



MEDIA RELEASE
Tuesday, 14 October 2025

Judges descend on Coonawarra for annual wine show

Penola, South Australia

High-profile wine judges from across Australia are travelling to the Limestone Coast wine region for the 2025 Limestone Coast Wine Show, which will take place in Coonawarra during the fourth week of October.

After a half-day tour of the Wrattenbully wine region on Monday 20th October, judging properly gets underway at the Coonawarra Hall on Tuesday 21st October, and carries over into Wednesday 22nd October.

"The Limestone Coast as a wine region remains a hidden gem and is vastly underrated both here and internationally. I am very much looking forward to judging at the upcoming show and seeing how recent vintages have played out."

- Angus Hughson, one of Australia's leading wine writers, and a judge in this year's show.

"The passion is impressive and infectious. It pours out of everyone you talk to, whether it be about wine, agriculture, history, Mary MacKillop or entering tomatoes in the local show. If you think the wine show is hotly contested, talk to anyone about the tomatoes at the local agricultural show.

"Some of the best dining around. Pipers of Penola, Ottelia. Passionate people creating delicious food with local and international flavours."

- Gwyn Olsen, winemaker at Henschke, and a judge in this year's show.

"It's an honour to make the trip south and spend some time judging the wines at the LCWS. I love Cabernet Sauvignon and the Limestone coast produces some beauties, along with some terrific Riesling and newer kids on the block. When I

think of the Limestone Coast, I think great food, great wine, and nice people too!"

- Paul Hotker, a consultant winemaker, and a judge in this year's show.

"It's always a pleasure to judge at the Limestone Coast Wine Show, celebrating not just the wines, but the people and places that make and have made this region so special.

"With diverse and unique wine regions, from the world-famous Coonawarra Cabernet Sauvignons to the elegant Padthaway Chardonnays, the coastal charm of Robe and Mount Benson, the rising stars of Wrattenbully, and the boutique creativity of Mount Gambier.

"It's a region built on passion, community, characters and a genuine love of good wine and good times. With the next generation challenging the past with varieties and wine styles there are some really excellent wines popping up mixed with the classics.

"Judging here always has a great sense of community, but above all it's always fun."

- Cliff Royle, winemaker at Flametree Wines in Margaret River, and a judge in this year's show.

Also judging this year is Matilda Innes from Ottelia, who the show is lucky to have as an associate for the first time. With plenty of experience in wine shows, Innes is herself a producer who makes wine from fruit grown in different parts of the Limestone Coast region.

Interviews with judges and stewards can be arranged on Tuesday or Wednesday at the Coonawarra Hall. All the judging will be finished by Wednesday afternoon.

A full list of judges can be found here: <https://limestonecoastwine.com.au/wine-show/judges/>

The trophy dinner, which will be a lavish affair, will be held for the first time ever at Raidis Estate in Penola on Thursday 23rd October. It will focus on the history of the Coonawarra wine region, highlighting the theme of 'preservation'.

"This dinner is an opportunity to connect, to share in the passion and love of wine, and to honour the unique region we are all part of."

- Dr Catherine Kidman, Viticulturist at Wynns Coonawarra Estate, who sits on the committee responsible for organising the dinner.

A media release with the winners will be released on Thursday (under an embargo until Friday 00:00).

A public tasting, which showcases some of the winners, will take place in the Coonawarra Hall on the morning after the big award ceremony.

CCL Labels and Vinpac International are the major sponsors for the show.

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The Limestone Coast Grape and Wine Council Incorporated (LCGWC) is a non-government and not-for-profit entity formed in 1976 to represent the interests of the wine and vine sector and regions of the Limestone Coast.

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