



# Aldiploma

## Module Seven

New World Wines &  
Upcoming Classics

# New World Classics and Up & Coming Classics

The previous six modules of the Aldiploma provided all the groundwork you need to make shopping for your wines easier and more enjoyable than ever. We covered off the basics of different wine types and styles, grape varieties, white and red winemaking, classic wines and also other types of wine. Now that you know what is in your glass and why you like it, we're going to explore New World wines. We're also going to take a little look at some up-and-coming wine regions – those less well-known areas that are producing some outstanding wines at incredible value, if you just step off the beaten track...

## New World Wines

The classic winegrowing regions of Europe and the Middle East are often referred to as the 'Old world'. Essentially anything grown outside of this area is referred to in the wine world as the 'New world'.

New World wines include (but are not limited to) wines from the **USA**, as well as a lot of countries in the Southern Hemisphere, including **Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Argentina** and **Chile**.

When they first appeared on the international wine scene, these wines were a breath of fresh air. Firstly, the often sunny, warm climates meant the wines were soft, round, approachable and easy-to-drink but secondly, the **labels were easier to understand**.

These new winemakers chose to label their wines by **variety**, meaning the grape variety is stated quite clearly on the label whereas for the majority of classic 'Old World' wines, they are labelled by **region**.



For example, on a Chablis wine bottle you usually won't find the grape Chardonnay written (even though Chablis is always 100% Chardonnay), as the producers will label the wine according to where it is from; in this case the town of Chablis.



However, if we look at a new world Chardonnay, e.g. from Australia, the grape will be written quite clearly on the bottle label alongside its geographical origin. Given that your wine predominantly tastes the way that it does because of the grape variety it is made from, this is very useful information!

Don't forget **Module 5** offers a cheat sheet to the classic old world wine regions

Many popular grape varieties that are now found worldwide originated in Europe. They were taken from their native homes in France, Spain and Italy to be planted in the New World. In some cases, these grape varieties have flourished and become even better known outside of Europe. For example, Malbec, which is now synonymous with Argentina, is originally a French grape.

With all this in mind, let's take a look at some of the wonderful New World Classics of the wine world:

## The United States of America



### Grape varieties:

Very heavily influenced by French grapes and French winemaking, the varieties best known in the States are Chardonnay and Sauvignon Blanc for whites (the latter being called Fumé Blanc if it has had some oak ageing). For red wines, Pinot Noir, Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon are popular options. There are also a group of winemakers known as the Rhône Rangers who look to the Rhône for inspiration and love Syrah, Petite Sirah and Viognier. Another hugely popular red grape variety is Zinfandel (it's used in a lot of rosés too) – this is known as the Primitivo grape in Italy.

### Regions:

Roughly 90% of wine from the USA comes from the West Coast, with California and illustrious places, such as Napa, Sonoma, the Russian River Valley, Santa Barbara and Carneros, most famous. Other regions include Oregon (known for its great Pinot Noir), Washington and the Finger Lakes in upstate New York.

### Food & Wine:

Chardonnay is a great match with chicken and fish. Whereas, Zinfandel works well with red meat, as does Cabernet Sauvignon and the Rhône style Syrah blends. Pinot Noir can be chilled and enjoyed with tuna or pork.



## Argentina



### Grape varieties:

The most popular Argentinian grape variety is Malbec. While Malbec is a French variety (from Bordeaux and Cahors), it really has come into its own in Argentina. Other French varieties, such as Cabernet Sauvignon, Pinot Noir, Syrah and Bonarda are also commonly grown. When it comes to whites, the Torrontés grape - which is a pretty, floral, aromatic variety - has made a name for itself in Argentina. It also produces excellent Chardonnay and other French white varieties such as Sauvignon Blanc.



### Regions:

Argentina is known for its high altitudes (thanks to the Andes) and consequently getting lots of sun, which is vital to grape ripening and results in red wines that are typically deep red in colour. The melted snow from the mountains provides essential irrigation as the climate is hot and dry with low rainfall. Famous wine regions include Cafayate, La Rioja, Mendoza, Patagonia and Salta.

### Food & Wine:

It may sound obvious but for food & wine nirvana, a peppery steak is the perfect match when it comes to Malbec!

