

A Region of Value: Strengthening the Grape and Wine Future of the Limestone Coast



Report compiled by Dr Jonathan Staggs, University of Queensland Business School,
for the Limestone Coast Grape and Wine Council (LCGWC)

October, 2025

Acknowledgement of Country

The lands and waters of the Limestone Coast are central to the culture and beliefs of our First Nations people, the **Buandig, Bindjali and Ngarrindjeri people**, of whom we pay respects to their Elders past, present and emerging. The stakeholders of the Limestone Coast visitor economy acknowledge the First Nations people as the traditional owners, and respect their spiritual relationship with Country. We honour their stories, songs, art and culture and are committed to enhancing the knowledge and understanding of our local people in our visitor experiences and storytelling.



Photo taken at 2024 LC Wine Show. This was a generous welcome by Uncle Ken he recalled deep history of perched swamps, canoes made from gum trees, and story of fossil underground water from the Grampians, reminding the audience of Indigenous knowledges and stories of Country. Importantly, Uncle Ken welcomed collective storytelling in the region.

Region of Value Abstract

Join keynote speaker Dr Jonathan Staggs as he shares detailed analysis and future perspectives on trends impacting the grape and wine industry and future strategies to future proof your business and protect the consumer experience.



In this report and subsequent presentation, Dr Jonathan Staggs will share findings from his report commissioned by the Limestone Coast Grape and Wine Council, which quantifies the industry's broad benefits for the Limestone Coast community. The report provides clear advocacy and novel recommendations to strengthen the industry's profile and future development, emphasising the need to build entrepreneurial capabilities that challenge the status quo, move beyond historical practices, and capitalise on emerging consumer trends. To support this, a series of economic scenarios are presented to spark discussion on how the Limestone Coast can develop future-focused capabilities.

Dr Staggs is an entrepreneurship and innovation scholar who has been published in leading journals such as Administrative Science Quarterly, Organization Studies, and the Cambridge Journal of Economics. He holds a BA (Hons) in Political Science/International Relations, an MBA, and a PhD in Business, and his research explores how institutional settings and place shape entrepreneurship and innovation, with a particular focus on the dynamics of entrepreneurial ecosystems.

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Executive Summary

Building on Kym Anderson's forceful 2024 paper 'Australia's Wine Industry Crisis and Ways Forward', this report outlines ways that the Limestone Coast wine region is well positioned to meet and address headwinds in the Australian grape and wine industry. While the red wine category has faced significant challenges in recent years, the Limestone Coast wine region enjoys a natural advantage, due to unique climatic influences and vital groundwater systems, and is well positioned geographically to be resilient. The report argues that favourable geography, though valuable, is insufficient to ensure future success given the increasing pressures of climate change.. This report advocates for an entrepreneurial shift in the region to prepare for the future.

The recent turbulence can be taken as an opportunity to reassess and reimagine the positive contribution that the Limestone Coast wine region can make to the Australian industry, and importantly the national conversation around the industry's sustainability. In this way, the region is at a kind of economic crossroads and innovation is required within wine categories themselves (towards whites, rose, and sparkling, and alternative red varieties) and outside out of wine. The industrial and societal headwinds facing Australian wine pose two strategic questions. Firstly, 'What industry are we actually in?'. And then secondly, 'What is the mindset and capabilities will the Limestone Coast collectively require to safeguard the future?

This report begins to answer the second question first by suggesting that the mindset required is one of 'ambidexterity'. On the one hand, this report advocates for the manufacturing of world class wine and viticulture and viniculture and a doubling down on quality, including sophisticated clonal selection and a type of 'science-push' innovation. These capabilities suggest that the Limestone Coast will continue to be a leader in the grape and wine industry. Yet on the other hand, the region requires individuals and firms to take their eyes off the grapes (& the resultant wines) and to think holistically about new value creation and broader societal benefit.

The Limestone Coast grape and wine industry has the opportunity to make a positive contribution to business and community in areas of education, hospitality, and of

course tourism. While novelty brings uncertain, unpredictable results, this report advocates for the ambidextrous capability of 'dissociation' and to shift from historical, tried and true practices to be alert to and capitalise upon emerging consumer trends. A number of economic scenarios, in the form of 'place-based pillars, are presented in this report to catalyse discussion on how the Limestone Coast grape and wine industry might have a multiplier effect on the region's economic growth.

This report argues that the future economic potential of the region will be realised by targeting two broad types of consumer personas. On one hand, the region should aim at those who want to learn where 'wine is culture' and focus efforts on how to onboard the next generation of wine aficionados. To date, the Limestone Coast has contributed to the Australian wine industry in the form of a sophisticated wine infrastructure and depth of viticultural and vinicultural knowledge and experience. This report advocates for future educational and wine tourism pathways in viticulture, viniculture, and on-premises hospitality in new and exciting ways, calling for the region to change the locus of control in Australian wine. In some ways, the region is the under-rated 'smart region' of the Australian wine industry.

The Limestone Coast is well positioned therefore, especially through the iconic status of Coonawarra, to target those who want to feel transformed through their involvement with grapes and wine, and a sense of personal growth and challenge, accomplishment and achievement, and mindfulness. Perhaps more strategically, the Limestone Coast is also well positioned to recruit a generation that maybe reluctant or unwilling to try new food and wine, otherwise known as 'neophobia' (Castellini & Samoggia, 2018). [Recruitment](#) is regarded as a strategic way forward for the industry and the Limestone Coast is both an ancient and modern laboratory to help 'onboard' the next generation towards neophilia.

On the other hand, the future economic potential of the region will be realised by aiming at those who want to have pleasure, so-called hedonic wine consumers and tourists, where 'wine is fashion'. To this consumer, the region needs to focus on service innovation and experiment with disruptive and potentially radical innovations to create

value in the 'experience economy' (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). The report also suggests new value creation can occur when focussing on consumers with 'special interests' where grapes and wine continue to play an important role but this is secondary to experience and self-discovery. In this line of ideation, the Limestone Coast is a convivial, entertaining destination region where experimentation in service and other domains is celebrated. This focus requires playfulness and 'poetic imagination' (see Staggs et al, 2021) where a new generation of artisan entrepreneurs seek to develop new products and services that provides stories and twists and turns for social media audiences, enrolling new hedonic tourists.

The report suggests that both personas are possible as the region leverages endowments in nature, the region to help facilitate discovery with a focus on enjoyment in a world-class natural environment and world-class cultural environment. While the region is endowed with unique geographical resources with sub-regions that offer a variety of grape and wine experiences, this report argues that it is the social cohesion across the community, so evident in the past, that will make a continued contribution in the future. The Limestone Coast is well positioned as a 'learning region' that is capable for drawing upon ancient knowledges of First Nations peoples and the most sophisticated wine research, and all that is in between, to embark on an era of entrepreneurship and innovation that can help safeguard the future of the region. The report calls for a synchronisation of efforts around three key place-based pillars that will drive economic growth and sustainable communities.

About this project

This report advocates for the positive value that the wine industry, and associated industries, have created, and will create, for the Limestone Coast. While the grape and wine industry may be often categorised as a primary industry, this report argues that the region is well-positioned to pursue secondary and tertiary industry opportunities that will help realise a multiplier effect from the grape and wine industry. These opportunities require bold steps with individuals, families, businesses, multiple levels of government, and the broader community to take captaincy of their future. Perhaps counter-intuitively (given the focus on international and industrial headwinds in this

report), this report advocates for action at the LGA level- the City of Mt Gambier and Councils of Grant, Naracoorte Lucindale, Kingston, Tatiara, and Robe- as a 'ground up' reinvigoration for the future. As set of regional renewal case studies are included in this report as an encouragement to political and community leaders in particular of the importance of place-based policies, advocated by Beer (2025), which have the potential to create liveable and productive futures for individuals, families, and SMEs that bring sustainable and long-lasting change for generations to come.

Economic methodology

This economic report is based on a methodology that aims to position the Limestone Coast grape and wine industry within a local, state, national, and global context. The methodology seeks to connect macro trends and developments in society with micro operational trends within the grape and wine industry in the Limestone Coast. These insights are supported wherever possible by relevant data and/or secondary research. Forecasts across five, ten, and twenty-year periods are framed and constituted around three pillars representing the main economic trends shaped by policy settings, market competition, and risk factors. The report suggests that while the Limestone Coast's enjoys a unique position in the Australian wine industry, the broader industry's mature stage of development and structural issues of over-supply and surplus of red wine production, means that clear, actionable recommendations are required to strengthen the Limestone Coast's competitive position into the future. The three pillars that are espoused in this report- and require philanthropic, corporate, and government investment- have been developed through a Schumpeterian economic lens to help reimagine the grape and wine industry's future and to act as a catalyst for economic change. A brief explanation of this approach, namely its capacity to theorise catalytic economic change, is provided in the [appendix](#).

Data collection

The report has been informed by a small number of stakeholder interviews which were conducted in December 2024-March 2025. The report's direction has been informed by semi-regular correspondence and guidance from members of the LCGWC. The report is also based on inferences from data obtained in Australian wine industry reports including Wine Australia, Australia Grape and Wine, alongside state

government reports (PIRSA), as well as local government. Publicly available data was obtained from the Wine Australia, including the National Vintage Report 2025, On-Premise Research Support, and [Tourism Research Australia](#). An extensive list of references is provided.

Strategic insights were also shaped by the academic research into the wine and wine tourism literatures, along with strategy research to help inform a blueprint for action. This scholarly research has been synthesised to present deeper analytical insights and a holistic perspective to help guide the Limestone Coast wine and grape industry forward. These scholarly resources are also included in the back of the report.

Data was also obtained from online resources, including producer websites, wine producer and tourists' social media accounts, specifically Instagram, to help inform insights on the Limestone Coast's engagement with the digital economy.



Finally, the report is supported by primary observations obtained with two visits of the region, the first in 2019 which included an interview with wine producer family in Coonawarra and then secondly, in 2024 in a visit that coincided with the Limestone Coast Wine Show in 2024.

Limitations

This report has a number of key limitations that should be kept in mind. Attempts were made by the author to obtain commercial information that might help provide (anonymous) fine-grained insights into the current economic reality of the grape and wine industry in the Limestone Coast. This fine-grained data might have included costs of production, net revenues per hectare, alternative land use availability, current profitability, and contract arrangements. Access to this data was not forthcoming which has limited the capacity to analyse this data to quantify the positive contribution of the grape and wine industry. Current data on grower intentions for new plantings or removals and future strategic planning, including succession strategies, was also limited. At a production level, the technical, strategic, and investment decisions of major

producers, including the current processing capacity within the region, remains opaque. Differences in planting costs across varieties and organic farming were only briefly noted in a series of interviews but no concrete data was provided.

Market facing data was also difficult to obtain including insights on consumer's needs, behaviours, or characteristics. This might include demographic, geographic, psychographic, behavioural, or business to Business segmentation e.g on-premise, off-premise, or export markets. Publicly available data from websites and social media was used to make inferences about consumer trends, as well as reference to industry reports. Consequently, this report has relied on extrapolations from publicly available national crush data as well as broad trends, and then applied strategic tools to help firms meaningfully explore their options.

High level overview of the Limestone Coast wine region

Introduction

The Limestone Coast grape and wine industry, located in South Australia's southeast, is a crucial part of both the state's and the nation's wine sectors. It is world renowned for its cool-climate wines, particularly Cabernet Sauvignon, Shiraz, and Chardonnay, benefiting from unique limestone-rich soils that enhance the flavour and quality of its produce. The region includes six wine regions: Coonawarra, Mount Benson, Padthaway, Robe, Wratttonbully, and Mount Gambier, as well as the 'Limestone Coast Wine Zone Other' (including Bordertown, Mundulla, Lucindale, etc).

LIMESTONE COAST WINE ZONE 2024 SNAPSHOT



AT A GLANCE

Total Producing Area: **15,194 ha** ↑3.7%
Vineyards: **388** ↑2.5% | Owners: **271** 1%
Average Vineyard Size: **39** ha



RED VS WHITE

Red Wines	White Wines
83% (12,577 ha)	17% (2,549 ha)
Cabernet 55%	Chardonnay 56%
Shiraz 32%	Sauvignon Blanc 17%
Merlot 7%	Pinot Gris 13%



VINE AGE & RENEWAL

1,066 ha new plantings (last 5 yrs)
7% of vines ≤ 5 yrs old (above state avg 5.1%)
60% aged 21–30 yrs 11% 26+ yrs
oldest 128 yrs



ROOTSTOCKS

14.3% on rootstock ↑ from 8.4%
17 types used

State, National, and Global Position

At a state level, the Limestone Coast accounts for about 31% of South Australia's grape crush. Nationally, it plays a critical role in Australia's wine exports, contributing significantly to the \$2.03 billion in annual export revenue, particularly through premium varieties like Coonawarra Cabernet Sauvignon, which is internationally acclaimed. Globally, wines from the Limestone Coast are well-regarded, with major markets in the United States, United Kingdom, and China. The 'Limestone Coast' was officially registered as an Australian Geographical Indication (GI) in 1996. A brief overview of the 2025 Vintage Crush value is provided below to underline the strong production capacity of the Limestone Coast wine region.

Wine region	2025 Crush Value
Padthaway	\$35,605,260
Wratttonbully	\$19,574,785
Mt Benson	\$4,039,819
Robe	\$7,145,436

Coonawarra	\$37,258,577
Mt Gambier	\$1,459, 020

In terms of growth, the region has seen fluctuating production volumes, affected by climatic changes and economic conditions. The region's production potential remains strong, with a shift towards sustainable practices and premium wine segments, ensuring its competitiveness.

Economic Factors and Growth Potential

Macro-economic factors impacting the region include currency fluctuations, international trade relations (such as tariffs in China), and domestic market dynamics. Despite challenges like labour shortages and rising production costs, the industry is expected to benefit from increased global demand for premium wines. As a significant contributor to Australia's wine economy, with robust growth potential driven by premium wine markets and sustainability initiatives, the Limestone Coast is well-positioned to respond to these macro-economic dynamics. With its unique climate and soil, the region as a whole offers competitive advantages that support long-term growth at both the national and global levels. The region also enjoys human capital endowments and technical expertise, best demonstrated by the contributors to the LCGWC report 'Unearthing Viticulture in the Limestone Coast'.

