

COMPARISON OF AUSTRALIAN WINE REGIONS

VICTORIA



	KING VALLEY	OVENS VALLEY	HEATHCOTE	BEECHWORTH
ZONE	North East Victoria	North East Victoria	Central Victoria	Victoria
REGION	Alpine Valleys	Alpine Valleys	Heathcote	North East Victoria
SUB-REGION	King Valley	Ovens Valley	N/A	Beechworth
TOPOGRAPHY	Elevation increases from north to south from a lower elevation (approx 150 metres above sea-level) toward the snowline of the Great Diving Range. Soils range from grey/black alluvial soils in the valleys to deep red Crazezoams derived from the weathering of volcanically derived basalts (similar to soils found in the Pipers Brook region of Tasmania).	Lies within the North East Victoria zone in the foothills of the Victorian Alps. The region is part of a group making up the Alpine Valleys. Soils vary with elevation from the Ovens Valley flood plain to 552m at Beechworth, with older soils, reddish brown in colour on the higher elevations.	Situated on the northern side of the Great Dividing range, elevation ranges from 160 to 320 metres. Within the region there are many subregions and consequently differing terroirs and microclimates. It is this variation of terroir that gives the wines of the region their richness and diversity. The climate geology and topography varies greatly.	The Beechworth Region lies within the North East Victoria zone in the foothills of the Victorian Alps. The region is part of a group making up the Alpine Valleys. The soils vary with elevation from the Ovens Valley flood plain to 552 metres at Beechworth. The flood plain has fertile sandy alluvial soils and on the higher elevations are older soils, reddish brown in colour.
CLIMATE	Continental climate with high humidity. Progressive increase in rainfall and decrease in heat summations from north to south. Climatic variability makes this one of the most diverse regions in terms of grape varieties and wine styles. An ideal climate for sparkling wine.	The two climatic elements- temperature and rainfall- are directly related to altitude. Due to this, climate varies throughout the region. It is strongly continental, with spring frost the major viticultural hazard. Temperature is moderated at night by a cooling breeze known locally as the Buffalo breeze coming off Mt Buffalo.	The north is drier than the south and likely to receive on average 5-10mm less rain per month during the vines' growing season (April to October). Southern vineyards also experience cooler temperatures during the growing season. This variation in temperature during the grape ripening period results in a spread of picking dates and subsequently the development of a range of different flavour profiles.	The Beechworth region has a cool, sub-alpine, frosty climate.
WINE STYLES	Known for Chardonnay with its rich mellow flavours and Cabernet Sauvignon that is flavoursome and generous with soft tannins. Increasing trend toward Mediterranean varieties such as Pinot Gris.	Focus is on Pinot Noir, Riesling and Chardonnay, which revels in the cool climate. Fortified wine, verjuice and organically certified wine are also feature products from this region.	Premium Shiraz defined by inky depth of colour and deep, dark, complex fruit.	The region's producers grow a range of varieties with, however, a focus on Pinot Noir, Riesling and Chardonnay which revels in the cool climate. Fortified wine, verjuice and organically certified wine are also feature products from this region.

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VICTORIA - CONTINUED

	KING VALLEY	OVENS VALLEY	HEATHCOTE	BEECHWORTH
AREA PLANTED	500 hectares (total for Alpine Valleys)		1,200 hectares	
ANNUAL PRODUCTION	2,000 - 4,000 tonnes (total for Alpine Valleys)		TBA	
INTERSTING FACTS	<p>The King Valley wine story began in the 1970s when Guy Darling and John Levigny planted vines. Brown Brothers came in to buy the grapes and has remained an important buyer and landholder since. The real growth spurt, however, came when many local Italian farmers (many of them brought to Australia as prisoners of war) switched from tobacco growing to vines as that industry began to decline and wine came into the ascendant.</p>	<p>Gold digging and bushranging (eg Ned Kelly and mates) were the main pursuits in the 1800s. Some vines were planted to produce wine for the goldfields; however, the vineyards today are all planted from the 1970s.</p>	<p>The region, like so many in Victoria, was given over to sheep grazing in its earliest white history, followed by gold mining and then in the 20th century wine production. Although the first vines appeared in the 1860s, it was the 1960s that saw sustained development which has continued to this day.</p>	<p>Gold digging and bushranging (eg Ned Kelly and mates) were the main pursuits in the 1800s. Some vines were planted to produce wine for the goldfields, however, the vineyards today are all planted from the 1970s. The history of the region can best be experienced in the town of Beechworth which has preserved its heritage.</p>

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