Explore **Module 8** for a more in depth look into what food to pair with which wine

## Chile

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### Grape varieties:

Chile is something of a grape growing paradise due to its wide-ranging temperatures, which range from warm in the day to much cooler at night. This allows the grapes to ripen during the day - enhancing flavour and colour - but the cooler night temperatures keep acidity and freshness; the perfect combination for grape growing. Carménère is Chile's star red grape. Originally from Bordeaux, it produces wonderfully distinctive wines with notes of cassis, mint and blackcurrant leaf. Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon are also popular, along with the Spanish Pais. For whites (which are less commonly grown in Chile than reds), French varieties are again widespread, including Chardonnay and Sauvignon Blanc.

### Regions:

The two most famous regions are Casablanca Valley, by the coast just north of Santiago, and the Central Valley, which is further in-land, with very fertile vineyards that are well-irrigated and produce larger volumes of wine. Other regions include Colchagua, Limari, Maipo and Maule.

### Food & Wine:

Carménère is fantastic with red meat, especially lamb and roasted vegetables.



**Aside from Argentina and Chile, there are a few other South American countries that also make wine including Brazil, Peru and Uruguay (which is best known for the chunky Tannat grape).**

## South Africa

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### Grape varieties:

Pinotage and Chenin Blanc are the two grape varieties that have become synonymous with South African wine-making. The latter is a French white variety, but unlike in its home in the Loire - where the wines tend to have quite high acidity - in South Africa, the wines are often softer and more tropical in flavour, especially if produced from grapes harvested from 'old vines' (which add complexity and texture). Pinotage is a South African grape that is a cross between Pinot Noir and Cinsault and was cultivated in 1925. Other varieties frequently grown include Sauvignon Blanc and Chardonnay for whites, and Syrah and Cabernet Sauvignon for reds. Traditional method sparkling wines or Cap Classique are also made as well as the famous Muscat-based sweet wine; Klein Constantia.



### Regions:

The wine regions of South Africa are extremely picturesque and include Stellenbosch and Constantia along with Elgin, Walker Bay, Paarl and Swartland. The Western Cape produces a large amount of wine too.

### Food & Wine:

With a peppery Pinotage and Syrah, a Braai or BBQ is perfection or other red meat, like a steak. Chenin Blanc is extremely versatile and can be enjoyed with chicken, fish, salads and pasta.

## Australia



### Grape varieties:

Shiraz is the grape variety most commonly associated with Australia. It's actually the same grape as Syrah, from France but stylistically it's richer and more fruit forward. Australia grows a large variety of different grape varieties and while many are French (Cabernet Sauvignon, Grenache, Merlot, Shiraz, Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc and Sémillon) the country has developed a great reputation for Riesling (originally from Germany), as well as Spanish grapes such as Tempranillo and Albariño, and Italian Sangiovese.

### Regions:

Australia has a plethora of world-famous wine regions, from Hunter Valley (excellent Sémillon and Shiraz), to McLaren Vale, Barossa, Coonawarra, Clare Valley, Tasmania and the Adelaide Hills in South Australia - not forgetting Margaret River in Western Australia. There are also huge winemaking regions including South Eastern Australia, and the Riverland and Riverina which produce great value bottles.

### Food & Wine:

As Australia has so many different grape varieties, the world is your oyster when it comes to food pairings; a BBQ with Shiraz to spicy foods with Riesling and seafood with a Chardonnay.



Hunter Valley

## New Zealand



### Grape varieties:

Fresh, usually unoaked and full of notes of passion fruit, gooseberry, asparagus and grass, Sauvignon Blanc has become extremely popular in New Zealand. Aside from the ubiquitous 'Savvy', New Zealand also produces first class Chardonnay along with other white varieties such as Pinot Gris, Riesling and even Grüner Veltliner from Austria. For red wines, New Zealand produces brilliant Pinot Noir as well as Bordeaux blends (mainly Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot) and Syrah (interestingly, they label it Syrah not Shiraz like in Australia).