Value from the maritime influence of the Limestone Coast

The Limestone Coast's terroir, which includes fertile limestone-rich soils and a maritime climate, gives its wines a distinct character. The cooling breezes from the Southern Ocean (Bonny Upwelling effect) help moderate temperatures, creating ideal conditions for growing grapes, particularly Cabernet Sauvignon, Shiraz, and Chardonnay. The Coonawarra region, in particular, is known for its world-class red wines due to this influence. Drawing upon the 2011 report commissioned by the LCGWC, the Limestone Coast enjoys important maritime influences that help explain its strategic advantages in the Australian wine industry.

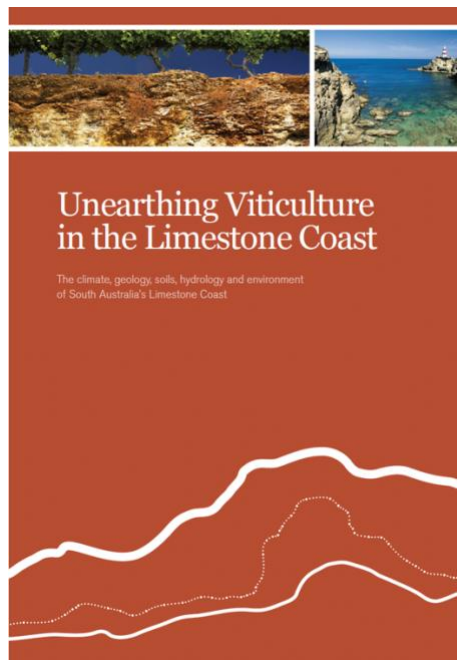


Figure 1 Longbottom et al (2011)

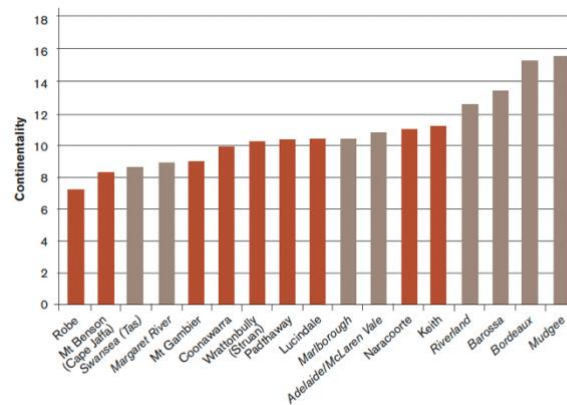


Figure 3.11. Continuity (mean January minus mean July temperature) across the Limestone Coast (calculations based on long term average climatic data) (Bureau of Meteorology 2011) and other viticultural regions (light brown) (Gladstones 1992).

What appears to be missing in the wine research literature is a focus on the maritime influence and role of climate as a factor in driving premium prices as well as consumer engagement. This might be implicitly included in 'region of origin' in many wine industry research (see Shane et al, 2018) but in light of marketing trends, this influence and proximity to the ocean is a source of the region's competitive advantage, and arguably should be explicitly promoted and privileged. According to [Mountjoy](#), proximity to the ocean offers refreshing acidity, salty nuances, mineral expression, complex aromatics, and food-friendly pairings, and a sense of adventure and exploration. All of these features offer opportunities to develop a type of 'hedonic escalation' when wine tastes better and better as consumers become more aware and sensitised to flavours (Crolic & Janiszewski, 2016). The Limestone Coast is well-positioned to take wine and food consumers on this escalating journey.

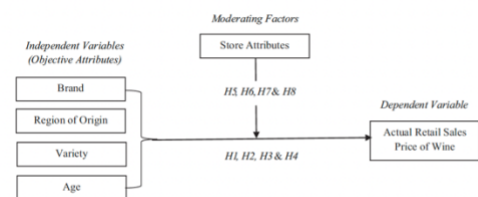


Figure 1. Conceptual model of the factors influencing retail prices of Australian wines

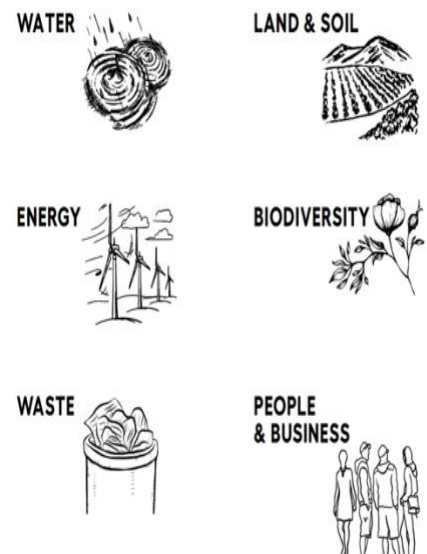
Wine Club Geography series - Part 3:
Coastal vines: how does proximity to the sea change my wine?



In short:

Wine Club's Geography series has seen us uncover how varying landscapes impact winemaking. So far, we've explored high altitudes, gradients, rivers and valleys. For our final instalment, our buying team headed to the coastlines of the Mediterranean, as proximity to the sea means interesting and exciting things for the winegrower.

Sustainability is becoming a differentiator as consumers increasingly demand eco-friendly products and the Limestone Coast is well-positioned to capitalize on this trend with its adoption of sustainable viticulture practices where some investment into organic and biodynamic farming has been made, with mixed results. Notably, Limestone Coast grape growers and wine makers conducting best practice, captured in a Sustainable Winegrowing Australia [case study](#) developed by the Australian Wine Research Institute with support from Hans Loder, Viticulturist at Penley Estate, the Limestone Coast Grape and Wine Council and the Limestone Coast Landscape Board, through funding from the Government's National Landcare Program.



Historical success of the Limestone Coast

The historical success of the Limestone Coast can be explained by the use of the Boston Consulting Group (BCG) Matrix. This matrix shows how commercial success is driven by market growth and the capacity of businesses to capture value in those market categories i.e. to 'own' the category. This matrix is ordinarily used at the level of the firm to help determine relative profitability and to help inform strategic investment or divestment decisions. In this report, the BCG Matrix can be used to both explain historical success but also to help the region identify the future economic potential in the next five, ten, and twenty years. The BCG matrix could be used to predict those industries where there is the potential for high market growth and where grape and wine producers, and associated



businesses in the Limestone Coast, might be able to obtain market share in that growth.

In the absence of business data, it would appear to date, that the Limestone Coast has been successful and made an important contribution to the region and the Australian wine industry through '**Stars**' such as world-class Cabernet and Shiraz via premiumisation pathways more broadly. The region has also benefited from '**Cash cows**' such as Chardonnay, Shiraz, Merlot where economies of scale and successful mechanisation have supported high yield low margin and market share in the bulk wine category. The region has demonstrated exploration and experimentation with **Question marks** such as Pinot Gris, and most recently Mencia. [Yalumba Gen Pinot Gris](#) is an interesting example of Sustainable Winegrowing Australia (SWA) certified wine and organic. No data was provided to help inform which grape and wine production might fall into the **Dogs** category.

To date, the positive contribution has been due to planting grapes according to the right climate (Puga & Anderson, 2024). The Limestone Coast is undoubtedly underpinned by a strong scientific base and strong technological diffusion, helping to explain **stars** and **cash cows** and overall commercial success. The strategic question going forward however is how the BCG matrix can be applied strategically to explore and assess varietal performance according to market conditions and environmental changes due to climate change. The potential benefit of this approach to guide the economic future is to help offer both strategic insights to avoid a situation of continuing to produce grapes and/or styles of wine in a low-growth category (mature market) and gradually or rapidly losing market share as a result of competitive rivalry in those categories and/or declining consumer demand.

Headwinds facing the Limestone Coast

Overall, global consumption is dropping as can be seen in the figure below and insights report accessed [here](#). The Australian wine industry is facing a set of broad challenges

and the Limestone Coast is not immune to any of these challenges. A summary of these challenges are included below and in the [Appendix](#).



Figure 2 ACIL Allen 2024

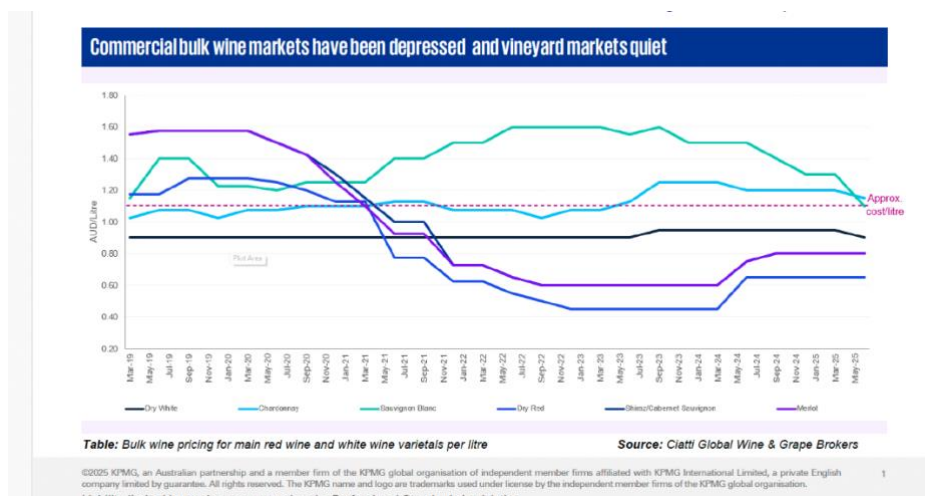


Figure 3 KPMG Wine Industry Insights Sept 2025

Geo-political shocks

The risk of geo-political jolts and the use of import duties continues to place a shadow over expectations of supply and demand dynamics in grapes and wine. The decision in 2021 by China's Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM) and a 218 per cent tariff for some exporters has made the Chinese export market for Australian wines tenuous. While the

election of the Albanese Government in May 2022 has improved the bilateral relationship, the rise of Trump politics and use of ‘Liberation day’ style trade decisions and retaliatory responses means that a ‘business as usual’ approach to Australia’s wine export markets is [tenuous](#). It would be an understatement to suggest that the Limestone Coast grape and wine industry is navigating a complex environment of economic pressure and marketing challenges. For example, many growers have struggled with suppressed prices in the bulk wine market due to competition from international suppliers and these tariff announcements.



Figure 4 Adaptation from Anderson (2024:18)

Declining demand and business model pressures

While the region may enjoy steady demand for the premium wine category, overall wine consumption in Australia has shown signs of stagnation and demand for bulk wine is questionable. Meanwhile, the rising cost of production, labour shortages, and climate change concerns that include water scarcity in dry periods, temperature variability, and the prospect of bushfires and smoke taint—have added pressure on vineyards and the business models of grape and wine producers. Echoing Kym Anderson’s report, low farm-gate prices, reliance on often tenuous contracts, and the opportunity for buyers to preserve margins at growers’ (increasing) expense has the potential to leave many privately owned farming businesses at a distinct disadvantage. The overarching strategic question is how might the Limestone Coast will continue to be a ‘region of value’ when it is at the mercy of market dynamics, compounded with geo-political headwinds that are very much outside out of the control of farm and wine business owners.

Generational consumer shifts

Generational shifts in consumers preferences present another challenge to the grape as Younger generations are less inclined to consume wine compared to [baby boomers](#). The wine industry requires new approaches and marketing strategies in the region need to adapt to this changing landscape. Targeting new demographics and experimenting with digital engagement

is key. For instance, the rise of direct-to-consumer sales and the expansion of e-commerce and engagement with consumers on a range of technological platforms is of paramount importance. Wine producers and associated businesses need to re-think how to connect with consumers and support the consumer experience, especially since COVID-19. An example of how Virtual Reality (VR) has been trialled to attract customers to the Riverland is provided as a case in point (Qesja & Bastian, 2023).

According to Wine Australia's 2025 On-Premise research, consumers today are concerned about the high mark-ups on wine lists as consumers often compare on-premise wine prices to retail benchmarks. This intensity of rivalry in off-premise wine market- an outcome of the oligopoly control of Australian wine production and retail and 'wine as commodity'- has implications as it leads to a reduced willingness of consumers to experiment due to the cost. This trend towards wine viewed as a commodity also has implications in an increasingly 'experience economy' when wine is juxtaposed against cocktails for their perceived "theatre" value. For many younger consumers wine is not as fun as cocktails, beer and the increasingly profitable Ready To Drink (RTDs) beverage category.

"Riverland on the Verge": The VR Project

The Scope of the Project

The "Riverland on the Verge" project aimed to promote international tourism (particularly focused on the USA and China due to being key Australian wine export markets) and consequently wine sales via the creation and distribution of a virtual reality experience of the Riverland wine region that accentuates the region's unique offering and addresses the constraints. The project, funded by Wine Australia, started in 2018 and included partners such as The University of Adelaide (in charge of conducting the research needed to inform what to include in the Riverland VR experience in order to increase its effectiveness), Riverland Wine Industry Development Council Inc. (in charge of the distribution of the VR experience together with PIRSA), the Department of Primary Industries and Regions (PIRSA), and 57 Films (in charge of creating the VR experience). While key motivation factors that influence destination selection of a wine region have been discussed, it is important to go one step further and explore the key motivators of the Chinese and American's tourists.

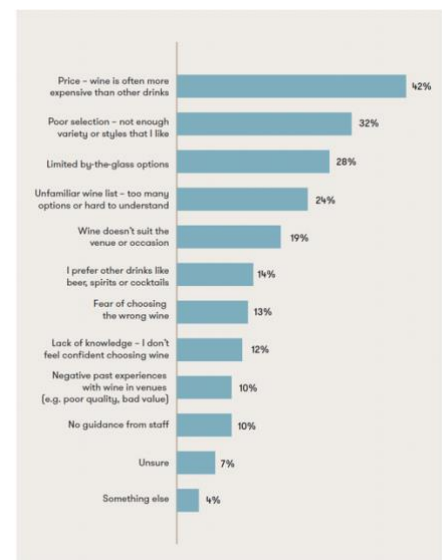
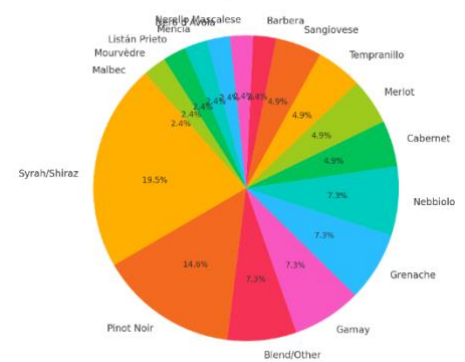


Figure 2 Consumption barriers. Wine Australia On-premise Research Report July 2025

“This is a sizeable market that is being reinvigorated by the refreshment and premiumisation trends”

For those that have strong product involvement with wine, there is a growing interest in alternative varieties. A rudimentary data analysis was conducted on a Melbourne on-premise location (see North Melbourne's Marquis of Lorne's wine list) to help gauge on-premise supply and demand. This analysis demonstrates an appetite and consumer demand for new varieties and storytelling through the use of special cuvees. This wine menu is full of stylistic experiments or reference to particular vineyards and plots that have the potential to draw the 'involved' wine consumer in. Tasmania producers such as [Dr Edge](#) take this to another level by geographical indicators e.g 'South', 'East', and 'North' to create and highlight a sense of place.

