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HD **Sale** of Yaldara turns clock forward to 1847
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CHATEAU Yaldara has been **sold** by owner Australian Vintage to the **Chinese** owned-**company** 1847 Winery.

The winery – which was established in 1947 by refugee Hermann Thumm – is expected to change hands in November or December as soon as 1847 acquires a liquor licence for the winery. 1847 is owned by Zhitai Wang of NSW and Kuifen Wang from Adelaide's sister city Qingdao, in Shandong province in **China**.

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It will mark a step up for the smaller **company**, which has previously been making its wine on a contract basis with various wineries. 1847 will employ some existing staff at the winery, while Australian Vintage will also retain some staff.

Australian Vintage chief executive Neil McGuigan said Yaldara, which it bought in 1999, had been an important part of the **company** and its people were "first class".

"The staff have made a significant contribution to our business," he said. "To ensure that our high quality is maintained we have entered into a two-year processing agreement with 1847 and we will also retain a number of winemakers on-**site** post completion.

"We will retain our Barossa Valley Farms vineyard, the grapes from which are critical to our super premium wines program.

"The **company**'s focus remains on its three fundamental strategies: grow export business, build branded sales with emphasis on the McGuigan, Tempus Two and Nepenthe brands, and be the lowest-cost producer of quality wines. The **sale** of the Yaldara Winery and the Yaldara brand is another step towards achieving those strategies.

"Over the next two years we will be exploring various options regarding the long-term processing of our super premium grapes from the Barossa, Adelaide Hills and adjacent regions. The net funds from the **sale** of the Yaldara Winery and Yaldara brand will initially be used to reduce debt." Yaldara is an Aboriginal name meaning "sparkling".

The **company**'s flagship product is its 40-year-old premium port and it also produces the Yaldara **Estate** shiraz, cabernet sauvignon and sauvignon blanc.

1847 chief executive John Curnow said yesterday the acquisition had been more than two years in the making.

"Previously 1847's operations were restricted with winemaking operations sourced from various contract winemaking facilities on an annual basis. Chateau Yaldara now provides opportunity for continued expansion of both the brand and range in both domestic and international markets." Australian Vintage shares closed 1c higher at 35.5c.

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