HUNTER VALLEY

2026 boutique winemakers show

EXHIBITOR INFORMATION

Proudly Presented by Hunter River Agricultural & Horticultural Association

Welcome

JUDY MEAD - CHAIR

Welcome to the 36th Annual Hunter Valley Boutique Winemakers Show

On behalf of the Hunter River Agricultural & Horticultural Association, it is my pleasure to invite you to participate in the 36th Annual Hunter Valley Boutique Winemakers Show. The past year has presented significant challenges for many across the wine industry. From changing market conditions to increasing costs and ongoing business pressures, we recognise that it has not been an easy time for many of our boutique wineries and grape growers. Yet, through it all, the resilience, passion and determination of our wine community continue to shine. It is in this spirit that we have shaped this year's Show.

While the Hunter Valley Boutique Winemakers Show has always been about recognising excellence in winemaking, it has equally been about bringing our industry together. For 2026, we've reimagined our Awards Celebration as a relaxed Cocktail Celebration, creating a more accessible and affordable event that encourages you, our exhibitors to bring your teams, share in the recognition and celebrate together. Winemaking is a team effort. From the vineyard to the winery, from cellar door to sales, every medal represents the dedication of many people. This year's celebration is designed to recognise everyone who contributes to that success and to provide an opportunity for our industry to reconnect, support one another and celebrate what makes the Hunter Valley such a remarkable wine region.

The 2026 Show also marks an important milestone as we acknowledge the final year of Neil McGuigan as Chief Judge. Neil's extraordinary contribution to the Hunter Valley Boutique Winemakers Show has helped shape the reputation and integrity of these awards for many years. His leadership, generosity of knowledge and unwavering commitment to excellence have left a lasting legacy, not only on this Show but across the Australian wine industry. We're excited to celebrate and thank Neil for his remarkable service during this year's Awards Celebration.

We look forward to receiving your entries and welcoming you and your team to the 36th Annual Hunter Valley Boutique Winemakers Show.

Regards

Judy Mead

Chair
Hunter Valley Boutique Wine Show

Key Dates

ENTRIES

10 August 2026
Entries Open

11th September 2026
Entries Close

25th September 2026
Labels Emailed

6-8th October
Exhibit Deliveries

JUDGING

12-14th October 2026
Show Judging

PRESENTATION

HV Boutique Wine Show Celebration
Friday 30 October 2026
4:00pm

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2026 Show

REGULATION 1

BOUTIQUE WINEMAKERS

Boutique winemakers are the lessees/owners of a Hunter Valley winery whose annual crush is less than 350 tonnes. Sections A-M

REGULATION 2

BOUTIQUE WINE PRODUCERS/GROWERS

Boutique Wine Producers/Growers have their grapes made into wine under contract in a Hunter Valley winery. The annual production of the Boutique Wine Producers/Growers must be less than 350 tonnes. Sections N-Z

NOTE:

$55 per entry.
Max number of entries per class is 3,
Except for Classes ‘All Varieties or Other Varieties and Blends’ which has a max of 5 entries per class.

Judging Panel

PANEL A

Mark Richardson (Panel Chair)
Brett Woodward

Nicholas Kruger
Alisdair Tulloch

PANEL B

Will Figueira (Panel Chair)
Jade Hafey

Hugh Spinaze
Valentina Moresco

STEWARDS

Laura Carr
Brooke Omotosho
Jennifer Bishop
Elliot Metcalfe
Peter Smith

Regulation 1

BOUTIQUE WINEMAKERS

2026 Dry Red - Class- 400 litres minimum volume	**Section**	**Class**
All Varieties and Blends (the variety must be stated on the label, and blends with percentage stated)	A	1

2025 Dry Red - Class- 200 litres minimum volume	**Section**	**Class**
Shiraz	B	2
Bordeaux Varieties and Bordeaux Blends (the variety must be stated on the label, and blends with percentage stated)		3
Other Varieties or Blends (the variety must be stated on the label, and blends with percentage stated)		4

2024 Dry Red - Class- 200 litres minimum volume	**Section**	**Class**
Shiraz	C	5
Bordeaux Varieties and		6
Bordeaux Blends (the variety must be stated on the label, and blends with percentage stated)		7
Other Varieties or Blends (the variety must be stated on the label, and blends with percentage stated)		