Distribution of Grape Varieties on Wine List



Direct Competition: National and Global Players

The Limestone Coast competes directly with regions either around Melbourne or Adelaide. In Victoria, the wine tourism industry has organised itself to present 'Victoria's Five Wine Pillars' which is a clever way to group otherwise disparate regions together. Shiraz Central (grouping together 250 wineries), Pinot Coast, and then Muscat of Rutherglen, Yarra Valley, and King Valley (with a clear connection to Prosecco)



In South Australia, the main competition is Barossa Valley, McLaren Vale, and Adelaide Hills, and further afield the Clare Valley. From a cool climate category perspective, the Limestone Coast competes with other cool climate regions such as Yarra Valley, Margaret River, and increasingly Tasmanian wine producers. Globally, the Limestone Coast, namely Coonawarra, faces competition from renowned wine regions such as Bordeaux in France and Napa Valley in the U.S., particularly in the premium wine segment. Bordeaux, known for its Cabernet blends, represents the Limestone Coast's most direct competitor, particularly in markets like the U.S. and China.

The most pressing headwind facing the Limestone Coast is that land is often understood as a commodity, one of the four factors of production in neo-classical economics, and can overlook a sense of place. As one respondent exclaimed,

“A narrow focus on short-term profit reduces the holistic value of wine, pushing markets to treat it as commodified SKUs rather than recognising its cultural and regional significance.”

The Limestone Coast enjoys large tracts of land and productive capacity but when wine is treated as a commodity, then it can fail to capture the inherent value of the region's distinctive and unique resource endowments. This report problematises this neo-classical approach by calling for the Limestone Coast to consider how the other factors of economic production- namely place and entrepreneurship- may be reemphasised in this equation- with a long-term vision in mind. Craggy Range, for example, formed a [1000-year trust](#) to foster long-term thinking. The attractiveness of the industry is consistently undermined and constrained by short-term contracts and decisions renewed on a short-term, year-by-year basis, making it difficult to attract workforce and hamstringing succession planning.

Beginning to look forward

In light of these trends, this report aims to encourage the development of the Limestone Coast wine region's capacity to respond to four of the five strategies outlined in Australia Grape and Wine's 2022-2027 strategy. Leaving aside the question of how to increase export sales given the structural issues of the Australian , the strategic question is how well the Limestone Coast is positioned to:

- ✓ Sell more wine domestically
- ✓ Develop new products
- ✓ Reduce costs/ improve efficiency
- ✓ Produce less grapes/wine

This section begins to shape a set of guiding principles to help the Limestone Coast navigate current challenges and chart a more strategic, sustainable path forward. It is clear that new strategies are required to better understand consumer drivers and a focus on grape varieties and new product development that offer best market growth. Furthermore, socio-cultural trends and concerns about climate change also offer an opportunity to rethink how grape and wine brands are perceived by next generation of consumers. Consumer trends are evolving like fashion, including a greater emphasis on a 'social licence to operate, with a younger generation increasingly focused on sustainability, ethical production, and health-related issues.

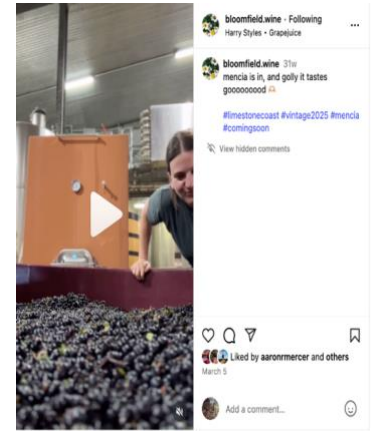
Realising this goal depends on the strength and creativity of local businesses. Yet, with grape prices falling and the costs of labour and logistics increasing, many producers have little room to innovate. What's needed is a collective, well-coordinated push to diversify markets and reinvest in science, innovation, and collaboration. This diversification could take shape across new geographies or by connecting with new consumer segments, helping the region adapt and thrive.

Wine as fashion

This report advocates a shift towards new varieties and creation of new categories (light and fresh) and new flavour profiles. The Ready to Drink (RTD) category is seeing great commercial success with a focus on seasonal, freshness e.g lemon, lime, and

potentially peach). This focus on 'refreshment' is noted in Wine Australia's [Market Bulletin](#).

From a (hedonistic) perspective, wine is about fashion and experimentation rather than maintenance of the status quo e.g 'age-old' categories such as Shiraz/ Cabernet/ Merlot and Chardonnay. For an example of new categories, it is promising to see lighter styles of wine receiving acclaim in the Limestone Coast 2024 Wine Show i.e.. Lauren Hansen's Mencia. The Chief Judge also gave recognition to the fact that the Limestone Coast was changing in a general openness to new varieties and styles.



While the grape and wine production on the coastal side of the Limestone Coast is incomparable to the productive capacity of Padthaway, Wrattenbully, and Coonawarra, there is real strength in the inherent diversity within the Limestone Coast region and arguably commercial promise in these coastal zones for attracting new customer segments. Anderson and Puga flags potential problems with planting decisions that are based on market trends and not on alignment with climatic suitability. However the Limestone Coast appears to well positioned geographically to pursue changes in varietal mixes to keep in step with climate change and to aim for more consumer friendly and premium wines.

[Strengthening the region through shared learning and innovation](#)

Long-term workforce planning gives businesses the confidence to grow and plan for the future. Yet short-term contracts and annual planning cycles often limit the ability to invest in people and skills. A shared regional focus on stability, training, and knowledge-sharing would help build a pipeline of skilled workers and future leaders. By nurturing next-generation talent and entrepreneurial capacity, the region can make careers in grape and wine—along with connected sectors—more attractive and secure. A place-based pillars approach to the future of grape and wine industry in the Limestone Coast.

Place-based pillars approach to the future of grape and wine industry in the Limestone Coast

A place-based pillars approach to the grape and wine industry recognises that regional renewal and innovation emerge most effectively when multiple levels of government, industry, and community collaborate around shared priorities and investment areas rather than isolated initiatives. This long-term approach positions proactive regional bodies such as the Limestone Coast Grape & Wine Council (LCGWC) as convenors and catalysts who are able to identify emerging risks and opportunities and to coordinate collective action before or during periods of economic and environmental disruption.

This approach reflects a qualitatively different philosophy of governance that moves beyond responding to relatively short-term regulatory jolts towards fostering whole-of-government approaches, anchored in clearly defined investment priority areas. A notable example is Mt Gambier's [2035 vision](#) that highlight five strategic priority areas that include environment and liveability, learning and innovation, infrastructure and services, economic and business growth, and a vibrant community.

Exemplar of interdependent pillars (Porto, Portugal)

This report incorporates research insights from an exemplar of renewal that can be found in Porto, Portugal (Loots et al, 2020). This empirical research explores place-based policies supported the development of cultural and creative industries (CCIs) which include businesses focussed on design, music, architecture, and the arts. This Porto case study is important for the Limestone Coast wine region as it represents the interplay between spatial development, cultural policy, and creative entrepreneurship and potentially help sustain primary industries such as grape and wine businesses in a mutually-reinforcing manner. While this is an urban case study, the lessons may be highly relevant for the scenario that Mount Gambier, and other councils, who catalyse shifts in regional identity as was seen in South-East Queensland between 1989-2005 (Staggs et al, 2021).

In policy and strategy terms, a regional shift in identity may involve:

- **Cultural planning and tourism:** celebrating hybridity, multiculturalism, and global connections (e.g., food festivals, creative industries, migrant entrepreneurship).
- **Economic strategy:** encouraging flows of talent, ideas, and capital and positioning the region as business friendly, globally competitive, and culturally vibrant.
- **Urban design and governance:** inclusive public spaces, recognition of Indigenous and migrant histories, and policies that welcome diverse participation in shaping the

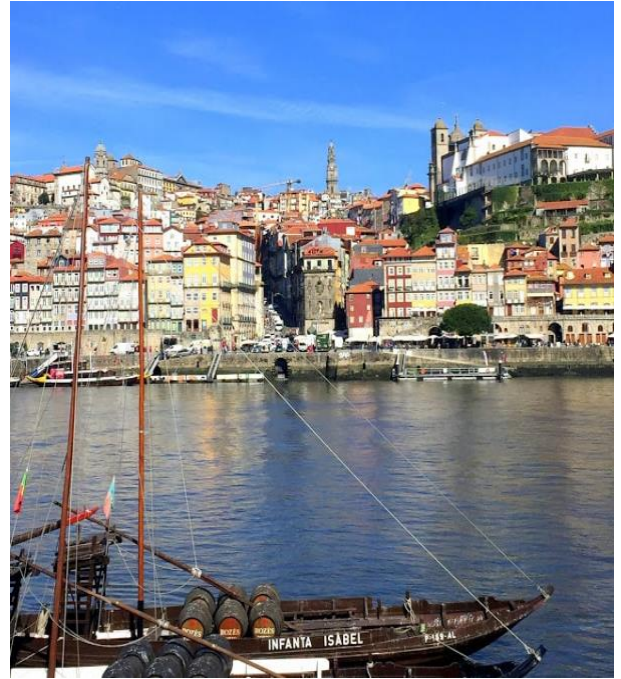


Figure 5 Revitalisation of Porto

- Regions cultivating **international linkages** through all levels of education, creative industries, and interstate and international migration as part of their local renewal.
- Recognizing **multiple heritages and futures** — Indigenous, migrant, environmental — as part of a shared regional identity

By calling for and aligning investment and policy efforts around these interdependent pillars, especially at the local government level, a place-based pillared approach strengthens the region's ability to drive long-term economic transformation built on local strengths and adaptive capacity.

Pillar 1- Cool Climate Leadership in a Climate Change Era

There is little doubt that the Limestone Coast to date has been well-positioned from a scientific and technological perspective to take more of a leadership role in the Australian wine industry. Producing approximately 10% of the Australian overall production, the Limestone Coast has the scale of production where important changes or innovations made in the region will help change commercial practices across the nation. In the interviews conducted for this project, a strong sense of viticulture excellence was evident along with a rich and long history of research translation. In

particular, corporate support for technical hub with teams, excursions, and early adoption of techniques has been a hallmark of the region.

There is no doubt that the region is supported from a sophisticated technical approach and data is increasingly used to support viticultural decisions and vine production optimisation. The collective geological and viticultural expertise means that viticulture in the Limestone Coast punches above its weight. The strategic question is to what extent the future & vineyard longevity can be assured by existing commercial rationalities and economic logic. Mechanisation has improved the efficiency of vineyards but does lead to reduced vineyard durability. Economic life of vines is approximately 20 years under mechanisation compared to 40 years traditionally, with visual decline occurring sooner. Leadership in this beverage category includes experimentation with wine varieties that match the consumer, the place and climate change resilience. This kind of leadership depends on the development of adaptive capacity in response to climate change. Researchers found that special investments will be needed to help wine production adapt to climate change (Merloni et al, 2018). Nearly half of respondents expected to invest in better irrigation systems to handle drought, and around 43% plan to take out insurance to protect against natural disasters. About a third (32%) think it's important to take training courses to stay up to date with new developments and technologies.

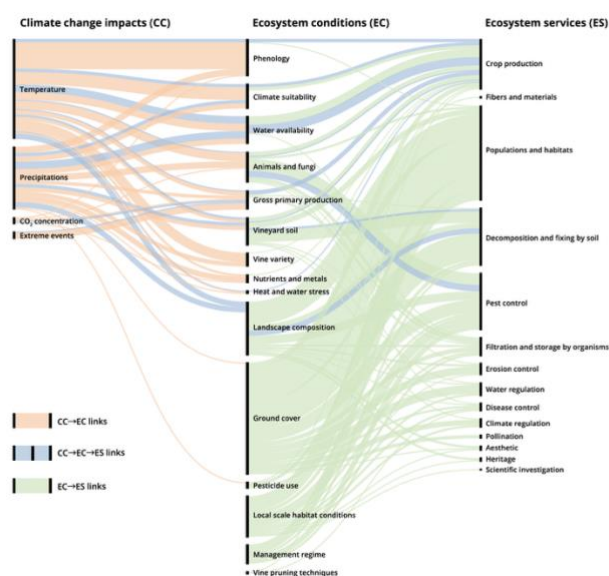
Here is an excerpt from Treasury Wine Estate Annual Report which outlines a number of key areas of development for the region more broadly to consider:

Impacts of climate-related change on TWE's ability to grow, make and market quality wines	We are exposed to threats and opportunities posed by climate change. As the climate changes, our ability to grow, make and market quality wines will be affected by more frequent extreme weather events and changing temperatures that affect the yield and quality of vineyards. In addition, there are related transition risks arising from policy, legal, technology, market and reputation changes associated with the transition (or lack of) to a low-carbon economy.	> Climate-adaptive business strategy including a multi-region sourcing model to mitigate over-reliance on a single region. > Adjusting our footprint to focus on sites where the conditions and access to water are projected to be more favourable. > Investment in key production assets to manage compressed vintages, which are becoming more frequent with climate change. > Climate and water risk assessments allow us to understand what opportunities and risks may emerge because of climate change and help to inform our adaptation responses. > Continued improvement of our data and weather forecasting abilities as well as investment in areas such as optimised irrigation and innovative agronomic practices. > Collaborating with a range of partners, such as universities, industry, and suppliers to improve our understanding of climate change and improve our practices. > Continuing to monitor and understand emerging trends, policy developments, and our emissions profile. > Developing business resilience through updated interventions or approaches to adapting to climate change. > Climate risk management (refer to page 45).
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Figure 6 Treasury Wine Estate 2025 Annual Report

