



Mataro in Australia

Australian Mataro

With 95 synonyms to its name, in Australia Mataro is the most popular name for the variety in Australia.

Some wines are labelled Mourvèdre - which has connotations of a more savoury, European style of wine.

There are two other names in use, though very rare - Esparte & Balzac.

Australian Mataro



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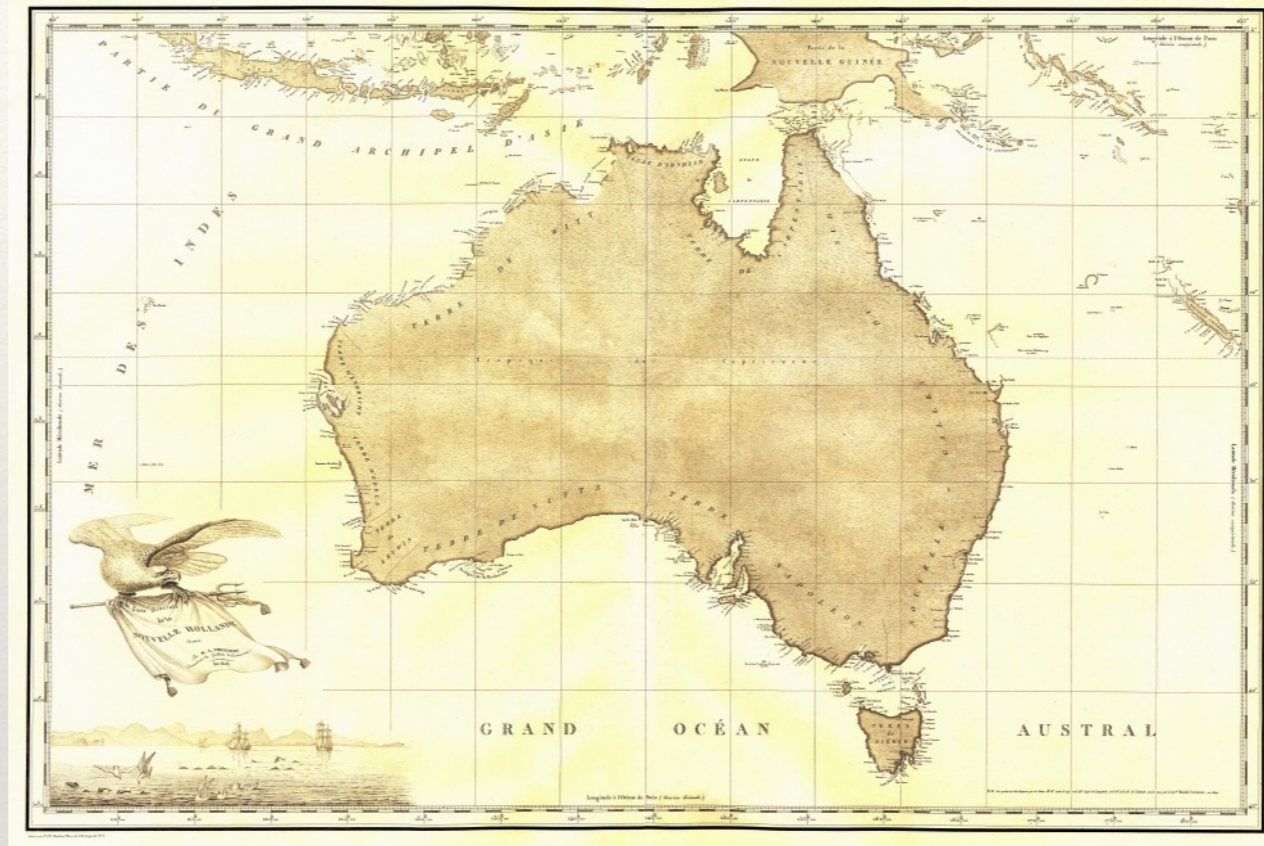
Often used as a blending component

In the past it was blended with Touriga Nacional, Tinta Cao and Tinta Amarella for port

Blended with Grenache and Shiraz in Australia's famous "GSM"
blend

Today over 200 wineries in Australia use Mataro in their wines with many straight varietal wines.

