

PENFOLDS BIN 138
SHIRAZ GRENACHE MOURVÈDRE



“The perfumed and seductive flavours of Grenache provide an essential element of the style.” – PETER GAGO



OVERVIEW: Penfolds Old Vine Barossa Valley Shiraz Grenache Mourvèdre (varietal mix variable, depending on vintage) was elevated to the Penfolds Bin range with the 1998 vintage. During the 1950s Penfolds experimented with blending Shiraz and the robust grape variety, Mataro (now referred to by the more lyrical French name, Mourvèdre) culminating in the release of the Bin 2 wines (first vintage 1960).

Considered at the time to be an inferior variety, Grenache was used mainly for fortified wine production. The Australian market, weaned on a culture of fortified wines, was slowly moving towards table wine. Recognising that this fledgling market was used to big flavours, Penfolds adopted a winemaking philosophy of house style and looked for grape varieties which showed intense colour, rich ripe fruit, strong flavours and tannins. This may explain why Penfolds experimented little with Grenache, preferring the more robust characters of Shiraz and Mourvèdre.

The introduction of Penfolds Bin 138 (first vintage 1992) was a natural response to a growing international market, increasingly interested in the highly perfumed and fleshy styles made famous by the wines of Chateauneuf du Pape. Curiously, the Barossa Valley, populated by Silesian and English settlers in the 1830s, was planted extensively with Shiraz (Syrah), Mataro (Mourvèdre) and Grenache from early on. Indeed, it represents some of the oldest genetic vine material in the world! It is ironic therefore that this style, now considered classic, was not made by Penfolds until the early 1990s. Fashion and taste largely account for both the lack of foresight and the immense international popularity of this wine today.

Penfolds sources much of the fruit for Bin 138 from low-yielding, independently grown grapes from around the Barossa Valley. Explaining the overall blend, Peter Gago notes, “The perfumed and seductive flavours of Grenache provide an essential element of the style. Shiraz brings colour, sweetness of fruit and palate richness. Mourvèdre provides some spicy top notes and plenty of savoury characteristics.” Blended together, these varieties can make a sublime wine with great personality and structure. Interestingly, this is the only Penfolds wine that remains in component form during maturation, and is put together after several rackings just prior to bottling. Vintage conditions and ultimately the nature of the fruit determine the final blend.

PENFOLDS

BIN 138

**SHIRAZ GRENACHE
MOURVÈDRE**

First Vintage: 1992

Variety: Shiraz Grenache and Mourvèdre in varying proportions depending on vintage conditions.

Origin: Barossa Valley, South Australia.

Fermentation: Stainless steel tanks with wooden header boards.

Maturation: 12 months in older (often six years plus) oak hogsheads.

Comments: Sourced from several vineyards, with average vine age of 35 to 100+ years. Elevated to Bin range with 1998 vintage.





PENFOLDS BIN 138

SHIRAZ GRENACHE MOURVÈDRE

Blended together,
these varieties can
make a sublime wine
with great personality
and structure.

Hence each year the varietal make-up can vary accordingly. In more recent vintages the wine has been a Shiraz dominant blend, but both Grenache and Mourvèdre have led the wine in the past.

John Duval notes that “the early vintages from 1992 to 1997 reflected a fairly steep learning curve. By 1998 we had a better understanding of our fruit sources and the overall style we wanted to achieve”. Bin 138 is a full-bodied style with an emphasis on musky plum fruit aromas and succulent sweet fruit. Peter Gago comments, “Unlike many Shiraz Grenache Mourvèdre blends, it is not of the fleshy/juicy high alcohol/extract style, nor does it rely on any new oak”. After vinification the wine is matured in old hogsheads to enhance fruit aromas, promote integration of flavours and soften tannin structure. Bin 138 is a relatively early to medium drinking style which develops rich, complex, earthy nuances with age.



1992 **Now**
Brick red. Earthy/cedar/spice aromas with some mint/eucalypt notes. The palate is sinewy with some spicy/dark cherry fruit. Lean, austere wine.

1993 **Now** **2005**
Brick red. Exotic plum/spice/leatherwood/gamy aromas and flavours. A rich, fleshy wine with black fruit/gamy flavours and ripe tannins. Finishes quite dry.

1994 **Now** **2006**
Medium deep crimson. Intense earthy/plummy/liquorice aromas. Full-flavoured palate with plenty of dark chocolate/plum fruit and fine grippy tannins.

1995 **Now** **2006**
Red brick. Dark cherry/plum/spice aromas. The palate is well-balanced and generous with savoury/spicy characters and soft supple tannins.

1996 **Now** **2007**
Medium deep crimson. Intense aniseed/liquorice/choco-berry fruit. A solid wine with rich choco-berry flavours and ripe supple tannins. Builds up firm and tight at the finish.

1997 **Now** **2009**
Medium deep crimson. Restrained wine with plummy/floral/mint aromas. The palate is lean with spicy/plum flavours and chalky tannins.

1998 **Now** **2011** ★
Deep crimson. Rich ripe wine with spice/dark chocolate/plum aromas. A well-balanced palate with seductive chocolate/plum flavours and some peppery/spice nuances.

1999 **Now** **2010**
Deep crimson. Musky/black fruit/liquorice aromas. A very concentrated wine with musky/plum/spice flavours, plenty of fruit sweetness and fine leafy tannins. Finishes firm.

2000
Not made.

2001 **Now** **2010** ★
Deep crimson. Fresh plum/spice/rosehip/floral aromas. A really well-balanced wine with deep set plummy/currant/spicy fruit and smooth round tannins. A very fruit-driven wine.

2002 **Now** **2012**
Deep crimson. Intense liquorice/black cherry/musky/violet aromas. A well-concentrated palate with rich aniseed/musky/raspberry/black cherry fruit and firm sinewy/savoury tannins.

