



# Islander Estate Vineyards : A French Winemaker Set Free in Australia 法國釀酒師 熱愛自由澳洲

**J**ust off the coast of South Australia, beyond Adelaide's renowned McLaren Vale, is an idyllic natural hideaway of immense beauty with a great array of wildlife—Kangaroo Island—where sea lions bask on white beaches and pelicans soar over shimmering lagoons. Not only is it known for its native kangaroos, wallabies, echidnas, seals, penguins, and koalas, but it is also Australia's newest wine region with a most unlikely ambassador for its developing wine industry: Frenchman Jacques Lurton, an international flying winemaker and part of the Lurton family, one of Bordeaux's most powerful winemaking dynasties.

It may seem strange that a winemaker with Bordeaux roots is making wine in a place so far off the beaten tracks. Yet, Jacques Lurton and his Islander Estate

**在**南澳洲沿岸，越過Adelaide著名的McLaren Vale，是一個如詩般美麗的野生動物天堂——Kangaroo Island，在這裡你可以看到海獅在白色的沙灘上享受日光浴、鸕鶿在泛着燐光的湖泊上翱翔。島上除了有著名的土生袋鼠、沙袋鼠(wallabies)、針鼯鼠(echidnas)、海豹、企鵝和樹熊，同時亦是澳洲最新的葡萄酒產區。當地釀酒事業始於一位法國人Jacques Lurton，他是國際飛行釀酒師，亦是波爾多最具影響力的釀酒王國——Lurton家族的成員。

儘管許多人都感到奇怪，一位家族植根波爾多的釀酒師，竟然會在這裡發展釀酒事業，似乎有點偏離常規；不過，Jacques和他的Islander Estate Vineyards 佳釀，與這遍鮮為人知的土地所構成的奇妙組合，很快便得到澳洲著名酒評家 James Halliday評選為5星級釀酒廠，贏得公眾的認同，亦再一次證明Jacques是



Vineyards wines, despite unusual blends from a little known region, has won critical acclaim fast and early, earning ratings as a 5-star "outstanding" winery by Australia's pre-eminent wine critic James Halliday. But then again, Jacques Lurton is not your typical Bordeaux winemaker.

"I've been exposed to the New World 26 years ago, going to work in Australian wineries after graduating from Bordeaux University. Since then I've been making wine all over the world. It is true that in Bordeaux they only teach you a certain style of wine. Back then, in Bordeaux you learn to make Bordeaux, and in Burgundy, you learn to make Burgundy. You never learn to make Burgundy in Bordeaux." After spending time making wine in the New World, Jacques Lurton felt

位非一般的波爾多釀酒師。

「26年前，在Bordeaux University畢業後，我到了澳洲的釀酒廠工作，讓我有機會認識這個新世界產區。我曾經在世界不同的地方從事釀酒工作，無可否認，在波爾多你只會學到某幾種酒的風格；在波爾多只能學會造波爾多葡萄酒；在布根地亦只會懂得釀布根地葡萄酒，你從來不會在波爾多學釀造布根地葡萄酒。」在新世界產區工作了一段日子，Jacques發覺在歐洲經常被複雜的釀酒規範所約束，觸發他到澳洲發掘更好的地方；現在，澳洲已經是他的第二個家，每年有一半時間會留在那裡。

為甚麼會選擇Kangaroo Island這個遙遠而偏僻的地方？原來，早在1997年



hindered by the complex web of winemaking regulations in Europe, and began to look to Australia for his winemaking ventures. He currently spends up to half his time in Australia, his second home.

Why choose Kangaroo Island, such a remote and isolated landscape? Jacques first visited the island in 1997 with his wife on their honeymoon. They fell in love with its natural beauty, and he began to recognize its considerable viticultural potential. "I was looking for a land with all the right conditions for growing vines: avoiding excessive water, excessive drought, and excessive nitrogen. Once you have these three parameters from the soil, then you have



Jacques與太太度蜜月時首次踩足此地，二人已即時愛上當地的自然美景，Jacques更發現這裡有種植葡萄的潛質。「我一直在找一遍適合種植葡萄的土地，它必須符合所有的種植條件：不可有過多水分、也不可太乾旱或有過多的養分。即使土壤符合這三個條件，還要氣候不能太熱或太冷；以及注意葡萄的生長週期。要是一切俱備，便可以種植不同品種的葡萄。於是，我選擇種植Cabernet Franc 和 Sangiovese，結果令人滿意！」Jacques細說。Islander Estate的皇牌佳釀正是混合了Cabernet Franc和Sangiovese的Yakka Jack，名字取材自一種二次大戰後士兵在島上清除的植物，這可能是世上唯一混合Cabernet Franc及Sangiovese釀製而成的葡萄酒。由Cabernet而來的色澤和單寧，加上Sangiovese帶來富層次的口感，令Yakka Jack成為出色的葡萄酒。