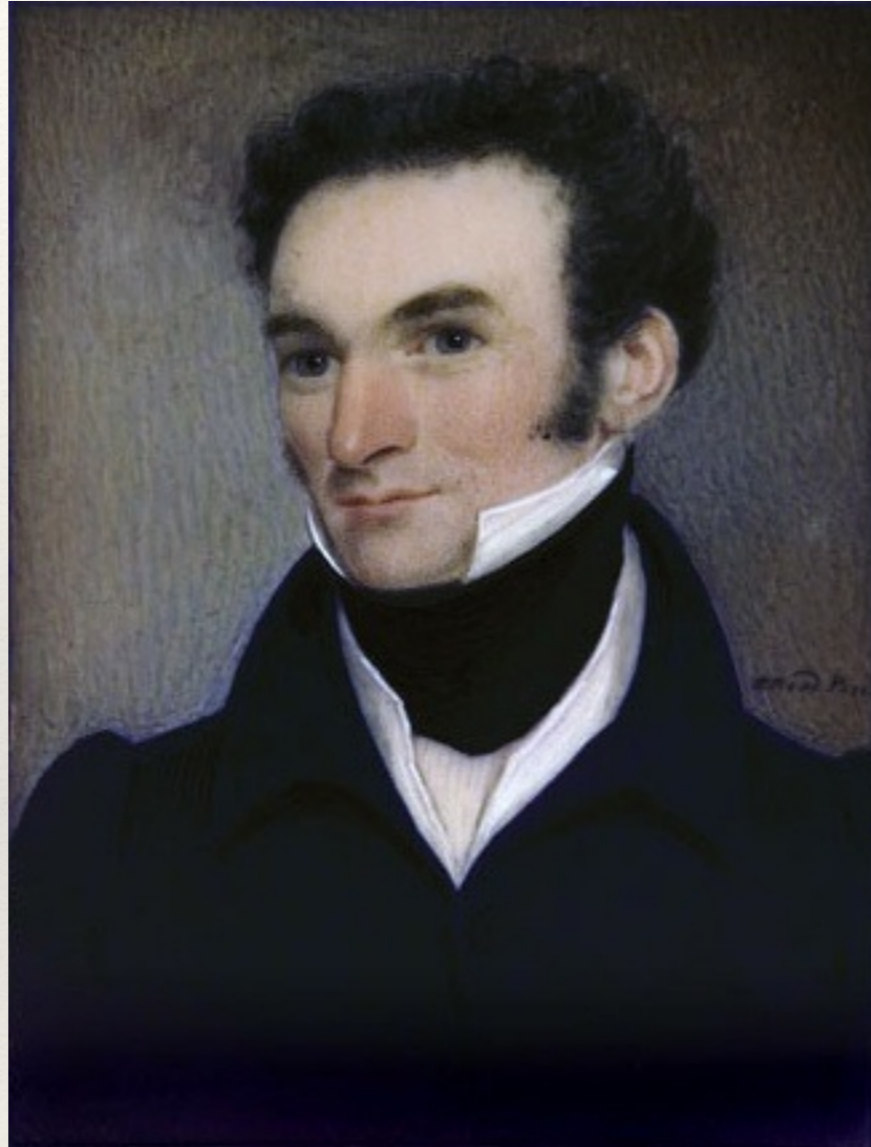
Arriving & Expansion



Australia is a very old land, inhabited for some 50,000 years.

With some of the oldest soils in the world, but on a world wine scale, it is still very young.

