

# YALUMBA

FAMILY VIGNERONS C.1849

## The Signature: A great Australian red blend

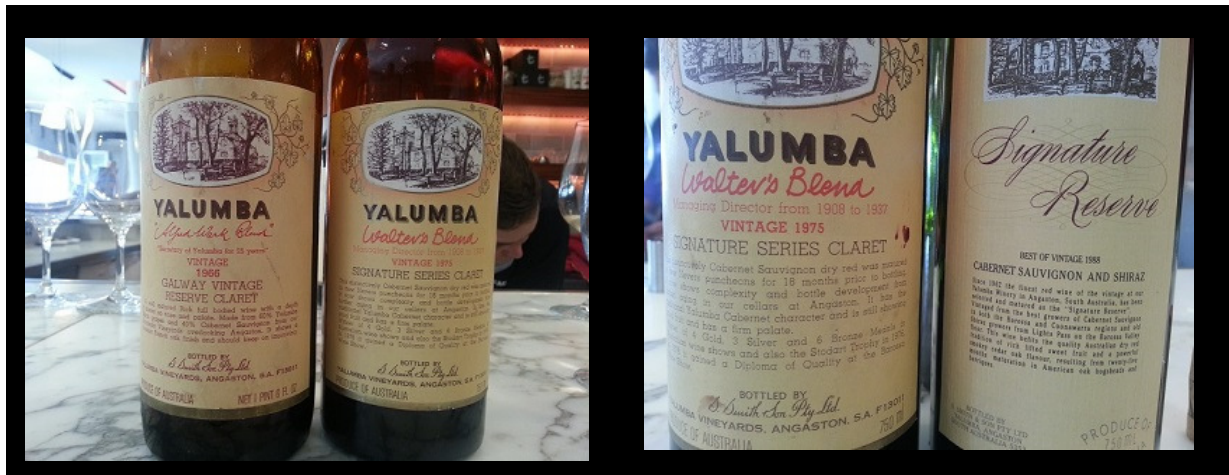


In the New World we are obsessed with single varietal wines. Australia is no exception. Their two most famous and collectable reds are made from one grape, shiraz. However, the old timers of the Lucky Country have made blends: sometimes by choice, other times by necessity. One of the blends that has worked brilliantly and stood proud since the early days is the cabernet shiraz mix, and they call it 'Aussie Claret'. It sure isn't a classic French combination. A fusion of two opposing grapes, yet they work in harmony by complementing and enhancing each grape's best characters.

One of the finest, most consistent and delectable examples is Yalumba The Signature. Each year a long-serving employee is given the honour to be the signatory on the label, hence the name. Now in its 50<sup>th</sup> year since the first release, this has become one of my favourite New World wines. It's a wine that you can completely rely upon, whatever the vintage.

At a recent launch of the latest The Signature 2012 vintage, it was a privilege to look at a selection of older wines, including the very last bottle of 1966 from the Yalumba museum cellar.

Best of all, the price remained outrageously low. Wines that can mature gracefully over twenty years, often longer, can be bought for under \$60.00. That's a bargain in the modern world of inflated prices for collectable wines. Looking at the vertical line-up of wines, which demonstrated their refined style and longevity, perhaps the price may not stay affordable for much longer.



Notes are from a recent media tasting held in Auckland, New Zealand.

Winery	Wine	Region	Points
<b>Yalumba</b>	<b>The Signature 1966</b> It was labelled 'Galway Vintage Reserve Claret'. Indeed this cabernet sauvignon and shiraz blend is Australia's rendition of the classic claret, and the style remains distinctly Australian to this day. A charmingly matured wine of generosity. Aromas of sweet oak, dark fruit, vanilla and mixed spice with subtle fruitcake note lead to a beautifully weighted palate that is finely textured and persistent with delicately drying tannins. A gorgeous wine to drink now. Signatory: Alf Wark (Yalumba's company secretary for 25 years). Library stock. April 2015.	Barossa	<b>94</b>
	<b>The Signature 1975</b> This is a distinguished old wine. Complex aromas of roasted meat, truffle, sweet berry and cedar on the nose. The palate is irresistible. It is rounded and seamless, and offers a lingering, savoury finish. Drink now. Signatory: Walter Smith (Robert Hill-Smith's grandfather). Library stock. April 2015.	Barossa	<b>95</b>
	<b>The Signature 1988</b> It is beautifully fragrant on the nose displaying dark fruit, clove, tar, leather and cigar box characters. The palate is equally engaging with supple mouthfeel and excellent fruit intensity. Tannins are finely drying and in abundance, providing firm structure to this opulent and stylish wine. At its best: now to 2018. Signatory: Colin Gerhardy (Joined the company in 1948 as bottling supervisor). Library stock. April 2015.	Barossa	<b>95</b>
	<b>The Signature 1996</b> Impressively complex and perfumed, the bouquet shows blackberry, game, dark leather, cedar and vanilla aromas, followed by a concentrated palate that delivers excellent fruit weight and plush texture. Super long and tasty. At its best: now to 2026. Signatory: James Wark (Group Commercial Director; jointed Yalumba in 1977). Library stock. April 2015.	Barossa	<b>98</b>



**Yalumba**

**The Signature 2001**

Barossa **95**

A deeply coloured, brooding wine; the bouquet shows dark berry, roast meat, tar, tobacco and spicy oak aromas, leading to a beautifully fruited, tightly focused palate that is bold and classically structured. The wine exhibits opulence within a sturdy frame of chalky tannins. At its best: now to 2026. Signatory: Geoff Linton (Has been the titan of technology at Yalumba and many Australian wine technical institutions for over 30 years). Library stock. April 2015.



**The Signature 2005**

Barossa **96**

Dense and powerful, this compelling wine shows complex aromas of blackberry, game, espresso, cedar and spice, which lead to a concentrated palate that is gorgeously fruited and richly textured. A wonderful expression of both cabernet and shiraz, offering terrific drinking. At its best: now to 2030. Signatory: Jeffrey Smith/Greg Pullen. Library stock. April 2015.

**The Signature 2009**

Barossa **96**

This oozes exquisite style, while offering undeniable Barossa generosity and approachability. Fabulous aromas of blackberry, plum, cocoa, game and cedar lead to a concentrated palate that displays lovely fruit richness and silky texture. The fine and grainy tannins are seamlessly woven into this immensely appealing wine. At its best: 2018 to 2035. Signatory: Clive Weston (Managing Director of Negotiants N.Z. and a doyen of the New Zealand wine industry). Library stock. April 2015.

**The Signature 2012**

Barossa **98**

A formidable wine of outstanding richness, yet it's sophisticated at the same time. Complex aromas of black/blueberry, dark plum, floral, game and vanilla lead to a velvety palate that delivers awesome intensity and opulence. A gratifying wine from an exceptional vintage. Surely this is the best wine made under this label of fifty-year history. At its best: 2022 to 2042. \$55.00. Signatory: Robert Hill-Smith (Chairman of the Board) NZ Distributor: Negotiants NZ. April 2015.

For more information: [www.yalumba.com](http://www.yalumba.com)

NZ Distributor: Negotiants NZ [www.negotiantsnz.com](http://www.negotiantsnz.com)



At the tasting in Auckland 21<sup>st</sup> April 2015

Robert Hill-Smith (2012 signatory), Vic Williams, Clive Weston (2009 signatory)