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By Lee Pancake

It's no secret around the shop that I am a huge history buff. Outside the world of wine, my knowledge of Australia's past is tad limited, but within this industry there is so much to be learned by understanding the history behind each of the important wineries and winemaking regions. This month, we will be focusing on two wines from one of the oldest estates in Australia, **Yalumba**. This storied property focuses intensely on all aspects of the winemaking process and remains family-owned and operated. If you are a fan of Australian wines, then you are in for quite a treat. And if you do not yet realize the incredible value and quality of these wines, let me guide you to the promised land.

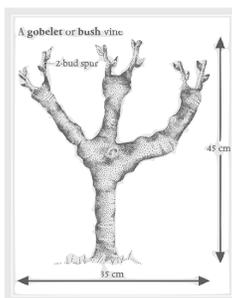
Yalumba was founded by a bright-eyed 35-year-old Englishman, Samuel Smith, who uprooted his family from their cozy town of Wareham, in southwestern England, to the port of Adelaide. They arrived just 11 days before Christmas, and it wasn't long after their arrival that he loaded the entire family and all of their belongings into a barrel cart and began the 50 mile journey to Angaston, where he hoped to find work. Sam ended up working as a gardener for the Angas family (for whom the town is named), learning the way of the land in eastern Barossa. He and his son, Sydney, planted their first vineyard in 1849 with the aid of Sam's newfound knowledge of the land. The vineyard sat on a small piece of land on the eastern edge of Barossa and did not produce as much fruit as Sam had envisioned. Around this time, Sam began to set his sights on a new venture—the gold fields of New South Wales and Victoria. Not wanting to miss out on a "golden" opportunity, he ventured east and returned four months later at the start of 1852 with around 300 pounds of gold. This was more than enough to buy 80 acres of land, two horses and a harness, which permanently staked Sam's claim in the Barossa Valley. He named his new vineyards 'Yalumba' after an indigenous Australian word meaning "all the land around."

Many years and five generations later, a gentleman by the name of Robert Hill-Smith, the great-great-grandson of Samuel Smith, took the helm as the Managing Director in 1985 at the age of 34. He immediately instigated a complete buy-out of all of the remaining family shares. With all of the experimentation that took place over the years, many varietals had been planted and failed. Robert believed that it was time to point Yalumba in a new direction that focused solely on matching the right varietals to the correct terroir. He also hired a team of young and talented wine makers and vineyard managers that would follow and uphold this vision for their new journey in the Barossa Valley.

Barossa is often noted as the heart of the Australian wine industry and is one of the most famous wine producing regions of Australia. The valley was formed by the North Para River and was named Barossa in 1837 by Colonel William Light. It sits about an hour north of the city of Adelaide, where the Germanic influence of the 19th century still remains, and there are over 32,000 acres of vines planted on ancient soils dating back 200 million years. The landscape is varied in topography, geology and climate, making it the perfect growing region for Shiraz and Grenache.

Even though Barossa is one of the most important wine growing regions in Australia, it is also one of the most remote. Because of this, Yalumba focuses on sustainability in order to protect the environment and the quality of the wines they produce. It's actually quite an impressive operation. As of 2011, all Yalumba wines were announced vegetarian- and vegan-friendly; but it extends way beyond that. Remember our friend from earlier, Robert Hill-Smith? He set forth an initiative that pledged to set aside one hectare of land for natural vegetation for every new hectare planted to vines. This accounts for over 250 acres of land conservation since the initiative began. On these lands, they have planted thousands of trees to protect the native flora and fauna of the area.

Quality control is taken to a whole new level only are they a completely sustainable winery, but as well as providing specialized varietal health consulting to many Australian winemakers and was started by Samuel Smith over 170 years ago used in the maturation and fermentation of some toasted on sight. The winemaker Kevin our two wines for the month oversees the barrels. Yalumba is currently the only winery in cooperage.



when it comes to the wines made at Yalumba. Not they have their own vine nursery and cooperage analysis, rootstock research and new vineyard growers. This attention to detail in the vineyard and is still carried on today. As for the barrels of the Yalumba wines, they are formed and Glastonbury (or KG as they call him) who made selection of all of the oak used to make the the southern hemisphere that has their own

The scale of wines made at Yalumba has grown to a point now that it is necessary to have a few winemakers on staff. Kevin Glastonbury was named the Senior Red Winemaker in 1999, but growing up in the Barossa valley provided him plenty of experience before joining the team. I love the fact that his approach to winemaking is the dirty one— hands on and hard work. His experimentation and innovation at Yalumba has taken him from monitoring fermentation first to selecting wood staves piece by piece on the cooperage floor. Needless to say, this hands-on approach is what gives these wines the incredible quality and complexity we have come to expect from Yalumba's red wines.

