



2007 d'Arenberg The Laughing Magpie

100% McLaren Vale Shiraz (90%) / Viognier (10%)

Towards the end of its fermentation the colour of this wine is a wonderfully vivid purple hence the colour of the label.



The Name

The vineyards and bushland that surround the d'Arenberg winery are home to the unique native Australian bird, the Kookaburra, famous for its distinctive laughing call. Much to the amusement of the family, Chester Osborn's daughters, Alicia and Ruby, named their two wild pet Kookaburras the "Laughing Magpies".

The Magpie plumage is black with a stripe of white feathers and bears no resemblance to its famous cousin, but to this day the name has stuck. The Osborn's thought the name was a good choice for McLaren Vale's first ever Shiraz Viognier blend combining the (black) Shiraz and its white partner, Viognier.

The Vintage

2007 will be remembered as the earliest start to vintage ever due to extreme drought conditions not seen for decades. Overall winter rainfalls were a third of what we normally receive. The extremely dry conditions and cold spring temperatures leading up to the growing season affected the vines fruiting and canopy development, producing very short shoot length. This resulted in reduced bunch size, bunch weights and berry size.

Just as vintage was to commence we experienced 50mm of rain, which created considerable fruit splitting on many of our dry grown vineyards. This saved the vintage as it provided enough ground moisture in the final stages of ripening for the fruit to ripen in a stress free state. This resulted in grapes having concentrated flavours at lower levels of beaume ripeness with excellent levels of acidity.

The Winemaking

Very concentrated ripe bunches of Shiraz and Viognier were gently crushed by the "Demoisy" open mouthed, rubber toothed crusher, then co-fermented together in traditional, headed down open fermenters where the traditional foot-treading in wader-clad feet takes place.

After about 2 weeks the must (the still fermenting juice) was then gently basket pressed by our 19th Century "Coq" and "Bromley & Tregoning" presses, and then transferred into American and French oak barriques for maturation. At 12 months, Dead Arm downcasts are selected from oak and are blended together to balance the level of Viognier in the final blend.

The Characteristics

Very dark rich looking appearance suggesting with a black-crimson hue suggesting a complex youthful dry red. The aroma is intense and still quite undeveloped with a floral mix of peach stone, jasmine and cranberry juice overriding dark maraschino cherries, star anise, and spiced fruit cake. If you give the wine a vigorous decanting you'll see amongst the floral & vegetative earthy notes a dominance of white pepper & plum notes mixed with root vegetables such as parsnips and beetroot, along with hints of roasted black tea, black olives and edges of fragrant garden herbs. The palate is full flavoured with ripe juicy soft mouth-filling flavours suggesting beetroot juice, blueberries blackcurrants and red cherries with herbaceous edges that keep the palate in check. Overall a slightly lighter wine than previous years but the oak is showing a greater impact due to its youth, with lovely cedary notes which compliments the abundant tea like tannins and edgy mineral acidity that gives the wine excellent definition. The concentration of this wine suggests it will greatly benefit further bottle aging for the medium term and in 10 years or so, depending on storage, it should be at its drinking best.

Technical Information

Harvest Dates:
8 February to 10 April

Oak Maturation
11 mths in US and French oak barriques

Alcohol by Vol: 14.5%

Glucose & Fructose: 1.1g/L

Titrateable Acid: 7.5g/L

pH: 3.3

Bottling Date:

From 28 March 2008

Chief Winemaker:

Chester d'Arenberg Osborn

Senior Winemaker:

Jack Walton



Artist Steve Panozzo ©

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