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FIVE OF THE BEST WINES FROM SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Shaw + Smith, Adelaide Hills

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SOUTH AUSTRALIA IS KNOWN FOR ITS EXCELLENT VINTAGES, BUT THESE FIVE BOTTLES OF WINE ARE THE ONES YOU ABSOLUTELY HAVE TO TRY.

All the world's major wine regions have their iconic wines - the wines you simply have to try, despite the cost and detours you have to make. These are the ones worth crossing the country to seek out.

South Australia is Australia's largest wine producing state and is blessed with many of them...and they're easy to find within a short drive from Adelaide. Here are five South Australian wine regions and their iconic wines you can't afford to miss.

1. PENFOLDS, GRANGE SHIRAZ, ADELAIDE



GRANGE PENFOLDS

From its first experimental vintage in 1951 to its current release, the multi-region [Penfolds](#)' Grange is unquestionably Australia's most prestigious, critically acclaimed and iconic wine. It is such an icon, it is a heritage-listed wine protected by the National Trust of South Australia. Naturally it's expensive, but you can buy a glass - or just a taste - at Magill Estate, which is just 15 minutes drive from Adelaide. With its acclaimed restaurant, cellar door and kitchen, it's also now the most splendid cellar door complex in the country. If you're in the Barossa, you can also taste Grange at Penfolds' Barossa cellar door.

2. JIM BARRY, THE FLORITA RIESLING, CLARE VALLEY

Part of the magic of the Clare Valley, apart from being one of the prettiest of all Australia's wine regions, is that it can produce the most delicate, perfumed Riesling and rich, full-bodied Shiraz, often in the same year. That's also true of family-owned Jim Barry Wines, but it's here that the region's reputation for the finest Riesling was first cemented. It created a benchmark for the rest of Australia. While the Jim Barry Watervale Riesling and The Lodge Riesling are top sellers, it's the grapes from the famed Florita vineyard - one of the area's oldest - that creates a truly iconic wine.

3. ROCKFORD, BASKET PRESS SHIRAZ, BAROSSA

The Barossa is home to big Aussie Shiraz. It does other varieties such as Riesling and Cabernet Sauvignon well, but think of the Barossa and you think of Shiraz. The big companies - Yalumba, Jacob's Creek, Wolf Blass, Penfolds and Peter Lehmann - all have fabulous visitor centres and make wines that could rightly be described as iconic. But if you want to strip away the big-ticket marketing and go in search of the heart and soul of the Barossa, there's no better place than [Rockford Wines](#) and its revered Basket Press Shiraz.

4. D'ARENBERG, SCARCE EARTH SHIRAZ, MCLAREN VALE

Winemaker Chester Osborn lists three 'iconic' wines among the 50 or so wines in his portfolio and one of them, the Dead Arm Shiraz, is known worldwide. But it's worth digging a bit deeper to find the truly iconic wines that have been included in the Scarce Earth project - a [McLaren Vale](#) initiative that encourages the release of single block Shiraz in order to learn more about the region. Each has its own unique flavour profile and personality. Only 15 wines from 10 wineries are included in the 2013 vintage and [d'Arenberg](#) has two of them. The 2013 Tyche's Mustard Shiraz and 2013 The Amaranthine Shiraz.

5. WYNNS, JOHN RIDDOCH CABERNET SAUVIGNON, COONAWARRA

John Riddoch himself was an icon, a pastoralist and parliamentarian who owned a huge chunk of the Coonawarra. He planted its first vines in 1890 within the 20km long, cigar-shaped ridge of rich terra rosa soil that has made the region world famous. [Wynns Coonawarra Estate](#) produced its first vintage only six years later. Since 1982 the John Riddoch Cabernet Sauvignon has been its flagship wine. It's now considered the definitive Coonawarra Cabernet Sauvignon, richer and more complex than any other, and an icon just like John himself.

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