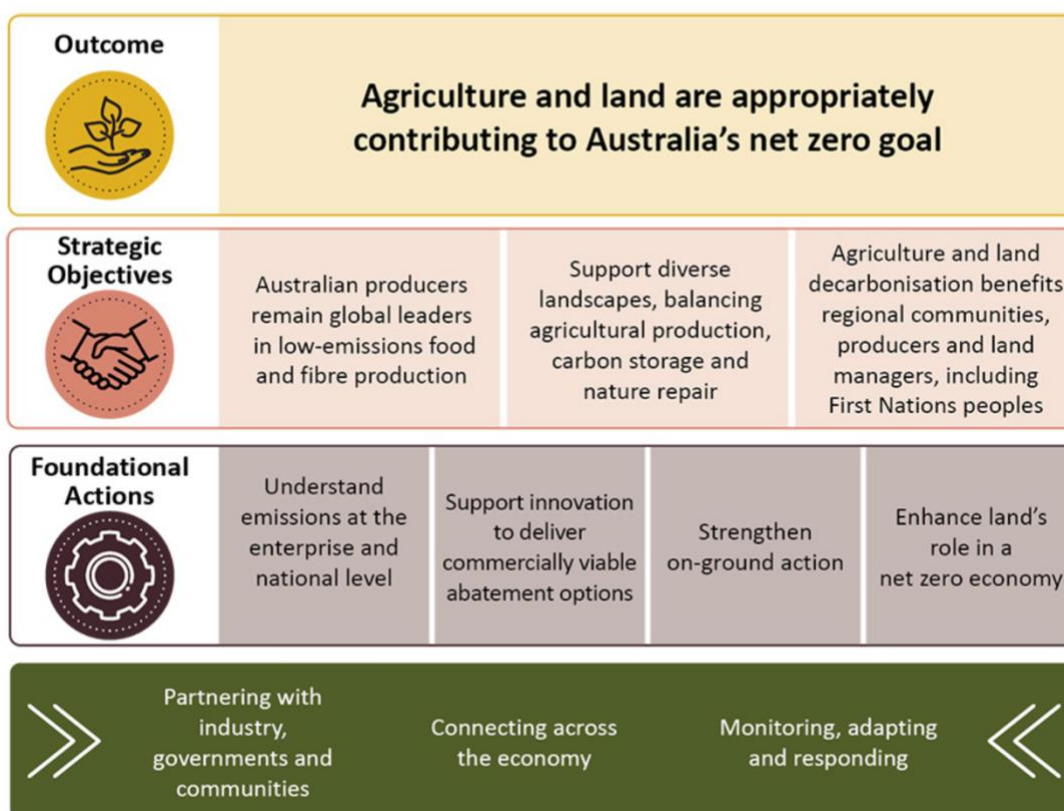
As the region looks forward, and considers environmental trends of climate change, the region may consider changing varieties or layouts in response to climate change. Investments need to be made to help support growers in their understanding of the land's variability such as the differences in soil type, moisture, and structure across the blocks, the more effective it can be to respond to climate change. To begin with, this might include soil tests or electromagnetic soil mapping to help identify zones that differ in soil texture, salinity, or moisture, giving a picture of how uniform (or not) the vineyard block is. Satellite analysis might be used to detect variations in vegetation, temperature, and also water stress. This pillar will enable the region to design the new vineyard more precisely so the replanting performs better and uses resources more efficiently.

Going beyond these viticultural measures, recent research has suggested that the approach to climate change and vineyard landscapes needs to be more integrated from an ecosystem perspective. Candiago et al (2023) argue that existing research tends to only focus on a number of ecosystems elements and does not take into account. In short, their research calls for a holistic focus to



vineyard landscapes as socio-ecological systems. By taking an ecosystem perspective, any adaptation strategies that emerge from empirical research are more effective due to their multi-disciplinary nature. For an example, Allen et al (2018) calls for nuanced research approaches to climate change that recognise how farmers' beliefs influence their choices and helping to bridge the gap between agricultural practice and conservation policy in diverse farming landscapes. By being ahead of this research curve, these approaches will be critical to keep in step with the 2025 Agriculture and Land Sector Plan as part of the Commonwealth Government's policy priorities towards [Net Zero](#) (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Framework for agriculture and land to contribute to Australia's net zero goal



Existing science research infrastructure to support agriculture in South Australia

Programs at the University of Adelaide, University of South Australia, Flinders University, TAFE SA, tech-colleges and industry-led research and innovation centres such as the Waite Research Institute, Forestry Centre of Excellence and Wine Innovation Hub foster continuous learning in areas including precision farming, food

science, wine, forestry and fishery management and best practice and sustainable manufacturing. These are listed here:

- The Waite Research Precinct has the largest concentration of expertise in the southern hemisphere in plant biotechnology, plant genomics, sustainable agriculture and land management.
- The wine innovation cluster at Waite is home to the Australian Wine Research Institute, University of Adelaide, South Australian Research and Development Institute (SARDI) and CSIRO, all with a long and proud history of supporting innovation in the Australian wine sector.
- SARDI, the South Australian Government's principal research institute, has played a key role in advancing the state's primary industries for more than 30 years.
- The new Forestry Centre of Excellence in Mount Gambier, providing international leadership in forest industries for research, education product and market development.
- The University of Adelaide's Roseworthy campus provides excellence in Animal and Veterinary Sciences teaching, research and clinical practice and is home to South Australia's only fully accredited veterinary school.

Examples of Place based policy- JIC

This report suggests that a focus on infrastructure can help support the future development of the Limestone Coast over the next five, ten, and twenty years. This approach builds on recent presentation delivered in Mt Gambier by Professor Andrew Beer who used the example of an Innovation Centre in Moravia (Beer (2025, July 23) to help catalyse industrial transformation according to place-based policy. This centre involved three universities in the region and joined with the Regional Office and the City Office of Brno to establish The South Moravian Innovation Centre – the JIC.

Drawing on contemporary ideas on regional innovations systems, the centre set out to oversee the development of a leading-edge innovation system in the region. The goal was to support services targeting firms, especially start-ups and later also mature companies. It set out to develop a range of support measures for start-ups and SMEs,

as well as networking initiatives. The JIC sought to develop and steer the Regional Innovation Strategy and to run four business incubators based on a limited number of high-value, knowledge-intensive sectors. The foundation of the JIC in regional innovation systems was combined with a focus on smart specialisation strategies, especially through a focus on encouraging research and development activity and collaborative working amongst entrepreneurs.

Analogous to the Department of Primary Industries' [demo farm](#) in Nuriootpa, the Limestone Coast offers a suitable site of specialisation for Australia's grape and wine future. While other cool climate regions are innovating eg. Tasmania, Hilltops, Orange for some examples, the Limestone Coast offers a depth and scale to help shape a new Australian wine identity.

Investment Attraction for a 'Cool-climate Centre of Excellence'

Through its focus on building knowledge intensity in cool climates and climate resilience, the Limestone Coast might position itself as a hub for smart infrastructure, fostering innovation in varietal selections, technology uptake, and new opportunities in research. The forestry industry has set a precedent in the region for such an investment into a [Centre of Excellence](#)- and in a Schumpeterian worldview, investments into research and development and technologies play a crucial role in securing future economic prosperity. Furthermore, if these investments into 'smart' infrastructure are conducted with an 'open innovation' philosophy, there are knowledge spillover benefits and long-term pay off to investments in terms of human capital and productivity in the region. Attracting strategic corporate investment for such a centre offers a way to balance immediate commercial pressures with longer-term regional and industry development goals.

Table 2. Examples of varieties being cultivated in established and emerging cool climate regions. Information provided by regional growers groups or individual producers in each region.

Region	Typical Varieties
Okanagan Valley, Canada	Merlot, Pinot Gris, Chardonnay, Pinot Noir
England	Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, Bacchus
Denmark	Rondo, Müller-Thurgau, Solaris
Nova Scotia, Canada	Cabernet Franc, Chardonnay, Pinot
Puget Sound, Washington USA	Madeleine Angevine, Siegerre
Leelanau Peninsula, Michigan USA	Riesling, Pinot Gris, Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, Cabernet Franc, numerous hybrids
Sweden	Chardonnay, Vidal, Regent, Solaris, Rondo
Poland	Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, Regent, Solaris
Netherlands	Chardonnay, Pinot Gris, Müller-Thurgau, Regent
Tasmania, Australia	Pinot Noir, Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc
Malleco, Chile	Pais
Central Otago, New Zealand	Pinot Noir, Pinot Gris, Riesling
Rio Negro, Argentina	Sauvignon Blanc, Merlot, Pinot Noir, Malbec



The State Government has today released new artist impressions of the Forestry Centre of Excellence (FCE) being built in Mount Gambier and officially launched today.

Potential specialisation pathways and flagship programs

Flagship Program	Focus	Impact
Smart Viticulture and Digital Transformation	Applying AI, remote sensing, and data analytics to optimise vineyard management, grape quality, and yield forecasting.	Builds resilience and competitiveness through precision viticulture and predictive modelling.
Biosecurity Innovation and Capability Development	Enhancing biosecurity infrastructure and training, including wash-down facilities, monitoring stations, and digital pest surveillance.	Protects the region's viticultural assets, ensures continuity of trade, and demonstrates proactive leadership in agri-innovation.
Indigenous and Local Knowledge for Sustainable Land Stewardship	Integrating First Nations knowledge of groundwater, soils, and geology with modern viticultural science to deepen understanding of terroir, water security, and sustainable land use.	Strengthens place-based innovation and aligns with reconciliation, sustainability, and community engagement priorities.

Pillar 2- Innovative Hospitality in the Experience Economy

The grape and wine industry is a major draw for tourism in the Limestone Coast. Wineries attract visitors for wine tastings, tours, and events, which in turn support local businesses such as hotels, restaurants, cafes, and event organizers. This positive contribution is supported by accommodation providers including motels, guesthouses, and B&Bs. Food and beverage are increasingly inseparable and many restaurants and cafes in the region partner with local wineries to offer wine pairings and promote local produce, creating a symbiotic relationship between food and wine tourism.

Service innovation in the experience economy – strategic focus on food and travel and not wine

The Limestone Coast is well-positioned to capture value from the hospitality and tourism industries with increased investment and the pursuit of entrepreneurial opportunities. The future of the region requires a new generation of business owners to innovate and be highly engaged participants in a higher-order value chain, aiming at consumers who will pay current price or a premium for experience. This approach draws on insights where businesses who use storytelling and symbolism effectively can make their food and wines feel more authentic and relevant. It reflects a broader generational shift from traditional wine drinkers to younger audiences who engage with wine as part of a cultural or experiential identity (for an exemplar see [Appendix](#)).

However consumer trends and scholarly research indicate that food and travel intertwined are driving consumer behaviour. Data obtained at the 2025 Australian Distillers Association annual conference indicates that younger generation of consumers do not use alcohol as the primary vehicle or way to signal social status or cultural capital. It appears that food is a pivotal vehicle with scholarly research by Basle (2023) explaining how food has evolved from a basic necessity to a primary motivation for travel. Importantly she finds that providing a high-quality gastronomic offer is still a restaurant's primary function, quality is no longer enough; today's demanding guests seek unique and memorable dining experiences. The opportunity for grape and wine

industry is to help consumers discover themselves through food and travel primarily, and grapes and wine secondarily.

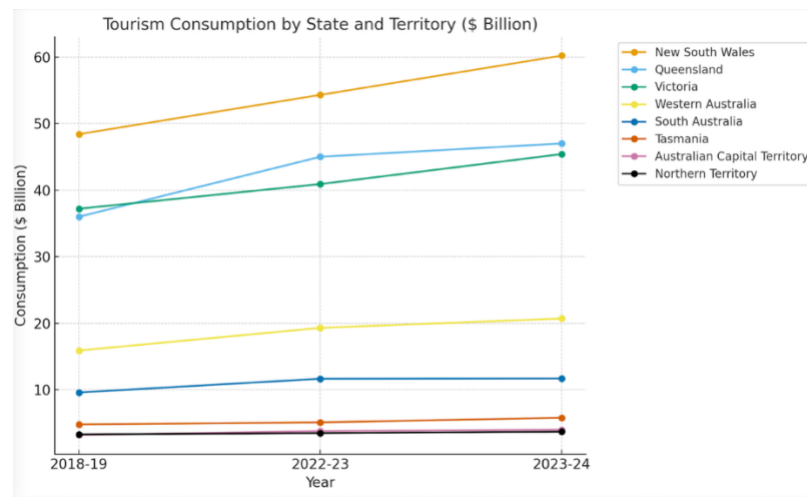
As one respondent explained:

“The economic opportunities for our future will be underpinned by a kind of flexibility, bordering on agnosticism, about what the region can offer. The overarching goal is to develop competences of innovativeness and creativity to succeed in the experience economy”.

Before delving into trends in relation to grape and wine industry, a broader overview of tourism trends on a state on state basis is presented.

New South Wales, Queensland, and Victoria have traditionally been strong tourism destinations and the graph below demonstrates the size of these markets. According to these figures, South Australia is ranked fourth in Australia in total consumption.

Broad State view of Tourism (by size of total consumption market)



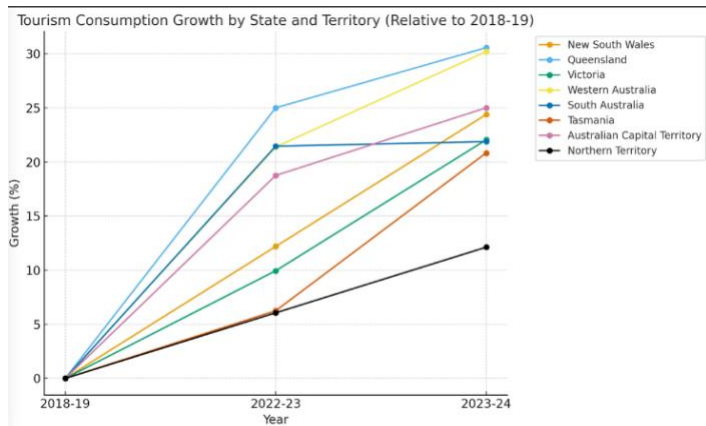
What is driving growth in tourism?