Open Vintage **Dry Red Class- 2023 and Older - 125 litres minimum volume**	**Section**	**Class**
Shiraz	D	8
Bordeaux Varieties and Bordeaux Blends (the variety must be stated on the label, and blends with percentage stated)		9
Other Varieties or Blends (the variety must be stated on the label, and blends with percentage stated)		10

Museum Dry Red Class- 45 litres minimum volume	**Section**	**Class**
Varietal or Blend 7 years of age and older	E	11

2026 Dry White Class - 200 litres minimum volume	**Section**	**Class**
Semillon	F	12
Chardonnay		13
Verdelho		14
Other Varieties or Blends (the variety must be stated on the label, and blends with percentage stated)		15

2025 Dry White Class- 200 litres minimum volume	**Section**	**Class**
Semillon	G	16
Chardonnay		17
Verdelho		18
Other Varieties or Blends (the variety must be stated on the label, and blends with percentage stated)		19

Open Dry White Class 2024 vintage or older **125 litres minimum volume**	**Section**	**Class**
Open Vintage Semillon	H	20
Open Vintage Chardonnay		21
Open Vintage Verdelho		22
Open Vintage Other Varieties or Blends (the variety must be stated on the label, and blends with percentage stated)		23

Museum Dry White Class - 45 litres minimum volume	**Section**	**Class**
Museum Varietal or Blend (7 years of age or older)	I	24

Open Vintage Sparkling - 125 litres minimum volume	**Section**	**Class**
Open Vintage Sparkling Wine - All Styles, All Production Methods 125 Litres	J	25

Open Vintage Rose Style. - 125 litres minimum volume	**Section**	**Class**
Open Vintage Rosé Style	K	26

Open Vintage Sweet White Table Wine - 125 litres minimum volume	**Section**	**Class**
Open Vintage Sweet White Table Wine Greater Than 1^{o}Be	L	27

Open Vintage Fortified Wines - 125 Litres minimum volume	**Section**	**Class**
Open Vintage Fortified Wines	M	28

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Regulation 2

BOUTIQUE WINE PRODUCERS/GROWERS

2026 Dry Red - Class- 400 litres minimum volume	**Section**	**Class**
All Varieties and Blends (the variety must be stated on the label, and blends with percentage stated)	N	31

2025 Dry Red - Class- 200 litres minimum volume	**Section**	**Class**
Shiraz	O	32
Bordeaux Varieties and Bordeaux Blends (the variety must be stated on the label, and blends with percentage stated)		33
Other Varieties or Blends (the variety must be stated on the label, and blends with percentage stated)		34

2024 Dry Red - Class- 200 litres minimum volume	**Section**	**Class**
Shiraz	P	35
Bordeaux Varieties and Bordeaux Blends (the variety must be stated on the label, and blends with percentage stated)		36
Other Varieties or Blends (the variety must be stated on the label, and blends with percentage stated)		37

Open Vintage **Dry Red Class- 2023 and Older - 125 litres minimum volume**	**Section**	**Class**
Shiraz	Q	38
Bordeaux Varieties and		39
Bordeaux Blends (the variety must be stated on the label, and blends with percentage stated)		40
Other Varieties or Blends (the variety must be stated on the label, and blends with percentage stated)		

Museum Dry Red Class- 45 litres minimum volume	**Section**	**Class**
Varietal or Blend 7 years of age and older	R	41

2026 Dry White Class - 200 litres minimum volume	**Section**	**Class**
Semillon	S	42
Chardonnay		43
Verdelho		44
Other Varieties or Blends (the variety must be stated on the label, and blends with percentage stated)		45

2025 Dry White Class- 200 litres minimum volume	**Section**	**Class**
Semillon	T	46
Chardonnay		47
Verdelho		48
Other Varieties or Blends (the variety must be stated on the label, and blends with percentage stated)		49

Open Dry White Class 2024 vintage or older **125 litres minimum volume**	**Section**	**Class**
Open Vintage Semillon	U	50
Open Vintage Chardonnay		51
Open Vintage Verdelho		52
Open Vintage Other Varieties or Blends (the variety must be stated on the label, and blends with percentage stated)		53