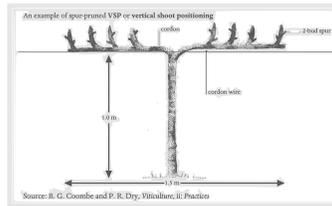
The first selection of this month is the **2018 Yalumba "Samuel's Collection" Barossa Bush Vine Grenache**. This Grenache is a special one. Not only because it's named after the founder of the winery but because the vines are

trained in the same way you see Grenache trained in Châteauneuf-du-Pape. This “bush vine” method of training is technically called *gobelet* in French, or goblet, because it resembles the look of the drinking vessel. The vines are free standing without any trellising or wiring and sit low to the ground. This method has its advantages and disadvantages. Even though most of the work in the vineyard is done by hand, this style of vine training yields concentrated and high quality fruit due to the natural canopy of the leaves that shade the fruit in overly sunny, warm areas. However, due to the low planting density of bush vine vineyards, yields are usually low compared to the more modern trellising systems.

The 2018 harvest for this wine was an impressive one. They had great soil moisture through winter, and the summer was warm and dry leading to a concentrated and healthy fruit set. All of the parcels of Grenache are harvested and crushed separately into open-top fermenters. Some of the stems are left on during crush for additional flavor. Better batches are left on the skins post-fermentation for the development of greater complexity. After draining and pressing, all of the batches are racked in older American, French and Hungarian hogsheads, a barrel format that is just a bit larger than the classic barrique, for six months.

When you open this wine, you’re going to want to aerate it for at least 30 minutes. If the bottle is not cellar temperature (around 55 degrees Fahrenheit) when opened, this would be a good time to bring the temperature down. Your taste buds will thank you as you are faced with a wonderful bouquet of strawberry jam, fresh cut red cherries, jasmine tea, black licorice, marinated olives and sage. The short stint in a decanter should help smooth out the tannins and bring this bouquet to the forefront. Drink this wine now or before 2023 with miso glazed pork chops or roasted eggplant.

The second selection of the month is the counterpart of the first, the **2017 Yalumba “Samuel’s Collection” Barossa Shiraz**. These two wines play incredibly well together and there’s a great teaching point built in. Much like Shiraz and Grenache always seem to pick up nothing lacking— it’s big, brooding, dark training method to thank for many of these onto a trellising system which means the giving them a framework to grow into. trellising has its strengths and weaknesses. ground, this method prevents fungal canopy. It also makes harvest easier because



Shoot density can get out of control quickly, providing too much shade and blocking sunlight needed for berry ripening.

The 2017 harvest was a successful one with cool nights in late summer leading to a relatively dry autumn. The fruit came in with ideal, even ripeness. Wild yeasts present on the grape skins were allowed to initiate fermentation with cultured yeasts finishing the job. Post fermentation, the wine is matured for 10 months in 15% new French, American and Hungarian hogsheads, barriques and octaves. The result is a wine with incredible length and complexity.

You’ll want to decant this wine for around an hour or so due to the harder tannins of a younger Syrah. However, after the hour of aeration, you’ll experience a complex bouquet of ripe black cherries, dried black plums, balsamic vinegar, coconut macaroons and milk chocolate. Drink now or before 2024 with a roasted leg of lamb or black bean burgers.

Black Bean Burgers

2 (15-ounce) cans black beans, rinsed

2 large eggs

2 tablespoons all-purpose flour

4 scallions, minced

3 tablespoons minced fresh cilantro

2 garlic cloves, minced

1 teaspoon ground cumin

1/2 teaspoon ground coriander

1/4 teaspoon salt

1/4 teaspoon pepper

1 ounce tortilla chips, crushed coarse (1/2 cup)

8 teaspoons vegetable oil

6 hamburger buns

1. Line a rimmed baking sheet with triple layer of paper towels and spread beans over towels. Let stand for 15 minutes.

2. Whisk eggs and flour together in large bowl until uniform paste forms. Stir in scallions; cilantro; garlic; cumin; hot sauce, if using; coriander; salt; and pepper until well combined.

3. Process tortilla chips in food processor until finely ground, about 30 seconds. Add black beans and pulse until beans are roughly broken down, about 5 pulses. Transfer black bean mixture to bowl with egg mixture and mix until well combined. Cover and refrigerate for at least 1 hour or up to 24 hours.

4. Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 200 degrees. Divide bean mixture into 6 equal portions. Firmly pack each portion into tight ball, then flatten to 3 1/2-inch-diameter patty. (Patties can be wrapped individually in plastic wrap, placed in a zipper-lock bag, and frozen for up to 2 weeks. Thaw patties before cooking.)

5. Heat 2 teaspoons oil in 10-inch nonstick skillet over medium heat until shimmering. Carefully place 3 patties in skillet and cook until bottoms are well browned and crisp, about 5 minutes. Flip patties, add 2 teaspoons oil, and cook second side until well browned and crisp, 3 to 5 minutes. Transfer burgers to wire rack set in rimmed baking sheet and place in oven to keep warm. Repeat with remaining 3 patties and 4 teaspoons oil. Transfer burgers to buns and serve.