Pullman & Gross (2004) offer some thoughtful ways to explore the transition towards the experience service design. This research explores how service innovation can

create experiences that influence and drive loyalty behaviours. This approach recognises the role of emotions in customer behaviour and what specific service design elements influence these emotions. A promising way forward for the Limestone Coast is digital storytelling that can be used as firm specific resources e.g attracting traffic to firm websites but also social media traction. This approach has significant economic potential to those firms/ business managers who focus on service innovation.

This section provides an outline of the growth rates post-COVID-19 to help identify trends in consumer behaviour. In this graph, the steepest gradient belongs to Tasmania which may provide some important lessons for the Limestone Coast, given the similarity as a cool climate wine region.

Tasmania has done some good work in the visitor economy strategy based on a set of values that is place-based and to embrace what is different and special about this place and its people. The strategy focusses on being champions of their natural environment,



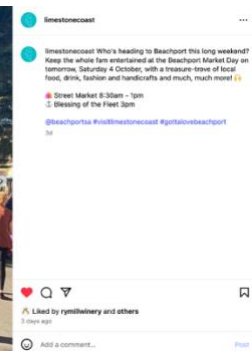
leveraging the beauty of the landscape that underpins the Tasmanian way of life, and recognising that the natural environment is finite and precious and is core to the reputation and integral to the brand. Importantly, the strategy focusses on the workforce with an emphasis on creativity, entrepreneurship, and innovation. Culture and heritage play an important part and a focus on authenticity, community, and experience reflect a sense of place.

Building on this, Parker et al (2025) conducted an insightful study of the Salamanca Markets in Hobart where they show how the sights, sounds, and smells of Salamanca Market create its special atmosphere and sense of place. It shows that these sensory qualities are a key part of what makes the market meaningful to the local community and visitors alike. However, they argue that this does not happen automatically and design thinking, careful planning, and event management are needed to protect the market's distinctive atmosphere. This includes its wooden structures, smells, and live music, so that its unique character is preserved for the future.



'Such sensory elements could be considered landmarks, smellmarks or soundmarks, being iconic of the Market and culturally valuable, and should be suitably recorded and/or protected as important attributes of Salamanca Market's cultural heritage'

Visitors are increasingly seeking immersive, sensory-rich experiences that allow them to feel connected to place and contribute to a stronger sense of regional identity. The Tasmania experience should be an encouragement for the Limestone Coast to consider how



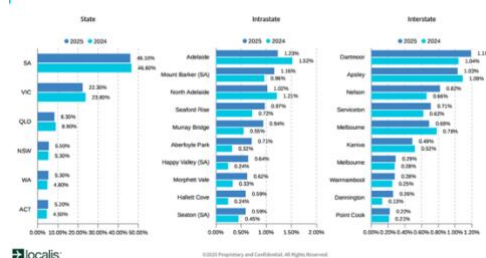
all sites, including heritage sites, located within the Limestone Coast wine region are managed and distinctive atmospheres are designed and created. A recent Beachport Instagram post is included as a positive direction taken by [Limestone Coast](#) which careful curation of photos taken by creative professionals. While there is a mixed success in this space e.g. Limestone Coast Wine Trails, social media trends show growing public interest in food, wine, and travel. This presents the LCGWC with a chance to consider how to partner with [Limestone Coast](#) to refresh and promote the region's identity through authentic, community-driven digital storytelling.

Limestone Coast Tourism Overview

This section provides information on where visitors to the Limestone Coast are coming from, and sourced from the Monthly Limestone Coast Tourism Data Snapshot (May 2025). They indicate the two highest state segments, unsurprisingly, are South Australia and Victoria with over 2/3 of visitors coming from those states.

Interstate + Intrastate Source Markets

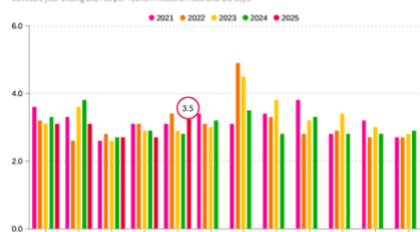
This section compares visitation to Limestone Coast by state, city, South Australian suburbs (excluding locals of LGA's in Limestone Coast) and interstate suburbs for the most recently completed month versus the same month last year.



Mt Gambier airport connects primarily to the Adelaide and Melbourne markets and the airport is relatively small in terms of route diversity and volume. The airport underwent significant upgrades including a new terminal and runway extension, completed around early 2021, which might influence capacity and trends though the prospect of more routes. Lobbying for flights direct from Brisbane and Perth might see these other regional markets improve in terms of visitation given that it is too far to self-drive. QantasLink recently made a [controversial decision](#) to close three regional bases causing some union and political backlash. Perhaps counter-intuitively, this move may present a window of opportunity to lobby for new direct flights to test and measure new market demand.

Length of Stay

Length of stay is the amount of time that was booked at the accommodation. Note: Length of stay for domestic and international travellers year ending 2024 as per Tourism Research Australia: 2.8 days.



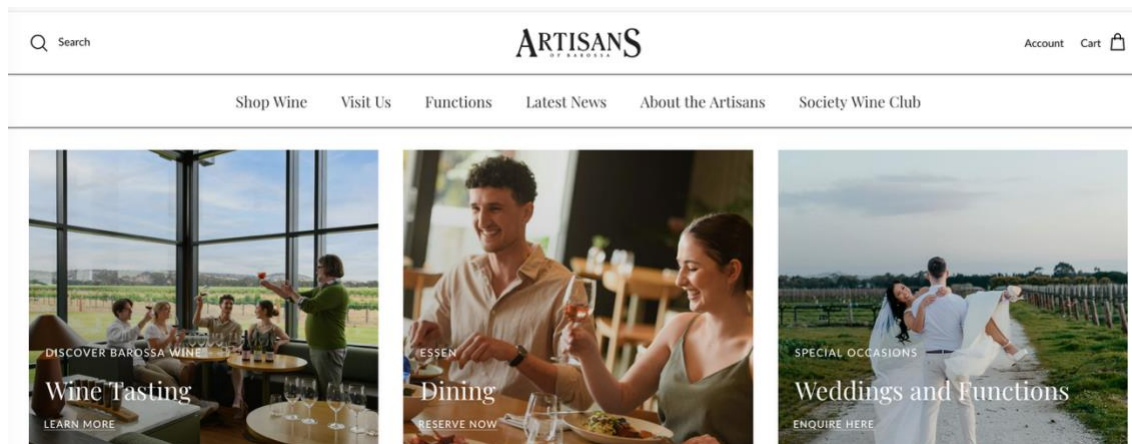
The average stay in the Limestone Coast is approximately three day according to this graph. While this is positive indicator of visitor engagement, this number may be largely made up by visitors who are visiting relatives or friends. Nevertheless, the region's geographic size may mean that short stays e.g 2-3 days may limit exposure to its full range of attractions, reducing opportunities for deeper regional dispersal and spending. A focus moving forward, over the next five years, could be to see that length of stay increase to five days using cross-promotional ['passport'](#) opportunities between businesses across the region to help encourage

visitors to stay longer and experience the entire region. A practical way to prepare for this is to ensure electric charging stations are available in all accommodation facilities to support the transition to electric vehicles in tourism (Day , & Alavipour, R, 2023). Electric vehicle sales in Australia are [sky-rocketing](#) yet the infrastructure needs to be in place to support this transition.

Tourism economic scenarios in the Limestone Coast

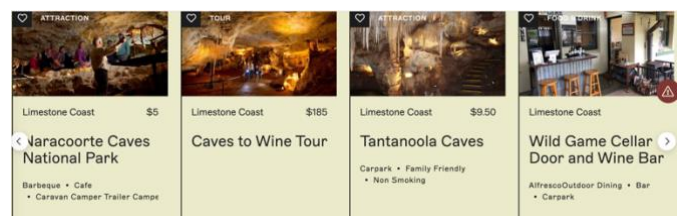
At a state level, a positive policy direction is being taken by the South Australia government towards the promotion of agri-tourism. While the wine industry is not explicitly included in this policy, it has the potential to drive innovation and the creation of new revenue streams around on-farm experiences and capitalising on consumer trends around 'paddock to plate' experiences. The strategic question is how Limestone Coast can feature in a national and international value chain in a way that Kangaroo Island, for example, is recognised. A goal over the next five years could to be included in Tourism Australia's [Signature Experiences](#) program that focusses on 'world-class special interest tourism experiences that drive consumer behaviour'. While the Limestone Coast does not feature in this program, the LCGWC should jointly consider how its strategies and efforts across the networks can align with this strategy as it taps into an international value chain (See Staggs & Brenner, ? for the benefits of this strategy). A potential way to move forward in this alignment is to partner with 'Lodges of Australia' and a serious commitment to accommodation infrastructure that would support the future attractiveness of the Limestone Coast grape and wine industry.

Meanwhile, the Limestone Coast offers a diverse range of cellar door tasting and some signature experiences available, though the latter tends to be sporadic and not well-resourced as compared with other wine regions. Anecdotal evidence would suggest that some producers are at a tipping point where they could do away with opening on Sundays as it is expensive from a staffing perspective. To help share expenses, the [Artisans of the Barossa](#) presents a compelling example of collaboration which includes a number of business models, including wine sales, dining, and events. This represents a collaboration between John Duval Wines, Spinifex Wines, Sons of Eden, Lienert Vineyards, Schwarz Wine Co., Hobbs of Barossa Ranges and Chaffey Bros. Wine Co.

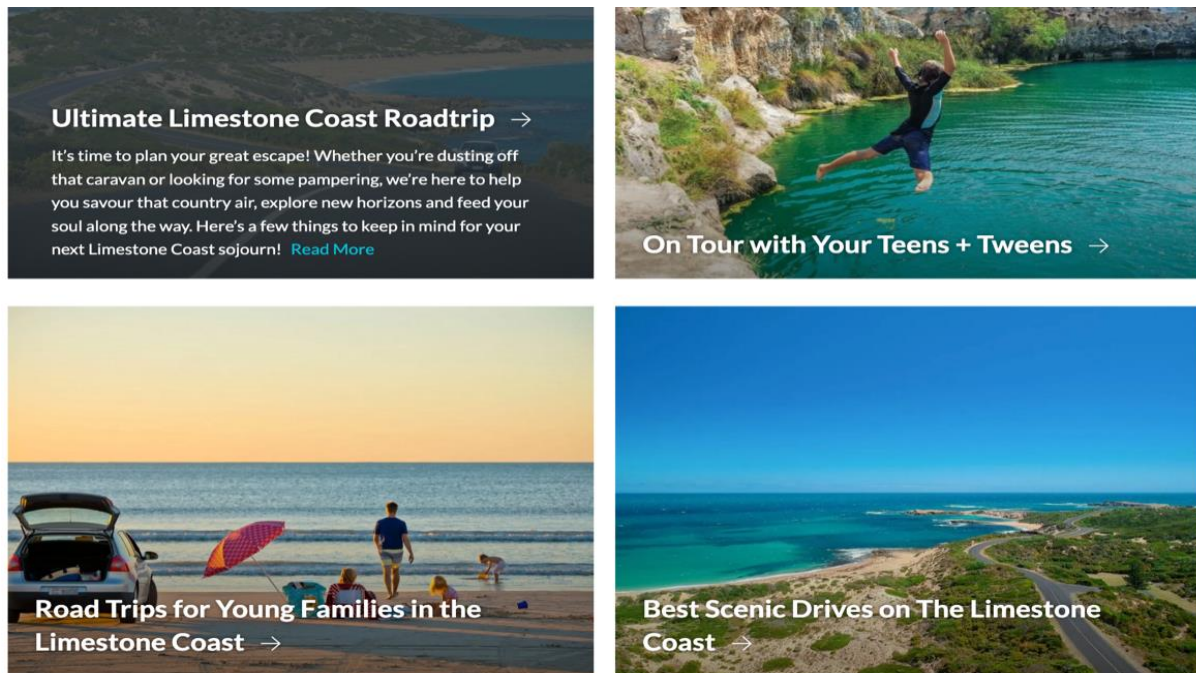


Special interest tourism

The Limestone Coast is uniquely positioned to make this central to place branding as it contains World Heritage geological features. The Limestone Coast enjoys a geological narrative as an ancient place has great potential as a catalyst to drive special interest tourism that builds on natural endowments. However the National Parks and Wildlife Service South Australia landing page is arguably too generic and requires high degree of existing knowledge to find the Limestone Coast. While the role of the



Department of Environment is not to promote the grape and wine industry, more might be done to catalyse engagement and interest in South Australia's natural resources via tourism pathways, and vice versa, and to encourage longer stays in the region. Currently, this site seems to be aimed at the no-frills bush enthusiast (see [TripAdvisor](https://www.tripadvisor.com.au)). This is in stark contrast to the outstanding and targeted work of visitlimestonecoast.com.au



While there was mention in interviews about a South Government national park tourism catalyst project, this park an opportunity to present the Limestone Coast wine region in this key strategic place. McLaren Vale has created a regionally unique 'servicescape' across a range of cellar doors with geological mapping helping to tell their stories (see [Skinner](#) for more information). By bringing attention to the unique geological nuances of the region, the region has witnessed the growth of wine varieties such as [Grenache](#). According to Wine Australia, the growth in demand has seen the price of Grenache grapes increase from \$577 per tonne in 2014 to \$986 per tonne in 2019. In 2020, the average value of Grenache grapes exceeded that of Shiraz in McLaren Vale for the first time. This is a fascinating case to observe the interplay between place and grape and wine industry, including tourism.

