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Virgin Australia and Barossa Valley winery, St Hallett, today unveiled a wine that has been blended specifically for consumption at high altitude. The wine, named The Duo, will be served exclusively on board Virgin Australia flights in Business Class and can be sampled in Virgin Australia lounges.

Environmental shifts when at altitude, such as atmospheric pressure and drier air conditions, affect the taste of food and beverages. Virgin Australia worked with St Hallett winemaker, Shelley Cox over a number of months to create the customised wine that focuses on delivering balanced acidity and texture when consumed in the air.

The wine was also developed to complement the Business Class menu designed by Virgin Australia's resident chef Luke Mangan, taking the inflight experience to a new level.

Ms Cox said The Duo is a blend sourced from both the Barossa and Eden Valleys to achieve a perfect balance at altitude. Whilst some airlines select wines based on their characteristics at altitude, it is believed this is the first blend specifically created to suit the conditions at altitude.

“The drier air in the cabin can make it hard to really capture a wine’s aroma. This is where the

Eden Valley component comes in. The higher altitude of the Eden Valley means cooler conditions and creates Shiraz with lovely overt floral aromas. You only need a small component to really lift a whole blend,” Ms Cox said.

“We played around with a lot of different options to ensure the acid and texture balance was right. It was a great experience and we are confident the wine will deliver in both taste and aroma on the plane at altitude.”

Virgin Australia’s General Manager In-flight Experience, Tash Tobias, said: “Our team is always searching for ways to deliver an outstanding experience for our guests on board.

“We are thrilled to bring the best of the Barossa to our guests travelling in Business Class and will continue to work with leading industry players to improve the in-flight experience,” Ms Tobias said.

The Duo will be on board Virgin Australia aircraft and in Virgin Australia lounges from today.

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