



d'Arenberg The Fruit Bat Shiraz 2009

Single Vineyard, McLaren Vale

Part of the McLaren Vale Scarce Earth project

The Name

There is an old shearing shed in the middle of this vineyard that's still used to shear d'Arenberg's Dorper sheep. The hessian sacks hanging from the rafters have attracted a family of tiny fruit bats that hang upside down between the folds where it is dark and they can live undisturbed.

The Vineyard

Altitude: 120m above sea level

Proximity to the Ocean: 9km

Soil: Shallow Grey Loam

Geology: Blanche Point Formation

Sub-Region: Beautiful View

Planted: 1999

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, with only the most expressive making the grade.

Cellaring Potential

The ability for a wine to age is a primary consideration of the Scarce Earth selection. Parcels from this vineyards have previously been used in The Dead Arm Shiraz. While restrained in youth, with bottle age it will open up to reveal more complex, layered secondary characters. With careful cellaring this wine will drink well until at least 2029.

Tasting Note

It's clear from the expressive nose this is a focused wine of elegance. Restrained purple and red fruits are nicely balanced with appealing floral notes of rose petal and exotic savoury spices of tumeric, paprika and cumin.

The palate is linear and with lovely fruit purity. Bright mixed berry and plum characters open to layers of complexity including cooked red meat, black olive, Turkish delight and spice. It's medium to full bodied with a great balance of power and impressive minerality and structure.

The fine, grippy fruit tannins are layered and build through the palate for a long finish and are a real feature of the wine. Bottle aging will serve this wine well and decanting prior to serving is recommended.



Technical Information

Harvest Dates:

2 March 2009

Oak Maturation:

18 months in new and old French and old American Oak

Alcohol by Volume: 15%

Titrateable Acid: 7.2

pH: 3.32

Additional Info:

Vegan friendly

Bottling Date

16 December 2010

Chief Winemaker:

Chester d'Arenberg Osborn

Senior Winemaker:

Jack Walton

