

Wirra Wirra heads to Gonzalez Byass

Historic McLaren Vale winery, Wirra Wirra has announced a change of United Kingdom distribution for its premium Australian wines.

The winery has moved to join the Gonzalez Byass stable in their quest to further develop their table wine portfolio on the back of the success of their port and sherry brands.

Wirra Wirra Managing Director, Andrew Kay, said the fit between Gonzalez Byass and Wirra Wirra seemed a natural one. "As an independent producer we place great emphasis on our history, sense of place and family. Gonzalez Byass share like-minded philosophies and we believe our range of super-premium Australian wines will compliment their offering."

Kay believes that despite tough market conditions, opportunities still exist for premium Australian wine brands in the UK market. "Despite its challenges, the market is constantly evolving and with that come new channel opportunities. We have invested significantly in grape and wine quality over the past few years and the results are being seen in the glass. Now is the time for us to move to the next phase of our brand development in the UK."

Martin Skelton, Managing Director of Gonzalez Byass UK, said "This is a fantastic development for our company; we have been very successful at developing our own premium wine and sherry business in recent years, as well as building a portfolio of high quality agency brands including Quinta do Noval, Jackson Estate, Matarromera and Fillaboa. Wirra Wirra is one of *the* premium Australian brands, with a great reputation in the UK and Australia where it has been rated a Five Star winery in the James Halliday Australian Wine Companion in 2011, for the seventh consecutive year! We look forward to working with them to realise their aspirations in this market".

Wirra Wirra will be represented by Gonzalez Byass in the United Kingdom from September 1, 2011.

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Wirra Wirra Vineyards was first established in Australia in 1894 by Robert Strangways Wigley. Today it is highly regarded as a producer of rich McLaren Vale reds and elegant cool climate Adelaide Hills white wines. Its Church Block red, a blend of cabernet sauvignon, shiraz and merlot is one of the best-selling wines in Australia in the £10 – 15 category, while its RSW Shiraz was a gold medal winner at the recent London International Wine Challenge. www.wirrawirra.com

