

## Penfolds Bordeaux Collection

Penfolds is truly Australia's iconic wine brand. Penfolds Grange is known in every household across Australia and increasingly so across the globe. The Penfolds story began in 1844 when Dr Christopher and Mary Penfold, English immigrants, arrived in Adelaide, South Australia. They purchased the mixed farm called Magill Estate, moved into their new residence named Grange Cottage, and planted a vineyard. Dr Christopher spent long hours establishing his medical practice in their dining room, where he conducted his consultations and prescribed the first wines as a tonic to overcome anaemia. In this endeavour he followed the age-old prescription "A little wine for thy health's sake".



*Grange Cottage today*

It was Mary Penfold who set about supervising the running of the house, the garden, the farm, the vineyard and the subsequent winery. Penfolds quickly established a solid reputation for its wines in local markets as well as exports back to England. After the death of Dr Christopher in 1870, Mary, her family and her descendants continued to build the wine business into Australia's first iconic wine brand. Penfolds became a public company in 1963. The Penfolds family involvement continued into the mid-1970s. Penfolds is currently a division of Treasury Wine Estates.

The well-documented Penfolds Grange story was the mastermind of Penfolds first appointed Chief Winemaker, Max Schubert, and was first released with the 1951 vintage. Its reputation soared in 1995 when US wine magazine Wine Spectator announced the 1990 vintage Grange as its Wine of the Year.

Current and only the fourth Penfolds Chief Winemaker is Peter Gago, with 20 years experience in the role and a Penfolds veteran of 33 years. Under his stewardship, Penfolds reputation has gone from strength to strength, continuing the true Penfolds "House Style", building the quality of the traditional wine range whilst introducing new and exciting Special Bin and Reserve Bin wines. Peter deftly manages a team of winemakers and also continues to traverse the globe in an ambassadorial role promoting the House of Penfolds. His reputation precedes him wherever he travels.

For my own story, I have always been passionate about wine. Born and raised in Tasmania, my father was the local distributor for Penfolds. From a very early age my father gave me small doses of Penfolds Bin 28 wine, following the age-old prescription for the sake of my health. My life-long passion for wine was thereby created, and Penfolds wines have always been an integral part of my life. In my teenage years, there being no courses to study wine-making in Tasmania, I completed my University studies in Chemistry. I moved to Melbourne after graduation to begin working for chemical companies. My father passed away shortly after, and I lost my contacts with the wine industry. Continuing to work for chemical companies in both Australia and then in France, my passion for wine remained paramount in my life. Whilst living in France I learnt the French language and subsequently completed my qualifications at Wine University in the Rhône Valley. I toured extensively throughout the country's prestige wine regions. Then in 2018, I was honoured to achieve the title of Rhône Valley Vineyard Wine Ambassador.

After returning to Australia, I was appointed Wine Merchant at Dan Murphys, Australia's largest chain of retail wine stores. The role of a wine merchant is to provide service to customers, so you can imagine my intrepidation the first time that I recognised Peter Gago in my store. Please Bacchus, God of wine, don't forsake me now! "Can I help you?", I asked, followed by a very timid "You are Peter?" I don't like to draw attention to customers as they may wish anonymity whilst shopping. However Peter was very accommodating, and we had the first of many chats about wine, eventually culminating in the thrill of my lifetime when he hosted my visit to Magill Estate. So generous with his time.



