Wine
Australia

BCLDB VISIT | 29 JANUARY – 7 FEBRUARY 2025

BCLDB customer profile

The British Columbia Liquor Distribution Board (BCLDB) is a branch of Government responsible for the wholesale distribution and retail sale of beverage alcohol in the province of British Columbia. The BCLDB operates a province-wide retail and wholesale beverage alcohol business, within a mixed public-private retail model. Its workforce has approximately 4,600 full and part time employees. The BCLDB is the operator of BC Liquor stores, with nearly 200 locations across the provinces. BC Liquor stores are one of the largest retail chain operations in the province.

Over the past several years, Australian wine sales have declined in BCLDB stores. This is due to several factors including: competition from other wine categories; competition from other beverage alcohol products; a lack of excitement in the Australian assortment sold in stores.

The last two years has seen significant change in the BCLDB's category management. The new buyer has created a specific and dedicated plan to refresh the Australian assortment and bring excitement and commercial viability to the category. A visit is a great way to continue this positive momentum and further support and educate the BCLDB on diverse Australian wines.

Why is a representative from the BCLDB visiting Australia?

A representative from the BCLDB category team has not visited Australia since 2018. The last seven years have seen significant changes to the wine industry in key export markets within Canada, including British Columbia. This is an opportune time to host the BCLDB as Wine Australia works closely with the category team to educate and showcase a refreshed and modern Australian wine assortment. Liquor board buyers travel to meet with existing suppliers, form relationships with new businesses and taste wines for potential purchase in the future.

How has the itinerary been developed?

The itinerary has been created by Wine Australia in partnership with the BCLDB category team. Regions and producers have been selected to meet the specific requirements and requests from the BCLDB while considering market need, significant existing partnerships, and new opportunities to refresh the current assortment. The itinerary has been developed to maximise the number of producers and regions visited without compromising on experience and the enjoyment of the visit.

Are there particular wine styles and/or price points the BCLDB wants to focus on?

The BCLDB has provided the following set of guidelines for consideration:

- New products only.
    - New vintages of existing listings, products already presented in tenders or meetings with the BCLDB will not be considered.
- Commercial wines under $10 CAD wholesale
    - Chardonnay, Pinot Grigio, Shiraz, Cabernet, Blends
- Exclusive brand opportunities
    - $10-$15 CAD wholesale
- Whites, lighter red styles
    - Including Pinot Noir, Riesling, Grenache, Tempranillo
    - $12-$20 CAD wholesale
- Innovation in labels, wine styles, varietals, packaging
- Premium wines for one-time buys (should have accolades)

    - $25-$45 CAD wholesale
- Sustainable Winegrowing Australia certification and trust mark an asset.
- New and exciting brands to launch in the Canadian market.

Which regions will be featured in the visit?

A number of regions throughout South Australia and Victoria will be visited by the BCLDB. Due to the limited time spent on ground, some regions will be included in the form of masterclasses or regional tastings in CBDs.

The following regions will host the SAQ:

- Riverland
- Barossa
- McLaren Vale
- Adelaide Hills
- Yarra

There will also be tasting opportunities for regions outside of the above list in the following CBDs:

- Melbourne CBD
- Sydney CBD

Is there an opportunity to put my winery forward for inclusion?

Yes. By clicking the link provided, you can submit your winery for consideration. Please refer to the priority wines, styles and price points outlined above. Wines that do not meet these criteria will not be considered, and a submission is not a guarantee that your wines will be included.

If I am not currently represented in British Columbia, can I still submit to participate?

Yes. The BCLDB is committed to meeting new wineries and introducing new wines to market.

If I am not a member of my regional association, can I still submit to participate?

Yes. All export-ready wineries who fit the criteria provided by the BCLDB will be considered.

How is this visit being funded?

Budget and operational responsibility for this visit is handled by Wine Australia. Producers or regions included in the final itinerary may be asked to assist with costs and/or in-kind support.

Can I pay to have my wines tasted by the BCLDB?

There is no opportunity to pay to be included in this visit.