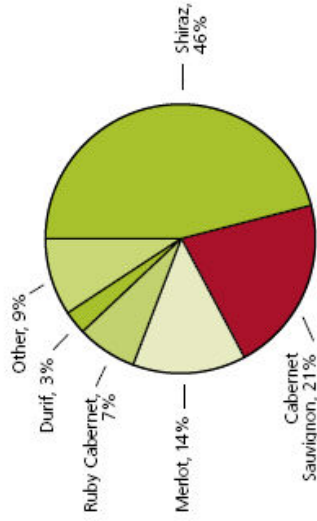
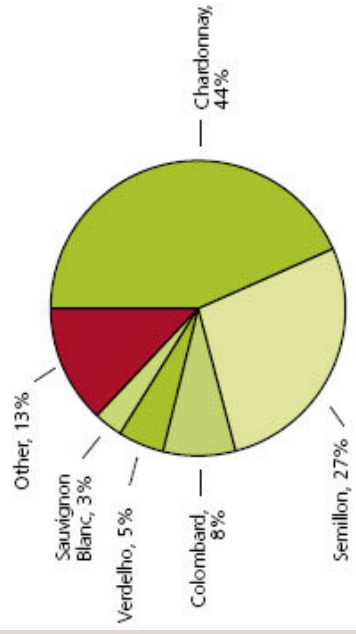


Wine Varieties

NSW red varieties



NSW white varieties



Wine production is diverse in the area, with a similar proportion of white and red grapes crushed for wine making purposes.

Shiraz is the most common red variety, while Chardonnay is the most common white variety.

Other important varieties are Semillon, Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot.

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**Wine Making
(Vinification)**

Wine making process (Vinification)

1. Grapes are harvested (either by hand or machine)
2. Fresh grapes are processed mechanically destemmed and crushed. This process removes all material other than berry, skin, pulp and juice.
3. The juice is drained from the grapes, then from the stems and skins.
4. The juice and natural yeast from the skins are added to the vat or oak barrel to ferment. The yeast converts the grapes' natural sugar into alcohol and carbon dioxide, which then bubbles and dissipates.
5. The juice, now called 'must', ferments at controlled temperatures for up to a two weeks until the sugar has gone.
6. The 'must' from white grapes e.g. Chardonnay is chilled whilst being pumped into a wine press where it is put under pressurised force through a sieve. The 'must' from red grapes e.g. Shiraz is pumped directly into fermentation tanks. Red wine colour is derived from the grape skins, therefore red wine is fermented on skins and then pressed once the alcoholic ferment has completed.
7. Controlling the 'must' temperature plays an important role in the wine making process.
8. The dead yeast are now either removed or left in to add complexity.
9. The wine can be kept fresh or aged in a stainless steel vat or oak barrel the oak impacts a vanilla, toast taste.
10. The remaining particles are removed from the wine by draining and filtering.
11. The wine is bottled and labeled.

Hunter Valley Wine Region

Nestled amongst gentle hills, the vineyards of the Hunter Valley benefit from moderately fertile black-silt loam soil and good drainage.

The production of a variety of quality table wines is aided by sea breezes, afternoon cloud and rain, which falls mainly between January and April.

Harvesting

Vintage is the period when the grapes are harvested and the wine is made, this generally occurs between February and May. The decision to pick the grapes is based on several factors:

- An assessment of the sugar/acid balance and the aroma and flavour profile of the grapes in relation to the style of wine being produced
- Weather conditions
- Availability of labour and machinery
- The condition of the grapes— whether berries are shriveling, or any disease.

Harvest commences when the winemaker considers that the grapes have ripened to the right stage for a particular style of wine.

Grape Harvest and lifecycle of grape vines

Late January to end of May

Weather dependant

Late January

Harvest of grapes begin, depending on the weather and seasonal conditions

Late March

Harvest of grapes finishes

March to September

Vines leaves turn red and fall, then become dormant in the cooler winter months

Late September

Budburst where the vines start to spring with new growth and foliage

September to January

Fruit ripens and grows

Wine Facts

There were 1,901,560 tones of grapes crushed in Australia in 2005-2006. With NSW accounting for 34% of total wine crush

722.2 million litre's of Australian produced wine was exported in 2005-2006 an increase of 7.8% from the following period. A value estimated to be \$2,757.9m

Australia's largest exporters of wine are the United Kingdom, United States and Canada.

Tourism NSW estimates that around 4.1 million people visit NSW wineries each year, generating expenditure of \$353 million