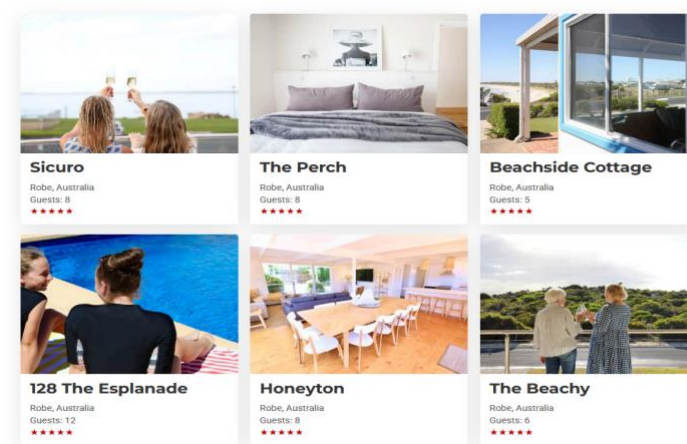
Agri-business tourism

On the food front, the Limestone Coast is well positioned with businesses such as [Holla Fresh](#), located between Millicent and Mt Gambier, who produces herbs such as watercress. Other producers are well positioned to speak to themes of provenance and the development of a clearer regional identity around food. A strategic focus and funding on agri-business clusters has the potential to complement to grape and wine with a clear identity, membership base, and brand that aimed to unite sectors under the banner of ***Unearth our treasures***. A focussed strategy on farmers markets may be

an opportunity to face the consumer and build a platform to recognise the value of the visitor economy.

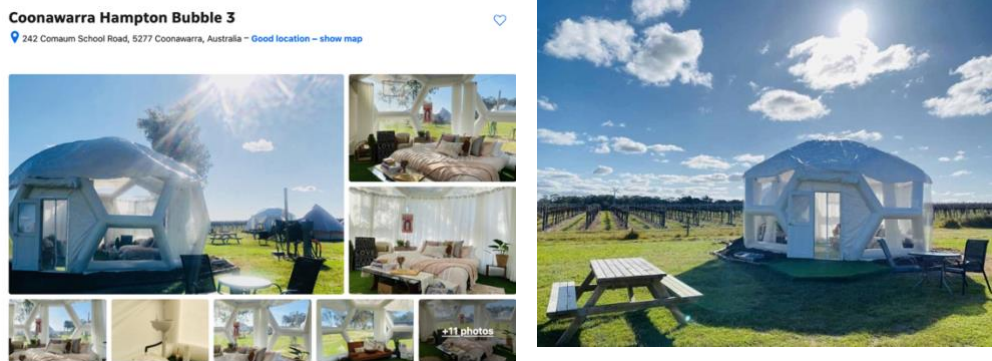
Existing Accommodation in the Limestone Coast

While there are a good number of holiday houses that are utilised on the Airbnb platform, this tends to work for Mt Gambier and Robe, and may not necessarily prepare the Limestone Coast for the experience economy which is expected to develop in the next five to ten years.



Happy Shack

Respondents argued that Coonawarra accommodation needs an update and the State visitor strategy has recognised that some 4-5 star accommodation is needed. In general, the accommodation in some parts of the region is quite tired and needs reimagining to attract the high value traveller they need to develop more scale and quality. There are some promising trends with some boutique accommodation in Robe at [Stoney Lodge](#) and [Delgattie Estate](#) in Mt Gambier. These options have required multi-million dollar investments but there may be other options to help the Limestone Coast pivot towards the experience economy. Innovators such as [CABN](#) operate in generally in fairly remote places and offer off grid accommodation options that can help support the scale. Here is an example of a Coonawarra Hampton Bubble as the 'first fruits' of this kind of positive ambition:



Innovative Hospitality Scenarios in the Experience Economy

Imagining and investing in hospitality scenarios is essential to transforming the Limestone Coast from a drive-through location into a true destination. Unlike regions near Melbourne, Adelaide, or Sydney that rely on convenience tourism with day-trippers and spontaneous weekend visitors drawn by proximity, the Limestone Coast must compete as a genuine stay-based destination. This means that expanding hospitality capacity, both in scale and in diversity of options, will enable visitors to commit to longer stays. This has economic potential when it amplifies the consumer-attraction strategies of local wine producers.

When grapes and Wine meet food and accommodation in the Experience economy?



Meet Sophie (32) and James (34) are a professional couple from Melbourne who live active, culturally engaged lives. Both are university-educated, career-focused, and love to spend weekends escaping urban intensity. They value good

design, local food, and experiences that align with their personal ethos of growth and

balance. This customer is searching for a physical environment that interweaves design, ambience, and service style that aligns with their self-image and expectations.

Figure 7 Primary Motivations (linked to Lin & Mattila, 2010)



In this persona, the primary motivations of these consumers require a shift away from primary production and the beverage industry towards the experience economy and a shift towards hedonic tourist. This builds on the work of tourism scholars (Demeter, 2024, MacInnes, 2024) who challenge the view that tourists are motivated by marketing aimed at sustainability and found that enjoyment-based and habit are drivers for tourism. The Limestone Coast needs to appeal to the hedonic consumer in a multi-dimensional way. In this new paradigm, alcohol still plays a part but is part of a broader hedonistic experience something unique.

These unique experiences connect well in the digital economy e.g reels, stories that help consumers create a new meaningful personal story/ QR code/ Instagram. This builds on research by Scott McCabe from the Birmingham Business School argues that indulgence/ hedonism trumps sustainability in driving tourist behaviour. Even though there's been decades of research into green consumerism and sustainable behaviour, the basic motives that shape our choices such as social pressure, curiosity, and how we see ourselves prevail. These motives often lead to over-consumption, feelings of missing out, or wanting to look a certain way to others. So while some people or situations may encourage more sustainable choices, these will probably always make up just a small slice of the market.

Experimentation with Tiny Homes

While existing accommodation providers may express reservations about the introduction of Tiny Houses in the region, these smaller, design-focused spaces nonetheless offer distinct hedonic value when thoughtfully integrated into the regional experience. Rather than competing with traditional accommodation, they can complement it by catering to visitors seeking a sense of belonging, simplicity, and renewal, potentially aiming at those wanting to recharge, digitally disconnect, and escape the routines of daily life. When framed within a broader destination narrative of wellbeing, inclusion, and connection to place, such offerings can enhance the region's appeal to younger and experience-driven travellers. These experiences can help reposition the Limestone Coast as both restorative and invigorating.

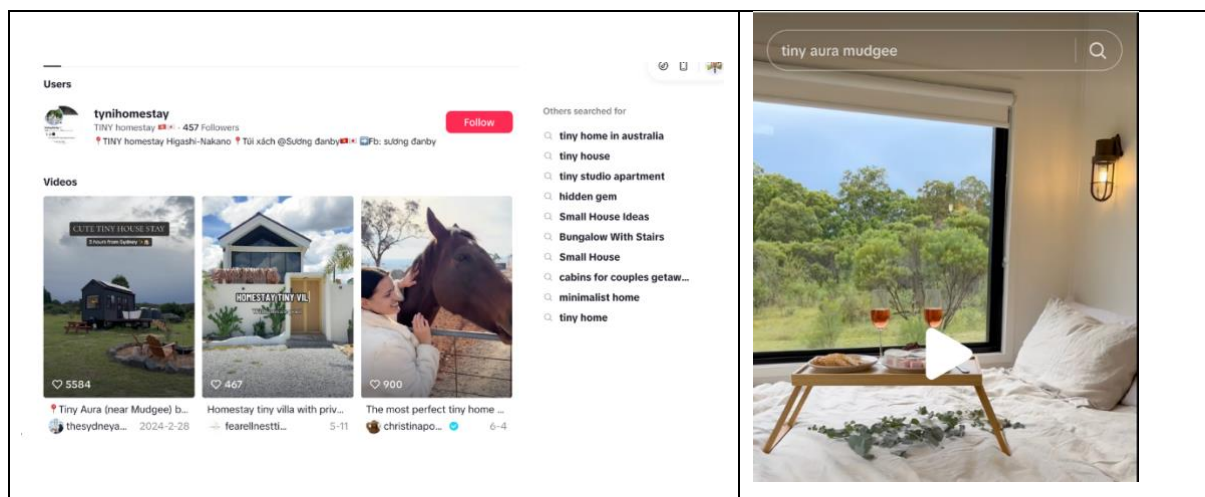
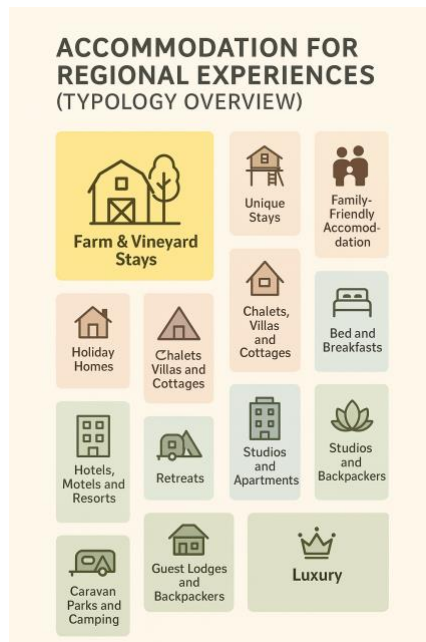


Figure 8 Mudgee tiny house 3 hours from Sydney, AI voiceover



The Limestone Coast is far from capital cities of Adelaide and Melbourne. The strategic challenge is to promote the region as more of a destination and to create a 'Mecca effect'. A review of Orange wine region offers a number of potential ways forward for future entrepreneurialism (Elliot, 2025). These include diversification with wine and food venues expanding their roles from casual bars to curated experiences. There is also a refreshing authenticity & storytelling with an emphasis on family legacies, agrarian sourcing, and terroir-driven narratives. A strong focus on foraging & seasonality, local soils and heritage farming

underpin menus. There is also an openness to fusion creativity where cultural techniques meet regional produce in innovative pairings. Finally the value proposition is clear relative to Sydney with high-quality dining at more accessible price ([see suggested itinerary in appendix](#))

Service dimension matrix

The 'service dimension matrix' (see below) offers a holistic perspective of the type of food and beverage (F&B) operations that are possible. This matrix can help appraise the region's current offerings and establish a baseline. It can also be used strategically to consider what the region can offer in the future to be more nimble in this space. Perhaps counter-intuitively, in this appraisal process the Limestone Coast wine region may recognise a gap in businesses that offer standardised fast service, recognising that consumer values range from the 'hedonic' (pleasurable and luxurious F&B in experience restaurants) and the utilitarian (F&B at scale with obvious budgetary relief) (Ryu et al, 2010). The Limestone Coast wine region might benefit from a balanced approach to F&B offerings that will allow visitors to budget out their average F&B spend, potentially as a driver for multiple-night stays. This appears to be an entrepreneurial opportunity in this space.

	Low Procedural	High Procedural
Low Convivial	Standardized fast-service firms (e.g. fast food or service-at-scale)	Routine high-efficiency operations with minimal human warmth
High Convivial	Casual social settings—some emphasis on experience, but light on process	Destination/experience restaurants: high-quality execution + warm, engaging social service

Pillar 3- Agri-Business Education

The Grape and Wine industry makes an important economic contribution to the region and beyond through employment generation, investments into training/ knowledge infrastructure, domestic and international market growth, and hospitality and tourism revenue that is directly and indirectly attributable to the wine and grape industry. The Limestone Coast is well-positioned from a wine knowledge infrastructure perspective.

The South Australian government through the Department of Primary Industries and Regions (PIRSA) has signalled an important shift in industry policy in its '[More than just an industry](#)'. This innovative White Paper has the potential to set the scene for the next five, ten, and twenty years in the Limestone Coast for its capacity to look beyond production of grape and wine to the type of economy and society that the local and regional community wants. As one respondent shared, "I want us to be successful in 100 years from now". This lends to a multi-generational perspective and raises the question of the next generation's appetite and preparedness to continue in the grape and wine industry in the Limestone Coast.

The region faces the complex task of helping to support economic resilience and sustainability into the future. The long-term prosperity depends on much more than infrastructure or short-term job creation but also initiatives that reflect an attempt to build adaptive capacity in the long-term. As part of this, strong local governance, the encouragement of new products, services, and even industries is key to ensure that the Limestone Coast can chart its own development path. There are policy signals and drivers for the inclusion of biosecurity, workforce development, and carbon farming and the Limestone Coast sits at the intersection of climate change, economic diversification, and social renewal.

At the same time, there is a clear effort to address structural inequities and build inclusion into regional growth strategies. Programs that promote First Nations knowledges and

ENABLE REGIONAL GROWTH	
Support key regional development drivers	
ACTIVITY	LEAD DIVISION AND DIVISIONAL PARTNERS
- MAJOR PROGRAMS & REGIONS - BIOSECURITY - FISHERIES & AQUACULTURE - CORPORATE SERVICES - INDUSTRY, STRATEGY & PARTNERSHIPS - SARDI	
PRIORITY: 5.1 Take a leadership role in establishing and activating policies, frameworks and partnerships that enable regional development	
Continue to deliver the new direction of investment through the Thriving Regions Fund with the aim of achieving thriving, resilient regional communities with improved quality of life, diverse leadership, attracting and retaining a skilled workforce, and capitalising on growth potential	●
Continue to foster and support regional projects enabling new economic opportunities and building and strengthening regional communities through PIRSA's Principal Regional Advisors	●
Chair and coordinate cross agency working group to consider and support project applications to the Commonwealth Government's Regional Precincts and Partnerships Program	●
PRIORITY: 5.2 Support economic development and local employment in regions	
Continue to support the work of the Regional Development Australia associations to deliver their place-based projects and programs, highlight investment opportunities and priorities in the region, and partner in the delivery of the Regional Leadership Development Program for a further two years	●
Continue to support the delivery of government policy priorities in regional South Australia	●
Continue delivering the state-wide Aboriginal Fisheries Officer Career Pathway Program	●
Deliver a program of priority activities to enhance economic participation by Aboriginal communities and businesses in South Australian primary industries	●
Provide advice and assistance to connect at least five Aboriginal businesses, communities or organisations to government services or industry organisations to take advantage of new economic opportunities	●
Support the development of a National Statement on First Nations in Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry to drive greater economic inclusion for First Nations Australians in agriculture, fisheries and forestry	●
Continue to work with the APY Executive on the development of a large scale carbon farming project	●

Figure 9 PIRSA 2024/2025 Corporate Strategy

participation in agriculture, fisheries, and entrepreneurship point to a shift toward more socially grounded economic development and one that values First Nations knowledge, community leadership, and cultural continuity as central to regional futures.

Education institutions have a part to play in supporting these promising industry policy directions. A recent approach is outlined below to provide guidance and inspiration to the education and training pathways that could be developed in the Limestone Coast in response to growing workforce needs of modern agriculture.

