



d'Arenberg McLaren Sand Hills Grenache 2010

McLaren Vale

Sourced entirely from the McLaren Sand Hills sub region



The Sub Region

The McLaren Sand Hills sub region is located in the eastern side of the McLaren Vale GI. The characteristics of this younger geology (100 000 - 2.6 million years) is sand on clay which has two distinct influences. Wines from this area are beautifully fragrant due to the sand and have great concentration and complexity of soil character due to the young clay. All of this accentuates the fruitiness of the wines while the vine age, low yield and clay geology ensure a concentrated, soil-expressive wine.

The Vintage

Above average autumn rains set the vines up well. There was some heat during flowering which reduced crop levels but had no ill-effects on quality.

There was some more warm weather in January as the reds were going through veraison, this did no damage, but did encourage an early start to vintage. The day time temperatures were mild throughout ripening with mild to cool nights. 2010 was a very strong vintage in McLaren Vale with the reds in particular showing excellent varietal characters and balance.

The Winemaking

Walking the vineyard rows and tasting grapes, Chester Osborn classifies and determines the ideal picking time for each individual vineyard. Small batches are passed through a gentle crusher with some berries remaining whole and then transferred to five-tonne headed-down open fermenters. These batches remain separate until final blending.

Foot treading is undertaken two thirds of the way through fermentation. When tannin extraction is just right the wine is basket pressed and transferred to a mixture of new and used French oak barriques to complete primary and secondary fermentation. The barrel ferments are aged on lees to keep the wine fresh while also reducing the oak influence. There is no racking until final blending with no fining or filtering. Chester and the winemaking team undertake an extensive barrel tasting process to determine which blocks will be selected for these rare wines.

The Wine

It's a very expressive nose with sweet red fruits, blueberry and plum leaping from the glass. Another sniff reveals nuances of earth and game which give the wine another dimension and provides an indication of the direction the wine is heading.

The palate is plush and opens with bright, pure fresh fruit characters that Grenache does so well. The mid palate is fleshy with flavours of salami, soil and game building to a long finish with fragrant Indian spices mingling with the chalky, flowery tannins that are lively and lingering. There's a huge amount of flavour and complexity while maintaining textural interest. The tannins are wonderfully balanced and the graphite like acidity is linear and provides wonderful focus to the rich fruit.

It's a wine that is drinking really well on release, but it's also set for a fascinating journey over the next 15 years and definitely a wine to be carefully cellared.

Technical Information

Harvest Dates:

18 Feb– 24 Mar 2010

Oak Maturation:

14 months in new and old French Oak

Alcohol by Volume: 14.0%

Titrateable Acid: 6.2 g/L

pH: 3.35

Additional Info:

Vegan friendly

Bottling Date:

11 May 2011

Chief Winemaker:

Chester d'Arenberg Osborn

Senior Winemaker:

Jack Walton

