



# 2003 d'Arenberg The Vintage Fortified Shiraz

100% McLaren Vale Shiraz

*The grapes for this wine come from a block destined for our Dead Arm wine. Instead, we leave the grapes an extra couple of weeks and then fortify the wine with a spirit that is full of character that is added half way through the ferment.*



### The Name

This wine is perhaps a little old-fashioned, as it doesn't have what we call an individual concept name like all the others. Up until the 1950's, all of the Shiraz was used for producing a Port styled wine hence the near original label has been retained for this wine for posterity.

### The Vintage

The 2003 season was characterised by a very low winter rainfall which signaled the vine to minimize potential crop load. The ripening period was warm producing a crop load of small berries and very pure, ripe fruit characters. Even with a smaller than normal crop load many batches showed wonderful fruit characters due to an excellent skin to pulp ratios and this is evident in the final wine.

### The Winemaking

The grapes are fermented in the traditional d'Arenberg way – minimal processing which involves up to two weeks fermenting on skins in traditional headed down open fermenters, foot treading, followed by basket pressing through the 19th century 'Coq' and "Bromley & Tregoning" presses. After basket pressing, a small amount of fine, fortifying brandy spirit is added, ending fermentation and retaining the sweet fruit and richness of the style. The Vintage Port is bottled in the same year of vintage. The d'Arenberg Vintage Fortified wine is made from a single vintage, and does not spend any time in wood prior to bottling. Unlike the Nostalgia Tawny, the Vintage Fortified wine will develop for many years in the bottle before it reaches its peak.

### The Characteristics

Upon release, eight decades of d'Arenberg's 'Vintage Fortified' Shiraz have had a consistent deep, intense purple-almost black colour, matched by just as intense aromas of ripe, berry-like fruit, spice, liquorice and juniper, combined with a lifted (and slightly 'taily') brandy spirit. Spicy blackberry, mulberry, plum and blackcurrant fruit smells are also evident on the structured young palate. The initial attack of primary fruit flavours, combined with the integrated, unwooded brandy spirit ensure the palate is rich, intense and full-flavoured, before a rich, drying astringency from the fruit tannins.

With significant bottle age, 'The Vintage Fortified' Shiraz gains extraordinary complexity. The intense young colour becomes a lighter, more ruby-red initially, then quite amber. Fruit and brandy spirit integrate further, making way for chocolate, coffee, and walnut, even hints of liquorice and anise smells. On the mature palate, sweet full and rich fig, chocolate, malt, coffee, leather and tobacco-like flavours dominate initially, before spicy, tea-like soft tannin dryness and a rolling hazelnut and juicy butterscotch length.

'The Vintage Fortified' Shiraz can live in the bottle for quite extraordinary periods. At this age, whiffs of rosehip, mushrooms, orange peel, estery sweet lemon and singed vanilla bean are some of the aromas detected, but in the main these extremely old wines become quite soft - vanilla dominated on the nose and brandyesque on the palate.



Artist Tony Rafty©

### Technical Information

<b>Harvest Dates</b> 5 May 2003	<b>Residual Sugar</b> 91.4 g/L	<b>Titrateable Acid</b> 6.4 g/L
<b>Oak Maturation</b> No oak maturation	<b>Alcohol by Vol</b> 18.5% alc/ vol	<b>Chief Winemaker</b> Chester d'Arenberg Osborn
<b>Bottling Date</b> 1 Sept 2004	<b>pH</b> 3.48	<b>Senior Winemaker</b> Philip Dean

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