

# Media Release

**The Hon Martin Pakula MP**

Minister for Industry Support and Recovery

Minister for Trade

Minister for Business Precincts

Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events

Minister for Racing



Wednesday, 9 March 2022

## DRINK VICTORIAN TO SUPPORT JOBS AND LIFT LOCAL SPIRITS

A new floating bar and restaurant on the Yarra River is making it easier to drink Victorian wine, beer, cider and spirits, thanks to an Andrews Labor Government initiative that is supporting local jobs.

Minister for Trade Martin Pakula welcomed the commitment by Yarra Botanica – on the Yarra River in Southbank – to serve an all-Victorian line-up of drinks as part of its participation in the *Drink Victorian* program.

The Labor Government launched the program in December, which encourages bars, restaurants and retailers to offer more Victorian-made drinks, including non-alcoholic varieties, to customers. Supplying more Victorian drinks in local venues helps to boost domestic demand and support local jobs while export challenges remain.

Victoria's drinks industry directly contributes \$10.7 billion to the economy, supporting more than 350,000 jobs in 22,000 licenced venues. That includes almost 950 businesses licenced to make wine, beer, cider, and spirits.

Drinks exports, particularly wine, have been hit hard during the pandemic, with producers facing challenges with trade disruption, finding new markets and international transport.

The *Drink Victorian* program will feature at the Melbourne Food and Wine Festival, which kicks off on 25 March, to ensure Victorian-made beverages are front of mind as diners return to cafes, bars and restaurants.

The Government has provided \$1.5 million to support *Drink Victorian* through Agriculture Victoria and Global Victoria, including a pilot program for 100 venues to get more local drinks on the menu.

Australian Venue Co, which owns Yarra Botanica, is also investing \$20 million over the next three years to serve more Victorian drinks at its venues across the state.

For more information about the *Drink Victorian* program visit [drinkvictorian.com](https://drinkvictorian.com)

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Trade Martin Pakula

*"Melbourne will be humming this autumn and it's the perfect time to experience a new venue that serves Victorian-made drinks and supports local jobs."*

*"By choosing to drink locally-made, Victorians are backing our world-class wine, beer, cider and spirit producers at a time when they need a boost."*

### Quote attributable to Minister for Agriculture Mary-Anne Thomas

*"We are proud to be getting behind our local drinks industry to highlight some of the excellent Victorian produce on offer which is brewed, distilled, or matured right here on our doorstep."*

### Quote attributable to Australian Venue Co CEO Paul Waterson

*"As a Melbourne-based company we're proud to be supporting Drink Victorian and look forward to adding even more local drinks to our menus."*

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