Barossa's identity is defined by these historical varieties, it's far from moribund. Fiano and vermentino are exciting new whites, while recent red varieties – nebbiolo, tempranillo and nero d'avola – are adding spice to the stalwarts.



The Barossa's big names – Yalumba, Peter Lehmann, St Hallett, Grant Burge, Torbreck and Seppeltsfield, along with the aforementioned Penfolds, Henschke and Jacob's Creek – are internationally recognised but there are more than 80 cellar doors in and around the Barossa and many of them are small producers.

Add much-loved food legend Maggie Beer to the mix and you have a region that offers the lot. The Barossa's German pioneers would be proud.

Take a pasta masterclass at Casa Carboni cooking school and enoteca in Angaston



## Tasting notes

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**KALLESKE  
CLARRY'S GSM**

2016 | \$23

Four generations have farmed these 19th-century vines. Named in honour of Troy Kalleske's grandfather, it has raspberry and dark-cherry aromas lifted by fragrant spices. There are juicy flavours of red and black berries and earthy tannins to balance. Match it with a sausage sandwich and barbecue sauce.

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**BAROSSA  
VALLEY ESTATE  
CABERNET  
SAUVIGNON**

2015 | \$28

BVE's shiraz is a Barossa benchmark, its sibling cabernet sauvignon inexcusably overlooked. A compote of blackberries and currants greets the nose with fleshy flavours of the same genre. The subtle cedary tannins would suit grilled lamb cutlets.

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**HENSCHKE  
KEYNETON  
EUPHONIUM**

2013 | \$66

The Henschkes craft magnificent reds and this bespoke blend is a cornerstone. Shiraz, merlot and cabernet (sauvignon and franc) deliver intense black-fruit, clove, pepper and sandalwood aromas. It's dense and fleshy, with a backbone of graphite-like tannins – perfect with a thick, juicy steak.

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**PENFOLDS ST  
HENRI SHIRAZ**

2013 | \$109

New oak is eschewed in favour of large, old vats with this "old-school" Penfolds shiraz, which smells of abundant red and black fruit, licorice and dried herbs. It's dense and intense with dark-fruit flavours and insistent tannins to carry the finish. Roast beef and horseradish cream, please.

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**PEWSEY VALE  
THE CONTOURS  
RIESLING**

2011 | \$36

Sourced from the oldest vines at this 50-year-old vineyard, The Contours is only released after five years in the bottle. There are fragrances of fresh lemongrass, warm toast and lime marmalade. The palate has incredible drive with a bright, zesty finish. Partner with chicken tagine.

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Sam McAdam-Cooper