

THE DERELICT VINEYARD

Grenache 2021

McLaren Vale, Grenache (100%)



The Name

At a time when Grenache was considered unfashionable Chester Osborn maintained a vigilant search for old vine McLaren Vale Grenache vineyards, showing faith in a variety that has been central to d'Arenberg since the very beginning. His search unveiled a number of old bush vine and poorly maintained trellised vineyards in various states of disrepair.

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

Walking the vineyard rows and tasting grapes, Chester determines the ideal picking time for each individual vineyard.

Small batches of grapes are gently crushed and then transferred to open fermenters. Foot treading is undertaken two thirds of the way through fermentation, the wine is basket pressed and transferred to a mixture of new and old French oak to complete fermentation and mature for 12 months.

The Characteristics

Bright, deep ruby in colour with a vibrant crimson hue. The nose is lifted and expressive, opening with juicy red cherry, strawberry compote and raspberry, followed by hints of rose petal, warm spice and a touch of licorice. The palate is medium-bodied and beautifully poised, led by fresh red berry fruits and a silky flow of cherry and cranberry. A savoury mid-palate brings whispers of clove, pepper and dried Mediterranean herbs, with fine, well-integrated oak adding structure without distraction. Tannins are firm yet polished, and the acidity keeps everything bright, fresh and energetic through a long, spice-laced finish.



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| Harvest dates | 19 Feb - 1 Apr | Alcohol | 15% |
| Residual sugar | 1.3 g/l | Titrateable acid | 6.5 |
| pH | 3.4 | Oak maturation | 12 months |
| Chief Winemaker | Chester Osborn | Senior Winemaker | Jack Walton |