Museum Dry White Class - 45 litres minimum volume	**Section**	**Class**
Museum Varietal or Blend (7 years of age or older)	V	54

Open Vintage Sparkling - 125 litres minimum volume	**Section**	**Class**
Open Vintage Sparkling Wine - All Styles, All Production Methods 125 Litres	W	55

Open Vintage Rose Style. - 125 litres minimum volume	**Section**	**Class**
Open Vintage Rosé Style	X	56

Open Vintage Sweet White Table Wine - 125 litres minimum volume	**Section**	**Class**
Open Vintage Sweet White Table Wine Greater Than 1^{o} Be	Y	57

Open Vintage Fortified Wines - 125 Litres minimum volume	**Section**	**Class**
Open Vintage Fortified Wines	Z	58

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Regulations

1. Boutique winemakers are the lessees/owners of a Hunter Valley winery whose annual crush is less than 350 tonnes.
2. Boutique Wine Producers/Growers have their grapes made into wine under contract in a Hunter Valley winery. The annual production of the Boutique Wine Producers/Growers must be less than 350 tonnes.
3. All wines must be commercially bottled at the time of entry. Unbottled wines will not be given an award or medal. However, they will be given a standard.
4. Wines to be submitted must be made from grapes grown in the Hunter Valley and LIP compliant- defined as the catchment area of the Hunter River.
5. Each exhibitor must be in possession of either a current Off-Licence, Vigneron Licence or a current Off Licence Retail Licence.
6. Max no of entries/class is 3, except for Classes 'Other Varieties and Blends' – max no of entries 5/class. Duplication of entries in any one class is not permitted.
7. The same wine may not be entered by any other competitor.
8. No wine may be entered in more than one class.
9. Each wine sample is to consist of four (4) 750ml bottles or six (6) 375ml bottles.
10. The minimum quantity of wines eligible for each exhibit within the respective sections will be:
    i. Sections E, I, R, V - 45 Litres
    ii. Sections D, H, J, K, L, M, Q, U, W, X, Y, Z - 125 Litres
    iii. Sections B, C, F, G, O, P, S, T - 200 Litres
    iv. Sections A, N, – 400 Litres
11. a) Further wine samples may be required and/or inspected by the Maitland Show Wine Committee or its nominees for quantitative and comparative analysis, and
b) The Committee or its nominees shall not be required to give notice to any exhibitor of its intention to make any such inspection hereby authorized, and
c) In the event of discrepancy disclosed by such inspection, the Committee or its nominees if it shall so determine may cancel any award won by an exhibitor and disqualify that exhibitor from further exhibition for such a period as the Committee in its absolute discretion may determine.
12. No exhibitor shall advertise or allow to be advertised by any means whatsoever by broadcasting, pictorially or in writing the fact that any exhibit has won any prize in the Show, unless such advertisement shows clearly
a) Hunter Valley Boutique Winemakers Show
b) Year of Award
c) Description of Class with vintage year applicable.

13. The decision of the Judges shall be accepted as final and binding.
14. The Exhibitor agrees to supply to the Maitland Showground (Hunter River Agricultural & Horticultural Association up to two (2) cases of award-winning wines at wholesale prices ($140.00 per dozen + GST) for presentation at the current or following years Wine Show Awards Presentation.

Definition of a Bordeaux Red Variety: This covers Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Merlot, Petit Verdot, Malbec and Carmenere

NOTE: A trophy will be awarded for each Section except for A, J, K, L, M, N, W, X, Y & Z.

These sections trophies are as follows:

- Trophy for Best Sparkling Wine (Sections J & W)
- Trophy for Best Rose (Sections K & X)
- Trophy for Best Sweet White Table Wine (Sections L & Y)
- Trophy for Best Open Vintage Fortified (Sections M & Z)

All Wines in Both Regs 1 & 2 are eligible for:

- The Karl Stockhausen Commemorative Trophy for Best White Wine of Show
- The Ray Healey Trophy for Best Red of Show
- Trophy for the Boutique Winemaker of the Year - awarded to the producer who has achieved the highest number of points for their exhibits apportioned 5 points for gold, 3 for silver and 1 point for bronze for 2024, 2025 & 2026 vintage wines only.

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