Arriving & Expansion



James Busby (1801-1971)

Arriving & Expansion

Initially planted in the colonial vineyards of Minchinbury & Camden near Sydney

By 1863, Mataro was planted in the Houghton vineyard in Western Australia near Perth.

Wines were shown at the Bordeaux Exhibition of 1882, the great world wine Olympiad of its time.

More plantings took place throughout the 1890s in the Clare Valley and the Barossa.

Arriving & Expansion



In February 1896, government viticulturist Arthur J Perkins wrote a article called “The Mataro Question” that was published in the Adelaide Observer.

Australia at that time was a beer and spirit drinking nation.

He wrote “Were wine to become the national beverage, good, sound Mataro might be sold here in abundance as cheap as beer, with advantages to winegrower and winemaker alike”.

Arriving & Expansion

Mataro proved to be versatile in port production, during the early 20th Century, as it was in the transition and development of the modern Australian wine industry.

During the 1950s and 1960s winemakers relied heavily on Mataro. It was a workhorse variety that filled the hole in the early McLaren Vale Shirazes before Cabernet Sauvignon became a fixture and the famous Australian Shiraz/Cabernet blends became popular.

It was rarely used on its own although there are a few experimental or one-off wines produced during the 1950s

From the 1970s onwards, Mataro found a home in the GSM Rhône-style red blends.

Arriving & Expansion

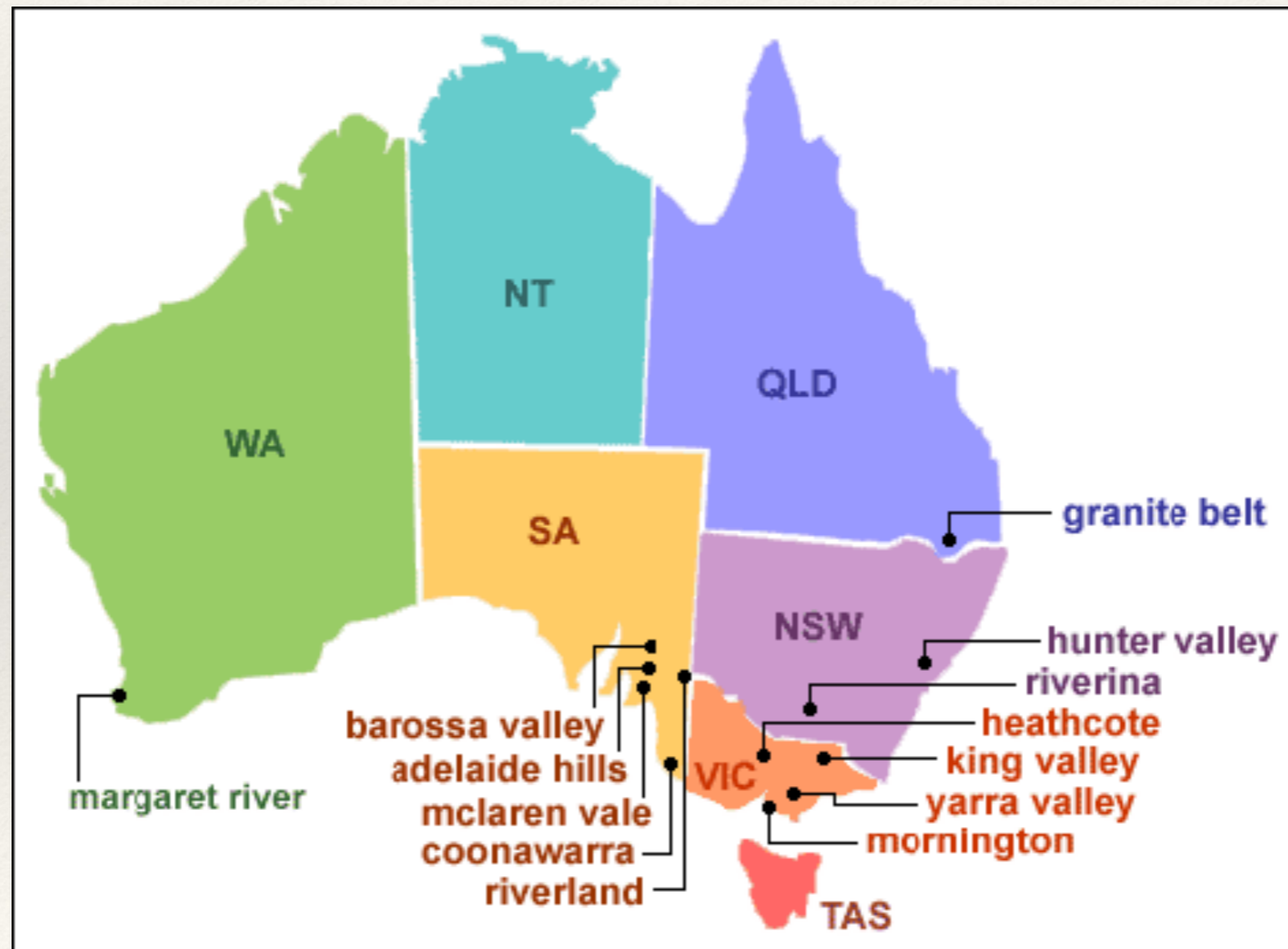
Despite its popularity in GSM blends and straight varietal wines over the last two decades

