

MOTHER BLOCK

Victoria, Australia



Products

A New Language for Australian Wine Mother Block begins with a simple premise: wine speaks most clearly when the vines are well-matched to their surroundings. Grapes grown in places where they feel at home need less help — less water, fewer chemicals, less manipulation — and they give more back in return. They reflect where they're grown, not just what they are. This isn't about novelty for novelty's sake. It's about asking better questions: What should we be growing here? What kind of wines might we be making if we let the land decide? Place and Provenance In Merbein, just outside Mildura in Victoria's Murray Darling region, Bruce and Jenni Chalmers began farming with the usual suspects — shiraz, cabernet, chardonnay. These were the grapes that had come to define Australian wine, though they were developed for entirely different climates. The land, with its long dry seasons and fierce sun, never fully embraced them. By the late 1990s, the Chalmers family had started to look elsewhere — specifically to southern Europe — for grape varieties that might be better adapted to the realities of their environment. In 1998, they became the Australian partner for Vivai Cooperativi Rauscedo (VCR), one of Italy's leading vine nurseries. What followed was not a pivot but a quiet revolution. Farming Practices and Sustainability The Chalmers farm is now home to over 75 grape varieties and clones, from the well-known (aglianico, fiano) to the rare and unfamiliar (pavana, slankamenka bela). These varieties weren't chosen to stand out. They were chosen to belong. This diversity isn't decorative. It's a practical response to a warming climate and a drying continent. Grapes that evolved in Mediterranean climates are better suited to Australia's conditions than the traditional French cultivars that came before. They require less irrigation. They ripen at more reasonable times. And they tell a more accurate story about where they're grown. Just as importantly, the Chalmers don't separate sustainability from quality. The two ideas are inseparable. A wine that's easier on the land often turns out to be easier to drink, too — more balanced, more refreshing, more honest.

Owner : Bruce and Jenni Chalmers

www.motherblock.com.au

