



d'Arenberg The Eight Iron Shiraz 2009

Single Vineyard, McLaren Vale

Part of the McLaren Vale Scarce Earth project

The Name

This vineyard is located on the same property as the winery, restaurant and cellar door approximately 8km inland. It's shaped like a golf club with the handle section on a south facing slope. It's roughly as wide as a decent hit with a trusty eight iron, or quite possibly eight shots with an eight iron if you are an average golfer.

The Vineyard

Altitude: 70m above sea level

Proximity to the Ocean: 8km

Soil: Shallow grey loam

Geology: Blanche Point Formation

Sub-Region: Beautiful View

Planted: 1960

The Vintage

Sufficient winter rains set up the vines well with good canopies. December and most of January were very cool with only three days above 30°C until late in the month. There was a string of days above 40°C in late January which caused loss of yield whilst most varieties were going through veraison. The mild weather that followed ensured that ripening was stress free and grapes showed good levels of natural acidity and balanced tannins.

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 crushed in the Demoisy open-mouthed, rubber toothed crusher 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 and old American 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. Chester and the winemaking team undertake an extensive barrel tasting process to determine which blocks will be selected for Scarce Earth and only the best Shiraz blocks from each vintage are selected.

Cellaring Potential

The ability for a wine to age is a primary consideration of the Scarce Earth selection. This old vine vineyard has a pedigree of producing wines which age gracefully. As a young wine it is restrained. With bottle age it will open up to reveal more secondary characters including tobacco, mocha and leather. With careful cellaring it will drink well until at least 2029.

Tasting Note

The nose is generous with rich, dark fruits and spices of pepper and clove. There is a more subtle second layer of earth and a lifted violet character which provides an elegant balance to the powerful fruit.

Opulent plum and redcurrant are powerful with great depth. The wine evolves with emerging characters of dark licorice and mocha and the floral notes from the nose manifest in the form of dried rose petals and lavender. The mineral element provides another layer with gravelly tannins pulling the wine into focus for a long savoury finish.

The old vine pedigree is clearly on display in this wine, which is still very youthful. It will benefit from cellaring and decanting prior to serving is recommended.

Technical Information

Harvest Dates:

3 March 2009

Oak Maturation:

18 months in new and old French and old American Oak

Alcohol by Volume: 15%

Titrateable Acid: 7.1

pH: 3.29

Additional Info:

Vegan friendly

Bottling Date

16 December 2010

Chief Winemaker:

Chester d'Arenberg Osborn

Senior Winemaker:

Jack Walton