Plantings of Mataro are actually decreasing

Grape ⇄	Area Ha (04)^[17] ⇄	Area Ha (05)^[17] ⇄	Area Ha (06)^[18] ⇄	Area Ha (07)^[17] ⇄	Area Ha (08)^[17] ⇄
Shiraz	39,182	40,508	41,115	43,417	43,977
Cabernet Sauvignon	29,313	28,621	28,103	27,909	27,553
Merlot	10,804	10,816	10,593	10,790	10,764
Pinot noir	4,424	4,231	4,254	4,393	4,490
Grenache	2,292	2,097	2,025	2,011	2,011
Mourvedre	1,040	963	875	794	785
Other Red	11,235	10,797	7,002	11,309	10,902

A vineyard census this year put the total Mataro plantings in Australia at 751 hectares.

Growing Areas



Growing Areas



Barossa Valley - 220ha

Riverland - 179ha

McLaren Vale - 90ha

South Australia accounts for 603 ha of the total plantings

Warm climate regions

Growing Areas



Growing Areas



Technical Conditions

Tendency towards an upright growth pattern

This upright pattern meant that bush vines tended towards an open structure, allowing good air circulation through the plant with the effect of keeping disease incidence low, to a degree.

Very tolerant of heat which suits the warm climate regions of South Australia.

It is recognised among Mataro winemakers that the best vintages seem to be from hot years

Most of the older vine material tends to be dry grown.

In extreme heat especially with unirrigated vines, premature leaf drop can be a problem.

