



Iain Riggs

BROKENWOOD

Hunter Valley, New South Wales

BROKENWOOD

“Brokenwood has established a reputation as one of the Hunter Valley’s most respected estates.”
Robert Parker’s The Wine Advocate

FOUNDED: 1970

CLIMATE: Warm/hot, summer-dominant rainfall

WINEMAKER: Iain Riggs

SOILS: Volcanic loam to red cracking clays

SIZE: 35.5 acres (Hunter Valley)

VARIETIES PLANTED: Shiraz (30 acres), Semillon (1 acre), Cabernet Sauvignon (2.5 acres), Merlot (2.5 acres).

HARVEST: Late January to early March

WEBSITE: www.brokenwood.com.au



The Brokenwood vineyards by air



PROFILE: A benchmark Australian winery founded in 1970 by Sydney trio Tony Albert, John Beeston and Australia’s leading wine critic, James Halliday, Brokenwood evolved from a weekend venture for these self-professed hobby winemakers into one of Australia’s most reputable wine labels. These enthusiastic partners knew little about viticulture, thus the early vintages were a labor of love for them and the family and friends they roped in to help. In spite of this, the distinct reds received praise from the earliest vintages, and with the appointment of winemaker, Iain Riggs, in 1982, the company extended its range to include the jewel of the Hunter Valley, semillon. Thirty-five years later, Brokenwood is known for producing some of Australia’s most long-lived Semillons, and one of the nation’s most iconic single vineyard wines, the Graveyard Shiraz, which Australia’s leading auction house, Langton’s, lists among the top twenty-five in the country. While the size of the company has grown, the operation remains deliberately labor intensive with the intent of retaining individuality and quality.

VITICULTURE: In a region considered relatively warm and subtropical, the presence of summer dominant rainfall, afternoon cloud cover and weak sea breezes temper what could otherwise be a challenging climate for the production of quality table wine. In spite of this, the Hunter Valley has an impressive grape-growing history, with the first vineyards being planted in 1830 by one of pioneers of the Australian wine industry, James Busby. The jewel in Brokenwood’s crown is a vineyard planted over a century later: the Graveyard Vineyard, its heavy clay soils producing low yields and intense flavors in the estate’s flagship shiraz. In addition, Riggs’ passion for exploring premium regions and producing single vineyard wines has seen fruit sourced from outside the Hunter Valley. This fruit complements the Hunter’s shiraz and semillon with aromatic complexity and style diversity, namely Sauvignon Blanc, Cabernet Sauvignon and Pinot Noir.



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THE WINES

Shiraz and semillon are the Hunter's king and queen. Unique in the world of wine, Hunter semillon is crisp and austere in its youth, yet rewards with a bounty of nutty, creamed honey characters on a toasty palate with age. Similarly, Hunter Shiraz is one of Australia's most regionally distinctive wines, displaying intense mineral, pepper and dark berry overtones in its youth, before developing savory notes of leather, spice and freshly turned earth after five to ten years.

ICON WINES

Graveyard Shiraz: Planted in 1968 using cuttings from mature vineyards in the area, the Graveyard vineyard was originally designated as a cemetery, although was never used as such! It now produces shiraz grapes for one of Australia's most iconic wines, the Graveyard Shiraz.

ILR Reserve Semillon: Planted on low fertility soils derived from sea beds consisting of Permian sediments of shales, tuffs, conglomerates and sandstone. This epitomizes Hunter Semillon with low alcohol, no oak and ample natural acidity. Released at a minimum of five years age.

SINGLE VINEYARD WINES

Oakey Creek Vineyard Semillon: Hand harvested from a single vineyard based on an old river bed leading down from the alluvial foothills of the Brokenback Range. Focused and intense, it shows lime and cut grass flavors with a tight acid backbone typical of this vineyard.

REGIONAL WINES

Hunter Valley Shiraz & Hunter Valley Semillon: Minimal intervention winemaking and maturation in American oak barriques grant the Shiraz restrained savory fruit and soft, dry tannins in true Hunter style. Likewise, the Semillon shows zesty lemongrass and apple blossom with tight structure and a focused citrus finish.

Beechworth Pinot Noir: A short cold soak, 10% whole bunch ferment and French oak maturation produces a robust pinot noir showing dark cherry, chocolate and earth with substantial structure.

Area Blend Shiraz: A blend of Shiraz from three regions, Beechworth, McLaren Vale and the Hunter, this wine shows great winemaking skill in balancing the best of each region.

WINEMAKING: Iain Riggs, Managing Director, Chief Winemaker and part owner of Brokenwood, has helped transition this estate from a small, hobby winery into an international icon in the nearly 30 years he has been with the company. Graduating from Roseworthy College in 1975 with honors, Riggs went on to become an inaugural Winemaker's Federation of Australia board member, Chairman of the Cowra, McLaren and Hunter Valley Wine Shows, and Nominee for Gourmet Traveller WINE Magazine's 2001 Winemaker of the Year. Not surprisingly, quality is paramount for this icon label. Low yields, hands-off processing and top quality French oak are the norm. In producing these regional benchmarks, the winemaking team adheres to tradition while remaining innovative in their approach, keeping a watchful eye on alcohol levels, tannin and oak to ensure these wines are balanced, yet structured for longevity. These are modern classics that exhibit a true sense of place.

BROKENWOOD



Iain Riggs walking the mature estate vineyards



The Stunning Brokenwood dam at sunset in New South Wales' Hunter Valley



Inky Graveyard Vineyard Shiraz