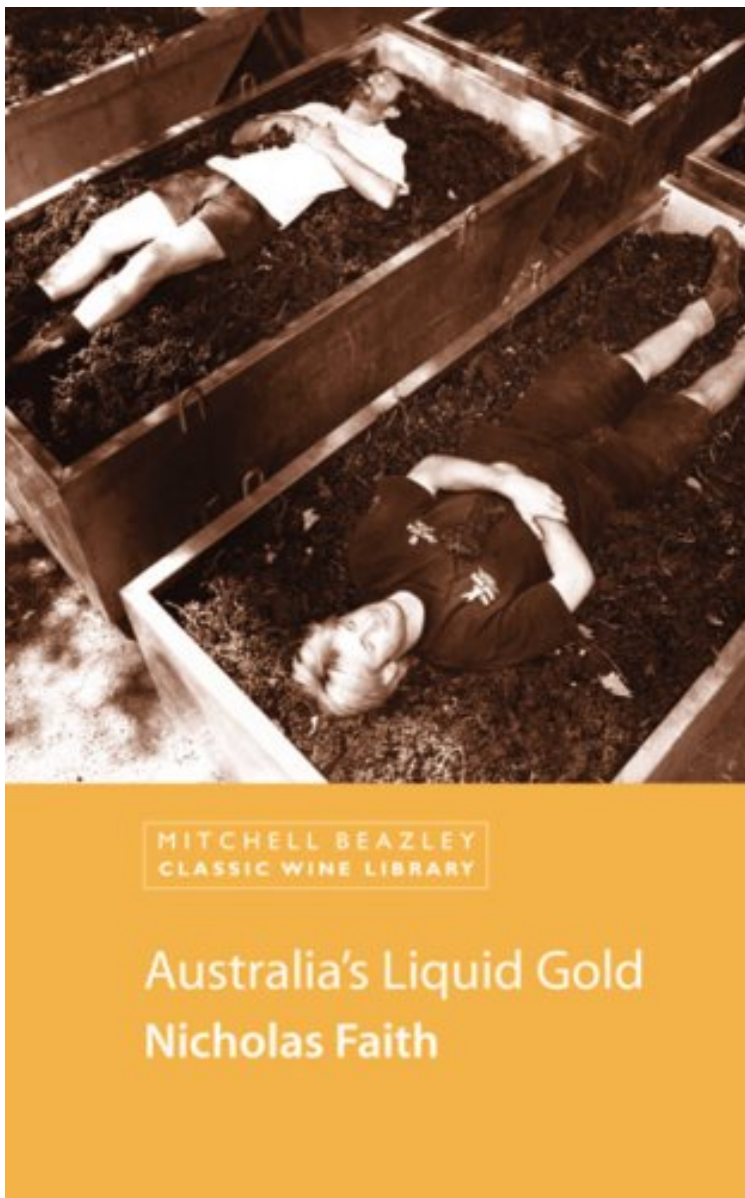


(Library ebook) Australia's Liquid Gold (Mitchell Beazley Classic Wine Library)

Australia's Liquid Gold (Mitchell Beazley Classic Wine Library)

Nicholas Faith

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Nicholas Faith : Australia's Liquid Gold (Mitchell Beazley Classic Wine Library) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Australia's Liquid Gold (Mitchell Beazley Classic Wine Library):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy DORDE SORONDAGreat. Thanks.1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Not What You Would ExpectBy Christopher BarrettThis is not a text about the