The Wines



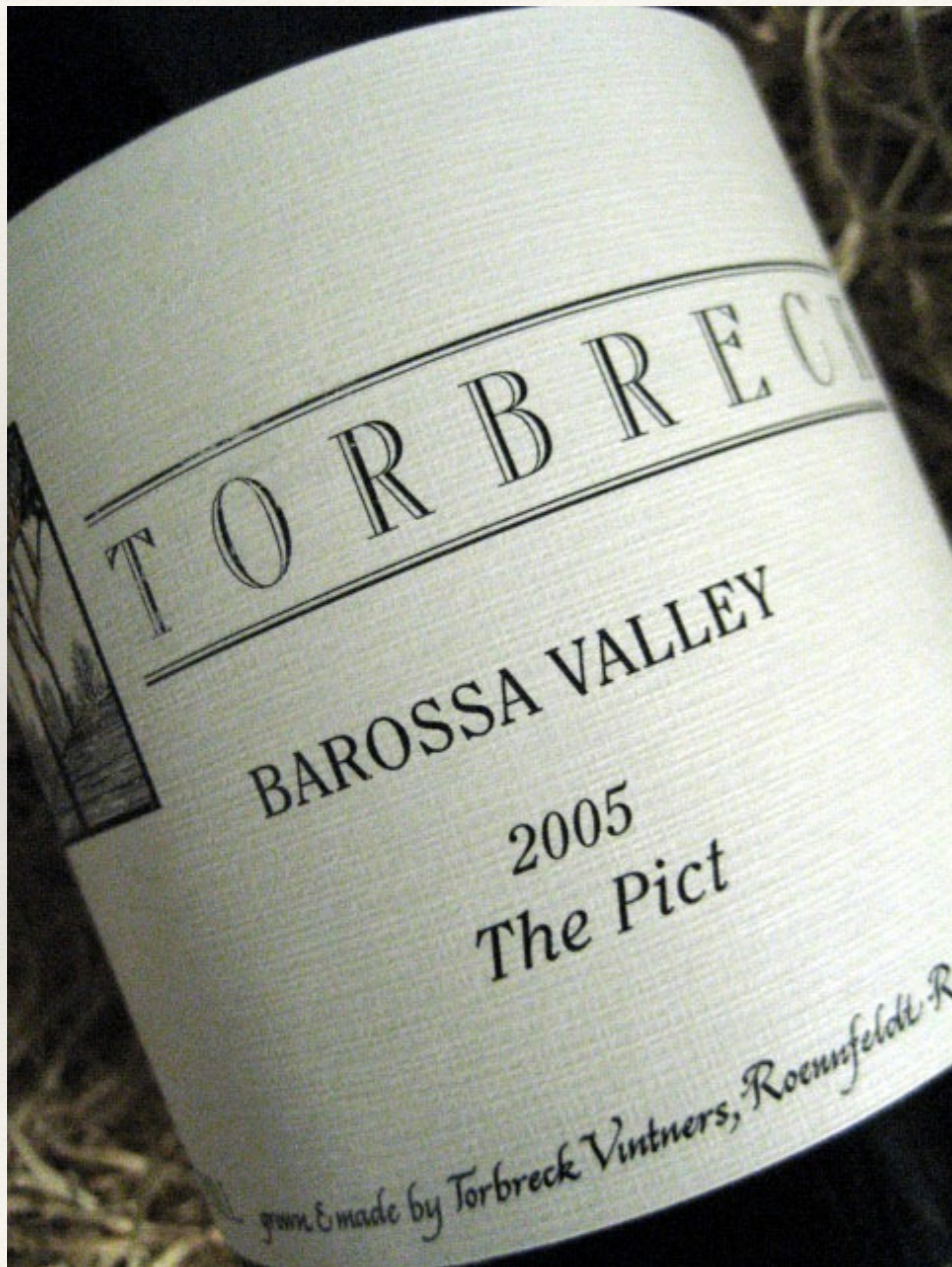
Vineyard planted in 1853

A mass selection was taken from the original 1853 vines.

Fermented for 24 days on skins.

18 months ageing in 100% new French barriques.

The Wines



Vineyard planted in 1927

Hand picked, de-stemmed, not crushed, open fermenters.

24 hours on sitting on skins before inoculation.

Quite warm ferments, basket pressed off at 2-3 Be

Ferment finishes in Stainless steel.

18 months ageing 100% French barriques.

The Wines



Harvest at around 14Be

Hand picked, de-stemmed, not crushed, open fermenters.

24 hours on sitting on skins before inoculation.

Quite warm ferments, 7-12 days on skins post-ferment

Basket Pressed.

12 months ageing in seasoned French oak hogsheads.

The Future for Mataro



As the search continues for new varieties to grow in an ever warmer climate, do we already have the perfect warm weather variety in front of our noses?

Decrease in Mataro vineyards has stabilised and the variety has a bright future in Australia.