A new University of Queensland initiative, the [AgriSkills Accelerator](#), has received government support to give students from a wide range of disciplines the chance to explore careers in Australia's agriculture sector. The program aims to attract more skilled and diverse talent to meet the growing workforce needs of modern agriculture.

Funded through the Australian Government's AgConnections – Skilled Agricultural Work Liaison pilot project, the program will offer multidisciplinary, team-based placements where students gain hands-on experience with industry partners. The unique feature of the program is its collaborative, cross-disciplinary design. Students from fields such as animal science, biotechnology, business, engineering, environmental science, and mathematics will work together, bringing fresh perspectives and complementary skills to agricultural challenges.

The program helps dismantle misconceptions about careers in agriculture—often seen as limited to those from rural backgrounds or family farms. He said AgConnections seeks to showcase the diversity of opportunities across the sector, encouraging greater participation from women and Indigenous Australians.

The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry has contributed nearly \$250,000 to support the initiative, with UQ providing additional cash and in-kind backing.

Students will be mentored by academics and PhD candidates throughout their placements, with travel grants and bursaries available for Indigenous, rural, and disadvantaged participants to ensure equitable access to opportunities in the agricultural workforce.

Initiatives such as these highlight the nexus between higher education and the agricultural industry's future capacity. Another example, again from Queensland, is the Queensland College of Wine Tourism (QCWT) which might be used as an exemplar to offers some insights on how the Limestone Coast as a region could approach the future. This \$6.5m facility was established in 2007 as part of the Queensland Government's 'Smart State' strategy. The QCWT is similarly distant from a capital city (3 hours from Brisbane) and helps support a wine



region that is infinitely smaller than the Limestone Coast. The QCWT consists of teaching infrastructure (rooms & IT), conference facilities, restaurant, and working winery for students undertaking vocational training. This kind of facility could help the Limestone Coast develop new education and training pathways, as well as new revenue sources (see Wine Immersion/WSET quote), and possibilities and help it respond to the workforce challenges facing the region.

Investing into the future workforce

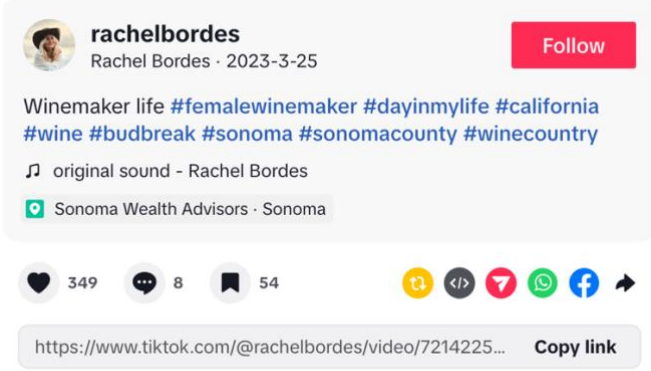


Figure 10 University students paying to pick grapes

There are of course broader challenges to the agri-business workforce that will not be overcome by investment into infrastructure alone. According to PIRSA (2024), there are formidable barriers and challenges in attracting the next generation into South Australia's food, wine, and agri-business sector. This is an opportunity space for the Limestone Coast as it develops entrepreneurial capabilities to help overcome those barriers and challenges.

A curated set of these obstacles from this report are outlined below with corresponding entrepreneurial opportunities and/or pathways that align with existing regional resources and capabilities.

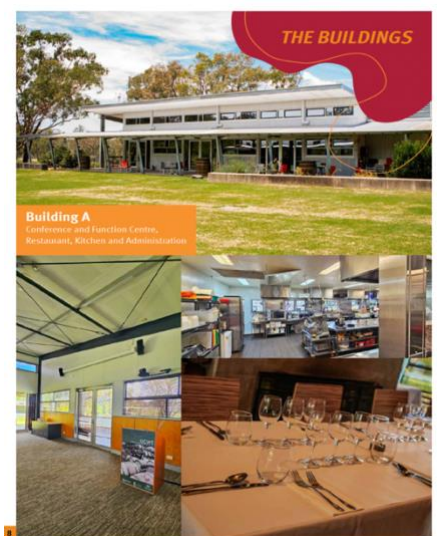
Barriers and challenges in workforce attraction	Entrepreneurial opportunity and/or training pathway
Seasonal fluctuations in labour demand and rural living pose unique challenges to attraction and retention of workers in some occupations, particularly for smaller organisations.	Entrepreneurial LGA to consider how to make the region more attractive along regional lifestyle See Goondiwindi's 2018 success named as best regional town in Weekend Australian Dreaming of leaving the city grind behind? From stunning beaches to cheap housing, jobs AND good coffee: Australia's top country towns revealed • Towns from each state were shortlisted by The Demographics Group to determine the county's best • They were rated on their community atmosphere, economic diversity and unemployment rates • To be eligible for finalist status, 'Goldilocks' towns needed to have a population less than 30,000 • Towns ranged from surprise spots like Griffith in NSW to more obvious areas like Margaret River in WA By BROOKE ROLFE FOR DAILY MAIL AUSTRALIA PUBLISHED: 13:05 AEST, 24 March 2018 UPDATED: 01:12 AEST, 25 March 2018
Lack of adoption into the education curriculum and dedicated agribusiness education is under-represented	Entrepreneurial universities to offer immersion experiences during study to provide students with lived experience of careers in food and wine

	
Students' lack of awareness and negative perceptions with many students holding limited awareness and hold outdated or negative perceptions about agribusiness careers – seeing them as low-paying, regionally bound, and lacking variety – due to gaps in education, exposure, and engagement with the sector	Entrepreneurial use of social media, especially TikTok, to give next generation insight into rural life 
Negative community perceptions about agribusiness careers with the broader community tends to hold negative and outdated views of the industry, seeing it as physically demanding, poorly compensated, lacking in modern opportunities and often in hardship.	Entrepreneurial storytelling on LinkedIn and Instagram, aimed at young couples working remotely, or middle-aged couples looking for 'tree change'

	It sounds romantic, but what's the reality of ditching the city for a country vineyard? By Brandon Long ABC Rural Regional Communities Sun 31 Mar 2024  Caitlin and Nick Roberts, pictured with daughter Lily, left London to buy a vineyard in Queensland. (ABC Rural: Brandon Long)
Declining and flatlining student numbers with rates of student participation in Vocational and Education Training (VET) and higher education affect future workforce skill shortages, recruitment difficulty and vacancies..	Universities to help support international students with work integrated learning opportunities in agriculture-related higher education courses, and international students to contribute to regional economies (see McCowage et al, 2025)

Investing in buildings and brains

Given that the Limestone Coast produces approx. 10% of national output for grape and wine production, a future feasibility study should determine whether new educational infrastructure should be established in the region to help support more innovation (Pillar 1) and provide solutions to workforce challenges in the agricultural sector, including training in viticulture, winemaking, as well as hospitality and event management to prepare capabilities for the experience economy (Pillar 2 & 3). The LCGWC might consider which tertiary education providers in Australia, either public and private eg [Torrens](#) or



[Navitas](#) , have the appetite and 20-year vision for the Limestone Coast. Philanthropy from within, or outside the region, may be required to catalyse investment (Dodgson & Staggs, 2012). The Limestone Coast is well-positioned from a human capital perspective e.g. calibre of the people, iconic grape and wines, and a history of technological innovation and best practice in the grape and wine industry to invest in and become a national leader in 'smart farming' futures.

Discussion

This report advocates for the Limestone Coast, as a coherent regional identity, to develop entrepreneurial capabilities around the three interdependent pillars outlined in this report. These pillars do require some entrepreneurial imagination but they present investment opportunities into plausible futures for the grape and wine industry in the Limestone Coast.

Moving towards greater interdependence

However the risk is that the region is too large and disparate to create this nuanced, high value proposition. The future of the Limestone Coast as an assemblage of coherent and compelling Geographic Indicators (GIs) depends on the extent to which the Limestone Coast has 'institutional thickness', evidenced by cooperation, collaboration, and supported by technological adoption, socio-cultural trends, innovation in servicescapes to fully engage in the experience economy.

This report advocates that local and regional governments do whatever they can to support investment into a 'smarter', more sustainable region. This is a region that couples technological innovation and the best of Australian science with a growing awareness and receptivity to socio-cultural trends that impact upon food, wine, tourism and ultimately population flows. The grape and wine industry in the Limestone Coast is more than the sum of its parts when it inspires and catalyses economic activity in various service sectors, creating a well-connected ecosystem that supports both the primary production of wine and the broader regional economy. In the long-term, the grape and wine sector contributes to supporting the essential services that enhance the region's overall productivity and appeal.

The need for ambidexterity

In one of the most influential innovation texts of all time, Clay Christensen articulated the 'Innovator's Dilemma' which suggests that managerial approaches that preside over yesterday's successes can cause the downfall of great businesses. To help avoid this from happening, Christensen's recommendation is for business leaders to proactively develop a type of ambidexterity. This ambidexterity means that on one hand, businesses should sustain and exploit natural and traditional advantages.



Yet, on the other hand, business and community leaders should explore with the aim to disrupt the status quo. Ordinarily, this is very difficult to do in a single organisation, or in a single region, as it can create strategic confusion and multiple economic logics. To help counter this, Christensen suggested the establishment of spin outs with the 'parent's blessing'.

In the case of the Limestone Coast, the symbolic strength of regions such as Coonawarra, Padthaway, and Wrattonbully suggest there is sufficient bandwidth and 'muscularity' to hold both forces in tension. Doubling down on quality, tradition, on one hand, and then on the other to engage in the following four (4) practices:

1. Create independent teams and new business models for disruptive innovation.
2. Use discovery-driven planning and customer discovery instead of financial forecasts for uncertain markets.
3. Measure success differently by aiming for learning and growth, not a short-term return on investment.
4. Accept small market niches as legitimate starting points for innovation.

This ambidextrous approach requires imagination to conceive of what the Limestone Coast wine region could be. This report advocates for a new era of cooperation that enables the region to maintain a market position with existing markets and at the same time, explicitly focus on the creation of new markets to fashionable, high value chains.

This will require challenging the 'rules of the game' and working towards a flexible identity and shared meanings about what the Limestone Coast stands for. There is good evidence to suggest this social cohesion already exists in the region. The Limestone Coast Wine Show for example highlights both the excellence and the diversity in the region. However future success depends on doubling down, or tripling down, on these cooperative efforts.

Exploring core-periphery relationships in the Limestone Coast

Empirical research by Wright et al (2013) shows that organisations in an industry can be categorised as being at the core, middle, or periphery of the industry. Generally speaking, the core tends to dominate the economic logics of the industry and enjoy status and high levels of legitimacy, but arguably resistant to change and play a custodian role in the industry. In contrast, organisations at the periphery do not enjoy the same status and access to economic and symbolic resources so they tend to be more innovative in order to survive. Mt Gambier, for example, had its first commercial plantings in 1982 and only was recognised as a GI area in 2010 with a focus on Pinot Noir and Chardonnay. These sub-regions can provide important environmental and economic signals and provide important lessons of flexibility and resilience to help the region overall align better with shifting consumer trends to different flavour profiles and lower alcohol? Peripheral regions can also be places of transformation as was seen in Catalonia and the [Priorat](#) region, and the pivotal role of Álvaro Palacios who came from the core region of Rioja region. His approach blended traditional methods with modern winemaking, emphasizing Garnacha (Grenache) and Carignan.

While this tension can be productive through the lens of ambidexterity, in some cases the organisations in the core may view the periphery as irrelevant or inconsequential or in the worst cases, 'deviant'. In these cases, a potentially symbiotic interdependence fails to develop. The importance of Wright's 2013 study into English Country Cricket, an industry steeped in tradition, showed how organisations in the middle, neither core nor periphery, played an important mediator role and were able to support and link top-down and bottom-up change processes.

One of the challenges facing the core of the Limestone Coast is a tectonic shift in consumer behaviour. Previous and current generations of wine consumers are brand-loyal and focus much of their spending on wine purchases and events. Younger consumers, however, are more experience-driven, directing their spending toward social and sensory experiences that combine food, wine, and lifestyle.



In the case of the Limestone Coast, vintage data clearly shows that greatest productive capacity in grape and wine production lies in regions of Coonawarra, Padthaway, and Wrattontully, falling into the 'core' category. The coastal wine regions of Mt Gambier, Robe, and Mt Benson (& Bordertown) would fall into the periphery category, producing much less grape and wine for the region as a whole but in a position to be nimble and entrepreneurial in approach. There does not appear to be an obvious centre in terms of vintage crush data. However, the Wrattontully wine region may be well-positioned to play this mediating role. On one hand, this region understands the economic logics of the broader Australian wine industry and grape and wine production at scale, but it is also well-positioned to explore niche, bottom-up change processes that may resonate with future marketing trends. A philosophical approach, as seen with [Land of Tomorrow](#), may help guide the region towards ambidexterity. The [appendix](#) includes other notable examples of core/periphery relationships in wine.

In order to safeguard the future, the Limestone Coast needs to be asking strategic questions around new value creation that help the region push forward. Yesterdays and today's value does not automatically guarantee future value creation. While the past provides a marvellous foundation for the Limestone Coast, protecting and maintaining traditional historical value at the expense of the future consumer and workforce. This means the Limestone Coast needs to be and to be seen on the forefront of trends and new markets (new organisational fields) with 'above average returns' rather than protecting narrow self-interest/ sectoral/ certain geographies with diminishing returns. For this kind of future-oriented, place-based action to occur,

strategic and at times experimental/ playful actions need to occur on multiple levels and will take time to 'play out'.