雖然Jacques是一個非傳統的釀酒師，但他仍然具有法國口味。「我喜歡清涼氣候孕育出來的自然酸度、精緻、細膩的味道。我特別鍾情氣候清涼的terroir，不論是波爾多、布根地或澳洲，它們擁有讓葡萄漫長成熟的時間，能釀造出最優雅的葡萄酒。這個優點並不會瞬間展現出來，需要時間孕育。」這份優雅的特質就是Jacques釀製Islander Estate時最重視的元素。

說到在Kangaroo Island的佳作——Wally White Semillon Viognier、Old Rowley Grenache Shiraz Viognier等等，Jacques興奮得像小孩子一樣。「澳洲真是

to have a place that is not too hot or cold. Then you respect the cycle of vines. With all these in place, you can grow any variety. When I planted my Cabernet Franc and Sangiovese that was my idea, and it worked," says Jacques. The Yakka Jack, named after the plants that the soldier settlers had to clear on the island following World War Two, is Islander Estate's flagship wine, and blends together Cabernet Franc and Sangiovese. It may be the only blend of these two varieties around the world, and it has worked extremely well: the Cabernet brings color and tannins, while the Sangiovese rounds out the structure and adds to its mouth feel.

Despite Jacques' unconventional winemaking, he still has very French tastes when it comes to making wine: "I like the natural acidity, refinement, and finesse that a cool climate brings.

一個非常奇妙的地方，你可以做任何事，這是在歐洲不可能的。這裡有合適的氣候、優質和豐富的資源，我可以自由地做我想做的事而怕受批評、我可以種植我喜歡的葡萄品種而不需要填表申報。就好像Grenache生長在釀造Châteauneuf-du-Pape的Rhône南部、而Shiraz生長於釀造Côte-Rôtie的Rhône北部，但從來不會有一個AOC出現三個品種，就算所有條件是適合的。相反，在澳洲，你可以進行測試，證明某品種是可以混合在一起。」

不過，Jacques仍然很支持法國將某些葡萄品種封鎖。「我喜歡此做法是因為這樣可以保留波爾多或布根地的獨特性。不過，波爾多的Chardonnay或Pinot Noir跟Burgundy的味道一定不同，這是由於兩地的土壤和氣候不同，因此我認為在現時的規範下，可以有更多創新的空間及自由。」Jacques解釋。

Jacques認為新世界的生活就好像是讓他充電。他認為澳洲是一個可以讓他休息的地方：「歐洲的生活太複雜，腦袋要不停地轉；相反在新世界我不需要想太多，生活非常簡單，就好像食方面，在Kangaroo Island我不需要吃甚麼而煩惱，因為這裡根本沒有餐廳，選擇少得可以讓心靈有更多時間休息。在舊世界，我實在想得太多；很高興能夠從世界的一面走到另一面，我喜歡舊世界，但同時喜愛新世界，我會將新世界的東西帶到舊世界，讓世界的兩面能夠交流。」

That's what I like to drink. I'm interested in cool climate terroirs like what you find in Bordeaux and Burgundy and Australia, because these make the most elegant wines with a long ripening season to concentrate the grapes. They don't express quickly in the bottle, but have fantastic capacity for aging." Elegance is always his foremost aim when it comes to creating his Islander Estate wines.

When Jacques talks about his wines on Kangaroo Island—his Wally White Semillon Vioignier, his Old Rowley Grenache Shiraz Vioignier, and so on—his delight and enthusiasm is like that of a kid at Christmastime. "I find Australia to be a fantastic place. You can do anything. No project like this can exist in Europe. Here is a place with the right climate and quality and all the resources of a modern country. I find the freedom of doing whatever I want and not being judged, and the freedom of planting any type of vines without having to declare and fill out paperwork. For example, Grenache is grown in Southern Rhone where they make Châteauneuf-du-Pape, Shiraz is grown in Northern Rhone where Côte-Rôtie is made. But never, ever will you have these three varieties together in an AOC, even if they have everything going for them to live together. In Australia, you can experiment and prove that some varieties that have never been blended together can get along well together."

Yet Jacques is fully supportive of French regions being locked into certain grape varieties. "I like that because it is what makes a Bordeaux or Burgundy. A Chardonnay or Pinot Noir in Bordeaux will never taste like Burgundy because the soil and climate is different. So I don't think we should go in that direction but I think within the general regulation, there should be much more space and freedom for innovation," Jacques explains.

Jacques likens being in the New World to recharging his batteries. He feels rested in Australia. "Life in Europe is very sophisticated but there is too much to think about. In the New World I don't have to think too much. Life is simple. For example, in Kangaroo Island I don't have to think too much about food, because there are no restaurants here. Your mind has more time to relax because choices become simple. In the Old World, I have too many ideas. It is fascinating to be able to come from one side and go to the other side. I love the Old World, but I love going to the New World and exchange things from both sides of the world."

