John Duval
Sequel Syrah

Few winemakers are as synonymous with the iconic wines of a country as John Duval, best known for his work with Penfolds’ Grange, the gold standard for Australian Shiraz.

John joined Penfolds winery in 1974 after completing his studies in agriculture and winemaking. In 1986 John was appointed Chief Winemaker, following the winemaking greats Max Schubert and Don Ditter.

The Duval Family had for many years run a world famous Suffolk sheep stud and also ran quality vineyards, at Morphett Vale south of Adelaide, coincidently supplying Shiraz grapes and vine cuttings to Penfolds.

During his time as Chief Winemaker, John oversaw a dynamic period of development. The many awards and accolades for its wines helped establish Penfolds as one of the world’s great wine brands.

While his honors and awards are too numerous to list, some of the highlights include the Robert Mondavi Trophy for Winemaker of the Year in 1989 at the International Wine & Spirits Competition in London; two-time recipient of the Red Winemaker of the Year award at the International Wine Challenge in London, first in 1991 and then again in 2000; and Wine Spectator’s “Wine of the Year” award in 1995 for the 1990 vintage of Penfolds Grange.

After 28 years, John stepped down from the company in 2002 to establish John Duval Wines, debuting with the 2003 vintage of Plexus SGM. John now makes four wines under his John Duval Wines label, a white; ‘Plexus White’ (Marsanne, Roussanne, Viognier), and three reds; ‘Plexus Red’ (Shiraz, Grenache, Mourvedre), 'Entitiy' (Shiraz) and 'Eligo' (Shiraz).

In addition to making his own wine, John also has a joint venture project with Ventisquero in the Apalta Valley, Chile and in 2003 John traveled to the Columbia Valley at the invitation of Long Shadows Vintners’ founder Allen Shoup to make his first U.S. wine, Sequel, a name chosen in recognition of his life’s work with Syrah.

Never one to be far from great Shiraz, he currently resides in the Barossa Valley, home to some of Australia’s oldest vines.

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