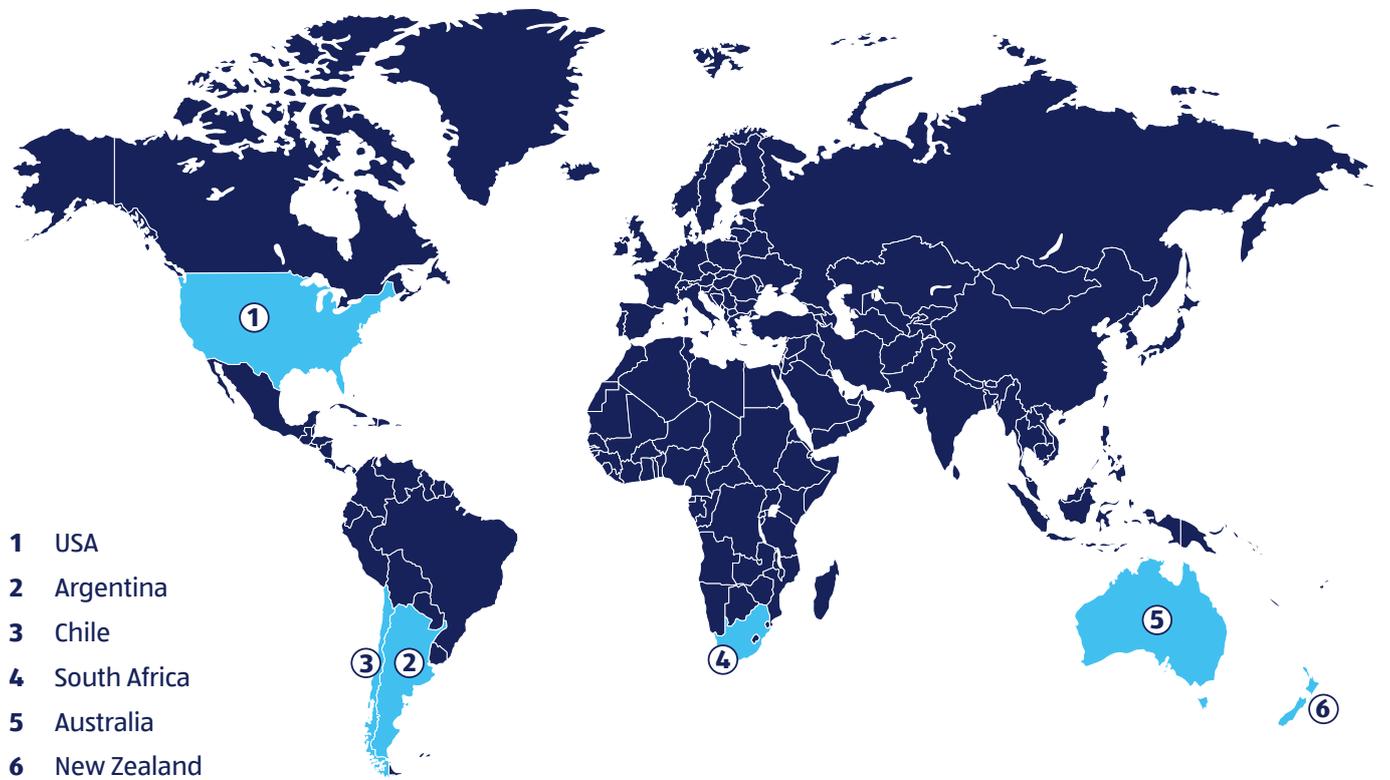
### Regions:

New Zealand's most renowned region is Marlborough, at the north of the South Island. Also on the South island is Nelson and Central Otago, which produces the world's most southerly grapes and delicious Pinot Noir. Hawke's Bay, Gisborne and Auckland are found on the North Island.

### Food & Wine:

Lamb pairs well with Bordeaux blends and try duck with Pinot Noir. And for the fabulous New Zealand whites, seafood and even fish 'n' chips will go down a treat!

## New World Wine regions



# Up & Coming Classics

Covering just classic Old world and New world wines doesn't do justice to the broad range of wines on our shelves nowadays. There are also a large number of countries less well-known for wine production but that grow little-known, interesting and unusual indigenous grape varieties. Some of these are relatively new to winemaking, others, such as Germany and Austria, have a long history of wine production but after falling slightly out of fashion are now enjoying something of a Renaissance. Below is a whistle stop tour of some of these regions to help give you the confidence to try something new and a bit different!