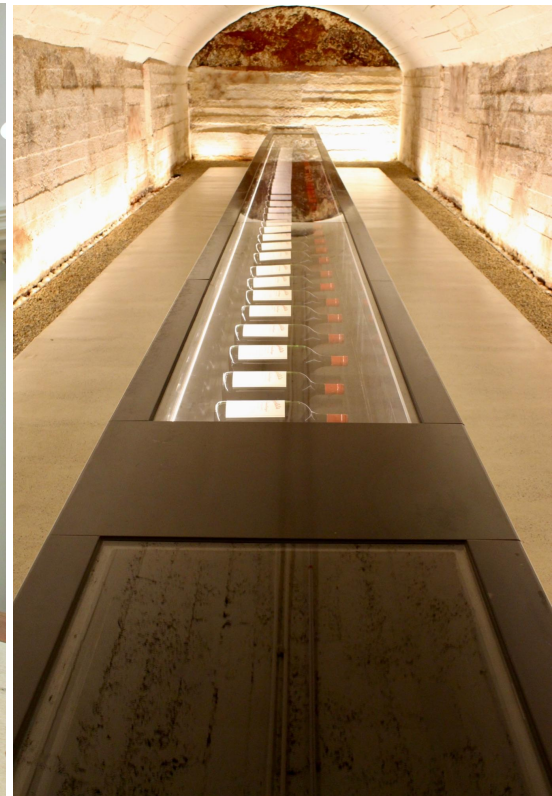
*Inspecting grapes at Mongrell Hill*



*Grange 2020 quietly maturing at Magill Estate*



*Tasting with Peter Gago in the Fountain Room at Magill Estate*



*The Grange Cellar*

Back to Penfolds. 2019 saw the release of the first of four Champagnes from Penfolds in collaboration with Thiénot. Last year saw the release of Penfolds Californian wine collection, from Penfolds owned vineyards. This year, as part of the Penfolds Collection 2022, we will see two new Penfolds wines from Bordeaux which will be

released on 4 August. Building on my French/Australian dual nationality, I was so very honoured and accepted with great enthusiasm Peter's invitation to attend the release event for the whole 2022 collection and particularly to see and taste the new Bordeaux wines.



2019 Penfolds FWT 585 is a Cabernet Merlot Petit Verdot blend made at Penfolds Château Cambon la Pelouse in Haut-Médoc. FWT signifies French Winemaking Trial, marking a brave new chapter for Penfolds in France. Penfolds have recently bought this plus two other chateaux in Bordeaux, with a fourth purchase in the wings. Penfolds FWT 585 comprises 53% Cabernet, 34% Merlot, 13% Petit Verdot, being blended then aged 14 months in both French (44% new) and American (14% new) oak barriques. This medium-bodied wine has great flavours of savoury blackberry and redcurrant, herbal aromatics of sage and thyme with floral notes of violet and lavender, creamy vanilla and walnut with a touch of leather coming through. It is complex yet refined, very easy drinking, a wine calling out for a second and third glass. This wine would match perfectly to Duck Confit with duck fat roasted potatoes from my good friends at PK's Food and Wine Adventures. Australian retail is around \$A120 per bottle.

2019 Penfolds II is a Cabernet Shiraz Merlot blend Wine of the World made in conjunction with Penfolds partner Douthe (also a partner of Thiénot). It is a blend of 59% Cabernet with 12% Merlot made at Chateau Belgrave in Haut-Medoc with 29% Shiraz made at Penfolds Nuriootpa Winery in the Barossa. The French component was air-freighted to South Australia, blended with the Australian component, aged 18 months in French (70% new) and American (30% new) oak barriques and hogsheads, and then bottled in Australia. Penfolds II signifies two winemakers coming together, two cultures, two hemispheres, old world and new. Penfolds winemakers from Australia travel to France to assist in making the French component. This full-bodied wine was not as big and bold as I expected. It was more

subtle on the palate, more in line with a Saint-Julien wine, with the additional gentle power of Shiraz red fruit flavours coming through, but not overpowering. Very balanced, generous and in proportion. Great black and red fruit flavours (blackberry, blueberry, raspberry and plum) with licorice, white pepper, caramel, vanilla, a subtle nuttiness and a touch of spice. Very intriguing. This is a wine for the long haul. Ideal match to Beef Spezzatino from my local traiteur, Albert Park Deli. Australian retail is around \$500 per bottle.

Penfolds now make wine on three continents, and are very present across the globe. There is a clear Penfolds "House Style" which shines through in all their wines. The Penfolds Collection 2022 spans over 20 wines, each unique yet each clearly Penfolds. With the addition of Penfolds Special Bins and Superblends there is a constant stream of surprises. Stay tuned for new developments from this global company which is rapidly becoming a global iconic wine brand.