

PLANTAGENET

Mount Barker,
Western Australia

The so-called “Great Southern” region of Western Australia encompasses a vast area with manifold climatic and geological variations. One of this region’s townships is Mount Barker, some 225 miles southeast of Perth and only around 30 miles north of the Southern Ocean coast. The Shire of Plantagenet within the Mount Barker gives its name to the winery, owned by Australia’s oldest wine merchants, Lionel Samson & Sons. Plantagenet, founded in 1974, farms well-drained loam, sand, and clay soils, whose oldest vineyard, Bouverie - the source of their estate Shiraz - recently celebrated its thirty-fifth year. Temperatures and precipitation here, as well as the pattern of maritime influence, are not too far from the norm of Bordeaux’s Médoc, albeit with significantly higher summer temperatures, usually well prior to the ripening of the fruit. As the Plantagenet wines demonstrate, Mount Barker encompasses exciting opportunities for Riesling and Chardonnay as well as Cabernet Sauvignon (planted in several sites) and Shiraz.

We are doubly fortunate at Vintner Select to have the opportunity not only to begin selling Plantagenet’s wines (through our friend Robert Whale) but to do so with an emphasis on the reds that resulted from one of the finest Western Australian vintages in recent years, 2001. Winemakers Gavin Berry and Richard Robson recommend “char-grilled kangaroo or beef fillet” with their 2001 Shiraz, but we feel confident you’ll discover a wide range of non-marsupial



northern-hemisphere fare appropriate to it!

A Riesling revival is underway here, as the original Wyup Vineyard (planted in 1971 and still a source of Chardonnay as well) has been supplemented in 2003 by the first, wonderfully ripe crop from Rosetta Vineyard.

The **Omrah** property in Mount Barker, first planted in the early 1990s and named for a steamship that brought settlers here in the early twentieth century, has in turn given its name to one of Australia’s most successful unoaked Chardonnays. (In fact, no trees were felled to produce any of the white wines we offer from the Plantagenet family.) More recently, the Omrah line has expanded to a wider range of exceptional vinous values including Shiraz.

Hazard Hill, named for a granitic vineyard ten miles south of Mount Barker, designates Plantagenet’s range of wines offering outstanding everyday value.

Plantagenet, Mount Barker

Riesling

Shiraz

Cabernet Sauvignon

Omrah

Unwooded Chardonnay

Shiraz

Hazard Hill

Semillon – Sauvignon

Shiraz (-Grenache)

“[T]here are more than 150 unoaked Chardonnays [now from Australia] in the market. Plantagenet in Western Australia was the first to introduce one That wine, „Omrah ... [is] considered to be among the best examples of its style: fresh, lifted and distinct.”

Patrick Comiskey, Wine & Spirits 4/05