producers, regions, or maps of Aussie wine; this is a story about the growth of Australian wine to become one of the wine powerhouses. If you want an Aussie text, get Halliday's Wine Atlas of Australia. If you liked Noble Rot, then definitely check this out. 7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. VIN EXTRA-ORDINAIRE By A Customer. "Liquid Gold" will become essential reading for anybody wanting to gain a detailed understanding of Australian wine. It looks closely at the history of the Ozzie wine scene and the trail-blazing vigneron who have elevated this country's wine to world-class status. Nicholas Faith's thesis is that Australians have underplayed the importance of "regionalism". He then demonstrates that each Australian wine district has very distinctive and attractive attributes. This book is the first comprehensive study of the Australian wine business written by a non-Australian. Faith is an Englishman with expert credentials. He made his name with *The Winemasters*, the classic 1978 study of Bordeaux. As a contributing editor to the London Financial Times Faith combines a knowledge of wine as one of life's essential joys together with a sharp commercial understanding of the wine industry. The history of the Australian wine scene is covered in more detail by other authors, but Faith, with his international perspective puts the last 200 years of development in a very relevant, topical and balanced context. Faith's stated purpose in writing the book is "an attempt to explain the success of Australians in the international wine market since the early 1990s". For those readers familiar with the early pioneers and the renaissance of our industry in the 1960s, it may be tempting to skate over the 275 pages it takes Faith to get to the current era. With an Englishman's appreciation of pedigree, Faith reminds us there are now dynastic Australian wine families eg the Smiths and Wynns, with up to five generations of viticultural, oenological and wine marketing skills behind them. Interestingly, members of these families are still at the cutting edge of wine innovation. Faith looks at the very topical issue of the two opposing trends in our industry. With the recent large-scale mergers and international rationalisations eg Rosemount/Penfolds and Hardys/Constellation - there is a risk that Australian wine making will become "commodified". Some critics (particularly the French) argue that industrial scale wine production (even at a high technical standard) leads to bland and characterless wine. The discounting power of supermarket liquor buyers and the squeeze they are putting on the growers and winemakers (both large and small) is seen as the biggest threat to our industry's continued success. Thankfully, there are still the innovative smaller-scale producers who are prepared to experiment and "push the envelope" when it comes to making their vines and wines sing and dance for our pleasure. Faith reminds us of the increasingly important role of estate-grown (individual vineyard) and "hand-made" wines. He assures us Australian producers will continue to carve out valuable niches at this premium end of the market. Faith is optimistic that the most of these competent "tin shed" wine makers with access to good fruit will survive, despite the increasing dominance of the Big Five wine makers and the pressure of retail liquor discounting. He sees cellar door, mail order and direct sales to restaurants as the key. When coupled with wine regions presented as attractive tourism destinations, the identity and survival of the small labels must be assured. In support of this, Faith tells us of the habit of the serious French wine consumer who likes to buy wine direct from the producer. The most provocative passage in Faith's book looks at the relative economic power between the grape grower and the wine maker. "The whole of Australia is now coming to resemble Champagne, another region of blended wines produced by firms that are renowned for the value of their brands but - with a few exceptions - can supply only a small proportion of the grapes they require." On first reading, you might think Faith has seen too many bottles on the shelves of Sainsbury's bearing the label "Product of South-Eastern Australia". However, statistics are on Faith's side. Recent numbers from the Australian Wine Industry Directory (Wine Titles 2003) show that the Top 22 winemakers own or lease only 20% of the total area of Australia's vineyards. To the outsider, the power would seem to be in the hands of the grower but, increasingly, the winemakers apply a rigorous grading system when buying fruit, and will reject grapes that are of inferior quality. A close reading of the book reveals a few annoying typos and oversights. One example is the name of Penfold's former Chief Viticulturist in South Australia: David Murdock. Faith spells it Murdoch. Late in the book, he tells us that the Margaret River region of Western Australia is the only region in the world that was recommended geologically as having soil-types suitable for wine-grape growing - this was before the first vine was planted. However, in an earlier chapter we are told that the founders of the Barossa Valley region in South Australia in the 1830s also consulted a mineralogist before committing to their vineyard plantings. Faith demonstrates that terroir and regionalism does underpin much of the qualities that we see in Australian wine. He reminds us that Brian Croser's bold move into the Adelaide Hills and Andrew Pirie's rigorous selection of Pipers Brook was driven by a belief that the soils and climate characteristics of Burgundy could be found in parts of Australia. The emergence of great local pinots is a result of this combination of science and passion. One familiar aspect of both the earliest and current generation of Australian vigneron is the large number of medical doctors who got themselves involved with grapes and wine. Faith tells us about the pragmatic and pioneering doctors of the 1800s who grew grapes and recommended wine as a health-giving tonic. The modern generation of winemaking medicos seems to be more inspired by the need for relief from the pain of taxation. Either way the restorative power of Australian wine is firmly based. When you finish reading "Liquid Gold" you may be obliged to lift a glass and thank Mr Faith for writing such an informative, provocative and entertaining book.

How did Australia achieve such phenomenal success with its wine? Historian and critically acclaimed wine writer

Nicholas Faith provides an in-depth account of the growth and international boom of Australia's wine industry, and describes how the country's wines have risen to the point of becoming the world's number one choice. This is the first, and very best, book to chart Australia's amazing success story.

"The Australian wine industry has virtually reinvented itself... it has proved a great ambassador for Australia." Brian Croser, winemaker.
About the Author
Nicholas Faith is one of the best-known financial journalists in Britain. His first wine book, *The Winemasters* was published in 1978 and won the Andre Simon award. He has written other well-received works on Champagne and on major Bordeaux chateaux, including *The Winemasters of Bordeaux*. He was editorial director of the leading French wine magazine *L'Amateur de Bordeaux*. His book on Cognac was awarded prizes in both Britain and the United States and is recognized as the standard work on the subject. He writes for numerous magazines and newspapers, including the *Financial Times*. He lives in London.