

# Yalumba The Menzies Estate

## The Menzies Story

In 1965, during a lunch at the Stock Exchange Club in Adelaide, Sir Robert Menzies declared the 1961 Yalumba Galway Vintage Special Reserve Claret to be "...the finest Australian red I have ever tasted." This comment did not go unnoticed and in 1987 when Yalumba produced their first wine from the Coonawarra Menzies block, the recognition was rewarded on the label of this outstanding wine.



## Creating a Coonawarra Classic

Coonawarra is one of Australia's most illustrious wine growing regions, with a reputation for producing rich red wines. Yalumba has long held an unequivocal goal to capture the best of a superb patch of Coonawarra *terra rossa* and bottle it as The Menzies. In 1987, the oldest Cabernet Sauvignon vines on The Menzies block were 14 years old. The fruit from the block was good however the viticultural team and winemakers believed it could be even better. So, in 1993 Robert Hill Smith made the leap of faith and paid a then record price per acre for the whole Menzies vineyard of *terra rossa*, lying smack bang in the middle of the Coonawarra strip. The Menzies Vineyard comprises predominantly of cabernet sauvignon vines and smaller, specialised areas of merlot and shiraz. A single winemaking philosophy stands behind this precious site- to reflect the distinctive varietal flavours of the region. This has been achieved with not only The Menzies Cabernet Sauvignon but also with The Menzies Merlot and The Menzies Shiraz which are available through the Menzies Wine Room only.

Grapes for The Menzies Cabernet Sauvignon are drawn from 25 year old vines grown with 'minimalist intervention' farming techniques. This allows the naturally low yielding vines to continue to produce grapes with strong colour and intense flavours. Also contributing to the complexity of The Menzies Cabernet Sauvignon is Yalumba's investment in small capacity fermenters. Of the process, Senior Winemaker Peter Gambetta said, "*The Menzies Cabernet Sauvignon draws from nine individual sub-plots, and we can maintain the integrity of those parcels with small fermenters. Blending decisions can be made much later, and solely on wine quality, not the capacity of the tanks.*"

## The Menzies Wine Room

Yalumba's ongoing commitment to Coonawarra and environmental sustainability was confirmed in March 2002 when The Menzies Wine Room & Vineyard was officially opened.

The Wine Room was constructed largely from recycled materials and is both a living and working space - one that balances quality of life with nature and features interpretive displays depicting Yalumba's environmental programme. Situated in the heart of the Yalumba Menzies Vineyard, the rammed earth building sits amidst a sea of vines. Surrounding it is an extensive native vegetation area that Yalumba has spent six years working to rehabilitate and rejuvenate, with over 600 saplings, the remnant native trees and grasses of the region.