

THE CUSTODIAN

Grenache 2021

McLaren Vale, Grenache (100%)

The Name

During the vine pull scheme in the 80s, d'Arry Osborn refused to remove his old Grenache vineyards. Today, d'Arenberg is the keeper of nearly one-third of McLaren Vale's old bush vine Grenache, earning the title of 'Custodian' of the variety.

The Vintage

The preceding winter was beautifully wet, flushing the soil of salts and filling the soil profile. Spring was also wetter than average, with rainfall continuing until November, which was almost completely dry. November was hotter than normal, upsetting the setting of berries—just as well, as the bunch number was way up.

Two inches of rain in early February were much appreciated by the relatively large crops. Where crops were smaller, berry size grew. The heat produced rapid flowering, set, and berry development, leading to an early veraison and the equal earliest start of vintage on record. A few consecutive days around 35°C in February rapidly ripened early, lower-cropping vineyards. From then on, the vintage was mild and dry. Average temperatures for autumn were lower than usual. Some warm 30°C days in late March and early April helped finish ripening the larger crops and late-ripening varieties.

The Winemaking

Small batches of grapes are gently crushed and transferred to open fermenters. Foot treading is undertaken two-thirds of the way through fermentation. The wine is basket-pressed and transferred to old French oak to complete fermentation and mature. The barrel ferments are aged on lees, and there is no racking until final blending. This wine does not undergo fining or filtration prior to bottling.

The Characteristics

Bright ruby red.

Lifted aromas of red cherries, cranberries, and red plums, with a hint of bouquet garni. Generous red fruits with a slight savoriness on the palate, rounded out with complex graphite tannins.

An elegant and complex example with loads of flavor and interest.



Harvest dates	16 Feb - 13 Apr	Alcohol	14.5%
Residual sugar	1.6 g/l	Titrateable acid	6.3
pH	3.44	Oak maturation	9 months
Chief Winemaker	Chester Osborn	Senior Winemaker	Jack Walton