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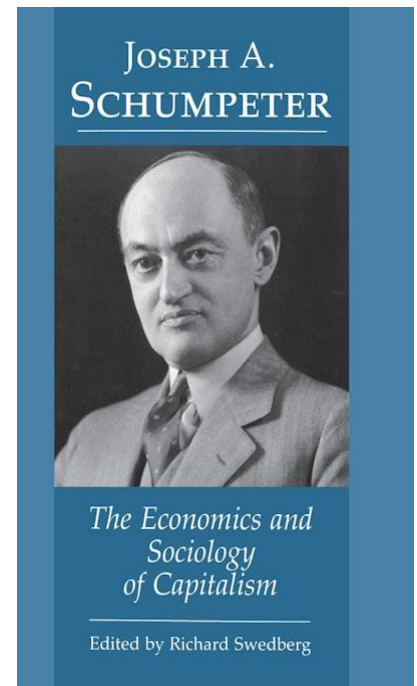
Appendix

Unlocking value in Limestone Coast grape and wine through a Schumpeterian lens

Building on Kym Anderson's argument that grape and wine producers must focus on controllable aspects of the industry, this report foregrounds the role of role that strategy and entrepreneurial actors to shape the local grape and wine industry. A Schumpeterian view, or evolutionary economic approach, helps highlight the role of entrepreneurship and innovation and the dynamic interplay between firm-level strategies and the macro-economic environment. According to this lens, change is instigated by purposeful innovation actors who exercise entrepreneurial agency with expected outcomes for strong economic performance and community well-being (not easily measured in conventional economics). This entrepreneurial perspective opens the window to the key role of firm and regional learning processes that help create and maintain markets rather than assuming the market 'out there' will fall into a natural equilibrium via the laws of supply and demand. This report therefore adopts a multi-level focus, including the role that local and regional governments can play, and emphasises the connection between ground-up change made by individuals and firms in the Limestone Coast with industry and societal level dynamics.

A number of principles can help explain this approach to economics:

- ✓ These are *innovation waves* that will render existing technologies, industries, and even professions obsolete, while spawning entirely new markets. Entrepreneurial mindsets are required to commercialise new products and services to avoid being left behind
- ✓ A Schumpeterian approach encourages a re-composition of employment where new roles and identities are required to manage, complement, and adapt to trends to novel technologies. Entrepreneurial mindset are required to avoid the sense of “I’m losing my job and livelihood!” to “I’m learning to be nimble and gaining new forms of work”.
- ✓ Schumpeter reminds us that the vitality of capitalism lies in *creative destruction* — the entry of new entrepreneurs with experimentation, disruptive ideas, products, and business models.
- ✓ Conversely, firms that resist change and continue to operate in a high intensity of competitive rivalry are likely to risk terminal decline. Firms, or spin-offs from these firms, that embraces disruptive innovation are well-positioned to capture high value returns in early growth phases.



The relevance of a Schumpeterian perspective to the wine industry is increasingly evident and implicitly called for by Anderson (2024). Entrepreneurial approaches to decisions around grape processing, winemaking, marketing, and distribution are often subsumed under macro, technocratic, and managerial frameworks that marginalise local agency and innovation. Crucially, management trends that prioritise vertical integration, standardisation, cost control, and the minimisation of uncertainty—even if it results in lower prices or worse, selling for less than production costs- decouples a sense of place. It also diminishes the region’s capacity to create new value through storytelling, and place-making. A traditional economic approach tends to downplay experimentation around new forms of value as it presents a risk to reputation and challenges the ‘rules of the game’. In contrast, this report generates a set of strategic insights based on the belief that more agency and innovation is required to be future focussed and generative.

PESTEL analysis

Dimension	Key Issues / Examples	Interpretation / Implications
Political	• Duties of up to 218% on Australian wine to China (Nov 2020–Mar 2024) • Trade headwinds, Murray Darling Basin reform	Tariff barriers and geopolitical tensions (especially with China) have disrupted major export markets and prompted diversification efforts.
Economic	• Global oversupply of wine intensifying • Increased cost of doing business • Record production + reduced sales	Market imbalances and inflationary pressures have eroded margins; producers face excess inventory and weaker profitability.
Social	• Evolving social attitudes toward alcohol • Pressure from health advocacy groups • COVID-19-driven consumption changes • Declining wine consumption in mature markets	Social moderation trends, health consciousness, and changing generational preferences are reshaping demand patterns and marketing strategies.
Technological	• Rapidly changing consumer preferences (e.g., digital, social media, e-commerce shifts)	Digital transformation in sales, marketing, and logistics is essential for competitiveness; tech adoption distinguishes adaptive wineries.
Environmental	• Impacts from extreme climatic events • Increased market expectation for sustainability credentials	Climate variability and environmental accountability drive adaptation in viticulture, packaging, and carbon reduction practices.
Legal/Regulatory	• Alcohol policy pressures • Evolving sustainability and export compliance requirements	Stricter regulation of alcohol advertising, labelling, and ESG reporting standards require industry alignment and proactive compliance.

Core-periphery wine industry examples

A “core-periphery” structure is common in viticulture where a dominant region drives production and reputation, while surrounding regions diversify risk and cater to niche or premium markets. Here are some global comparables:

Napa Valley & North Coast, USA

- Prestigious Core:
 - Napa Valley, with sub-AVAs like Oakville and Rutherford, dominates high-value Cabernet Sauvignon production, driving regional identity and tourism.
- Peripheral Regions:
 - Sonoma Coast, Mendocino, Lake County form the periphery, producing cool-climate Pinot Noir, Chardonnay, and Sauvignon Blanc, often at lower volume but high quality.
 - Peripheral AVAs often attract boutique producers and value-focused international buyers

Rioja, Spain

- Prestigious Core:
 - Rioja Alta and Rioja Alavesa produce the flagship Tempranillo wines and control the regional brand identity.
- Peripheral Regions:
 - Rioja Oriental (Baja) and small high-altitude sub-zones produce lower volumes or experimental wines, including Garnacha and white varieties.

Tuscany, Italy

- Prestigious Core:
 - Chianti Classico and Brunello di Montalcino define the regional identity with Sangiovese-based wines, enjoying strong export and tourism pull.
- Peripheral Regions:

- Bolgheri, Maremma, Montecucco (coastal or hill zones) specialize in niche, premium, or experimental wines, often using international varieties like Cabernet and Merlot.

5 Delicious Reasons to Revisit Orange in 2025 (with Lorraine Elliot)

<https://www.notquitenigella.com/2025/06/28/places-to-eat-in-orange-nsw/>

Orange is known for its established food scene and cool climate wines and it has been many years since my last visit there. With a population of 44,000 people there are always new things happening and so many fantastic places to eat and drink at. Come along as we visit five new restaurant and wineries. From wine bars, restaurants and cellar doors, I'll show you why Orange is a foodie's destination.

A 4-day itinerary for young couples seeking transformation through regional food culture.

Day	Venue	Experience Highlights
Day 1	Summer St Wine Bar	• Start your journey with cocktails and shared plates • Try the 'Cruel Summer' cocktail and local Chardonnay • Enjoy hot olives, taramasalata, and lamb empanadas
Day 2	Swinging Bridge Winery	• Morning tasting with wine and canapé pairings • Learn about cool-climate winemaking at 900m altitude • Enjoy Blanc de Blanc and William J. Shiraz with local bites
Day 3	Fiorini's Osteria Italiana & Rowlee Wines	• Lunch or dinner at Fiorini's for rustic Italian fare: burrata, Aperol salmon, rabbit pappardelle • Visit nearby Rowlee Wines for Riesling, Gewürztraminer, and Arneis tastings • Relax among volcanic hills and vineyards
Day 4	The Schoolhouse at Union Bank	• Dine in the historic schoolhouse with seasonal local dishes • Highlights: beef tartare, miso steak, saffron mushrooms • Finish with a honey-joy crème brûlée and mulled wine

Wine Immersion Program (incl. WSET) at QCWT (Granite Belt)

Program Outline (draft)

The program provides students with the following components:

- Hands-on experience in the vineyard and winery under Peter Orr, *Manager – WSET Training*
- Formal delivery of the Wine & Spirit Education Trust (WSET) international Level 1 Wines program, including assessment. This industry qualification is recognised in over 65 countries. Further details in attached brochure.
- Context for Undergraduate and Post graduate projects.

DAY	TIME	PROGRAM
Friday 5 th August	5.30pm	Arrive at QCWT – complimentary antipasto platter and glass of wine
	6pm – 6.30pm	Marketing Presentation
	6.30pm – 7.30pm	WSET Session 1 (Introduction to wines)
Saturday 6 th August	9am – 10.30am	WSET session 2 (Introduction to wine tasting)
	10.30am – 10.45am	Break
	10.45am – 12.00pm	WSET session 3 (Tasting 1/storage and service of wine)
	12.00pm	Lunch @ QCWT
	12.00noon	Lunch @ QCWT
	O/C	Depart for Winery Tours
Sunday 7 th August	1.30pm – 3.30pm	Vineyard/winery activity (split into 2 groups and swap?)
	3.30pm – 3.45pm	Break
	3.45pm – 5.45pm	WSET Session 4 (tasting/food & wine pairing)
	6.00pm	Dinner @ QCWT
	9am – 10.15am	WSET recap (review/practice exam)

Monday 8 th August	10.15am – 10.30am	Break
	10.45am – 12noon	WSET Exam
	12.00noon	Lunch @ QCWT
	O/C depart	Depart

Cost

- Hands-on experience in picking grapes, processing and fermentation processes (tuition fee): \$25
- WSET Level 1 Wines Program – all tuition, tasting wines course materials and assessment: \$190
- Meals Package \$ 100
 - Nibbles on Arrival complimentary
 - Morning Tea (1 x \$10) \$10
 - Lunch (2 x \$20) \$40
 - Dinner with matching wines – Medley of Mains (*Saturday Evening*) \$50
- **Total Cost** **\$315pp**

Accommodation: At own arrangement.

Before and After in Porto

Context: Before

Porto's traditional economy faced industrial decline and urban degradation in the 1980s–1990s. The city's creative sectors existed but were fragmented and underfunded, with limited infrastructure and few formal entrepreneurial supports. Early urban regeneration efforts were focused more on physical redevelopment than on cultural and creative entrepreneurship.

After: Porto as a Creative Hub

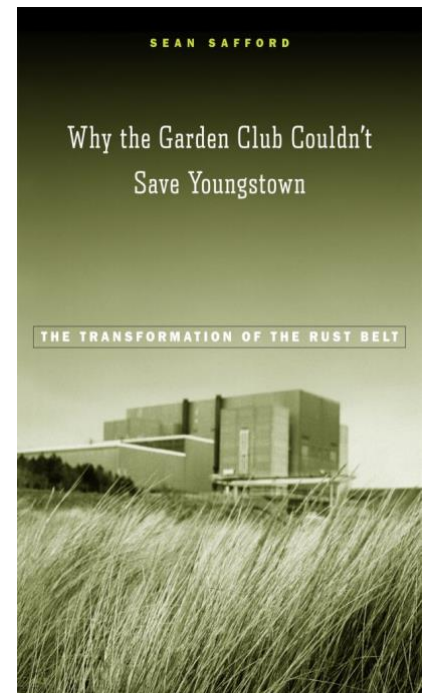
Porto's CCI ecosystem matured into a self-sustaining sub-ecosystem with strong local identity and spillovers into tourism, gastronomy, and technology. **This case study describes a positive spiral of policy support along with local culture, expressed through creative entrepreneurship that drove city renewal and importantly further investment.** The case shows how culture-led entrepreneurship can trigger wider urban and economic renewal even in resource-constrained settings.

Key mechanisms driving Porto's transformation included:

- ✓ Urban policy alignment: Local government repositioned cultural policy as an economic driver, integrating it into city planning.
- ✓ Grassroots and networked entrepreneurship: Independent artists, designers, and cultural collectives created bottom-up initiatives that later connected with formal institutions.
- ✓ Spatial clustering: Creative hubs and co-working spaces emerged in formerly decaying neighborhoods (e.g., Miguel Bombarda arts district).
- ✓ Public–private partnerships: City authorities, universities, and private investors co-developed infrastructure and funding schemes (e.g., Porto Lazer, StartUp Porto).
- ✓ Cultural branding: Porto rebranded itself as a creative and design capital, using events, festivals, and design awards to boost international recognition.

Lessons on regional renewal 'Why the Garden Club Couldn't Save Youngstown'

Sean Safford explores why some deindustrialized U.S. cities adapted better to economic change than others, despite having similar industrial structures and declines. In this research, he compares two steel towns — Youngstown, Ohio and Allentown, Pennsylvania — which both faced major plant closures in the late 20th century. His main findings were that the “Garden Club” symbolizes elite, insular social networks in Youngstown. While they were polite and cohesive they were disconnected from the broader civic and economic fabric. These closed networks fostered exclusivity and complacency, preventing collective problem-solving. In Allentown, overlapping and cross-cutting social ties connected business, civic, and labour groups, enabling collaboration and regional reinvention. Safford argues that bridging capital by fostering diverse, cross-sectoral ties can support resilience and renewal.



Creation of a Smart State

This research (Staggs et al, 2021) explains the process by which actors create and transform institutions—unfolds in an already established, organized world. This was a longitudinal case study of the field of scientific research production in Queensland was conducted, spanning roughly three decades. The authors examined how entrepreneurial activity—both institutional and place-based—shaped the emergence of the Smart State as a new geographic and symbolic formation. A key concept of this research was place as an institutional project: A “place” is not merely a location but a form of organizing human activity with material and symbolic meaning.

The creation of the ‘Smart State’ was not a single event but a flow of “becoming”—a continuous process of experimenting, assembling, and adapting across multiple sites and innovation actors, including the pivotal role of a philanthropy (Atlantic Philanthropy, 2015). Place and entrepreneurship were mutually constitutive: as institutional structures changed, they reshaped the meaning and identity of Queensland itself. The research emphasizes spatial and material dimensions in a processual account of how a new place emerged through purposeful innovation actors.

“Before Atlantic came with this investment in bioscience and research, Queensland was largely beaches.”

— Peter Beattie, former Premier of Queensland, Australia

In the late 1990s, Queensland's then Premier Peter Beattie was launching a public campaign to make the province a “smart state” with an economy based on science, technology and innovation.

Queensland was known back then more for its beaches than its brains, even though Brisbane, its capital, was home to two major universities—the University of Queensland (UQ) and Queensland University of Technology (QUT).



Opportunity for impact

Because of prospects a decade earlier for his global investment group, Chuck Feeney, Atlantic's founder, knew about Queensland. His visits to Australia piqued his interest in the rugged and often overlooked country, and the no-nonsense, can-do attitude of its people.

- ✓ Structural emancipation – freeing individuals and businesses from old institutional constraints.
- ✓ Dissociating and reimagining place meanings – reshaping the narratives and identity of a place.
- ✓ Bricolaging of place forms – creatively combining existing structures and resources.
- ✓ Co-evolving place identities – adapting and negotiating shared understandings of