## Central Europe – Austria, Germany & Hungary

### Austria

A treasure trove of wine (especially dry white wine) at the centre of Europe, it is Grüner Veltliner that is stealing the show at the moment. Other grapes grown include the lightly aromatic Riesling, Pinot Blanc (Weissburgunder) and Pinot Gris (Grauburgunder). Arguably less well-known, and certainly under-represented in the UK, are Austria's red grape varieties, such as Zweigelt and Blaufränkisch. The latter is a delicious dark skinned grape, which produces wines rich in tannin.

### Germany

Don't be put off by the wine labels, which can be tricky to understand due to rather complicated wine laws! The grape varietal is usually there on the bottle if you look for it – and inside may lie one of Germany's superb wines, which often offer incredible value. There are 13 very important wine growing regions in Germany – all are cool climate and many have steep slopes to make the most of the sun, to ripen the grapes. There is one grape that really reigns supreme in Germany - Riesling. A versatile grape that can be dry, off dry, sweet or even sparkling, it pairs well with a diverse range of foods.



### Hungary

There are a lot of grape varieties indigenous to Hungary. Furmint and Harslevelü are the two you're most likely to come across, as they which go into the luscious sweet Tokaji wine, which Hungary has become renowned for. Tokaji is grown in the Tokaj region in The Northern Massif and is a sensational match with blue cheese, dark chocolate, and even Christmas Pudding!

## The Rest of Europe – Greece, Portugal and The United Kingdom

### Greece

This warm, sunny Mediterranean country has a long history of winemaking but Greek wines have arguably been underrated for many years. One of the most commonplace and popular indigenous varieties is the zesty white Assyrtiko. Wine is made all over Greece, from the famed Ionian and Aegean Islands to the mainland. As you might expect Greek salads, seafood and fresh white fish work brilliantly with the white wines whereas for the reds, try robust, rustic fare like roasted meats, game or sausages.

### Portugal

With over 250 different local grape varieties, there's lots to explore! You may not recognise their names, but prepare to be happily surprised. Whilst Portugal is historically better known for its fortified wine, there is now a wide range of stylish still wines produced across the country. The Douro Valley, about an hour from Porto produces some wonderful full-bodied reds, while Vinho Verde is known as the eponymous 'green wine'. Don't be fooled into thinking the wine is actually green, it's actually a crisp, very young white wine produced in northern Portugal.

### The United Kingdom

Perhaps not surprisingly it is in the warmer regions of the south of England that the majority of UK vineyards can be found, but there are also plantings further north in Yorkshire, Wales and even Scotland. The growing reputation for homegrown sparkling wine means there are large plantings of Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Meunier. For still wines, the zesty Bacchus (similar in both style and taste to Sauvignon Blanc) is favoured, whereas Pinot Noir can be used for both still and sparkling wines. A top food pairing tip for English sparkling wine is fish and chips – delicious!

## Elsewhere in the World – Canada, China and Lebanon

### Canada

Canada is the world's largest producer of Ice wine (where the berries freeze on the vine), which is a very rich, sweet wine ideal with puddings. Due to the extremely cold weather, hardier (and lesser-known) grape varieties are grown such as Vidal Blanc but also Riesling. To counteract the intensely cold winters, vineyards are typically planted near bodies of water, such as lakes. The water changes temperature at a much slower rate than air, helping to moderate the surrounding temperature.

### China

One to watch, China's wine production is expanding incredibly rapidly. Like Canada, China can be extremely cold so grape varieties must be resistant to that. Although increasingly, it is the key international grape varieties that are grown, especially Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot for reds. Popular white varieties tend to be Chardonnay or Riesling.

### Lebanon

In the 19th Century, missionaries introduced French varieties to Lebanon and to this day popular grape varieties include Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc, Viognier and Sémillon for whites and Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Syrah and Cabernet Franc for reds. The Bekaa Valley is indisputably the most well-known wine region in the Lebanon and home to iconic wineries such as Chateau Musar, Chateau Kefraya and Chateau Ksara, which are all producers to look out for! It is also home to the ancient Roman temple of Bacchus, God of Wine.