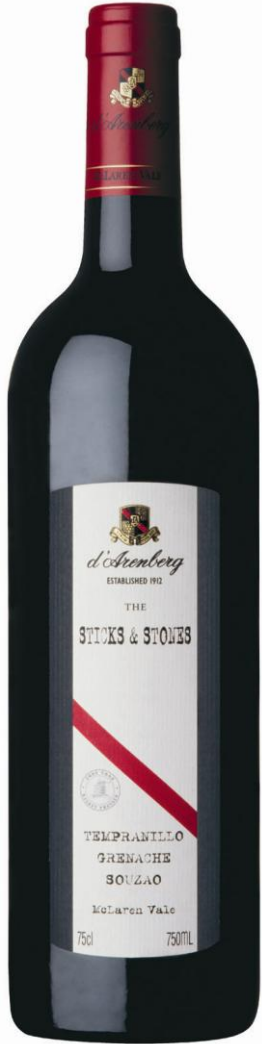




2006 d'Arenberg The Sticks and Stones

100% McLaren Vale - Tempranillo (45%) / Grenache (38%) / Tinta Cao (10%) / Souzao (7%)



Chester Osborn was one of the first to plant Tempranillo in McLaren Vale. This Spanish variety is well suited to the region and is a traditional blending partner for one of d'Arenberg's all time favourite varieties, Grenache.

The Name

The inspiration behind this name came from the age-old proverb 'sticks and stones may break my bones but names will never hurt me.' The unusual and quirky names that d'Arenberg's range of wines has never done the winery any harm. We also do use sticks (vine cuttings) planted into stony soils to produce the grapes that result in this wine.

The Vintage

Average winter rain followed by heavy rains in spring resulted in vines with healthy, balanced canopies. A mild (albeit early) summer led into a warmer period during veraison. This stopped vegetative growth and allowed vines to channel energy into the fruit.

A prolonged cool period occurred in February with some rain which enabled the fruit to ripen without stress. The warmth returned in March with cool evening temperatures to complete ripening in almost perfect conditions, enhancing fruit flavour and richness without diluting levels of natural acidity. Picking was staggered with many parcels picked in wonderful autumn conditions.

This resulted in excellent quality fruit that was noticeably fragrant with good acidity and excellent length.

The Winemaking

Concentrated bunches of Tempranillo, Grenache, Tinta Cao and Souzao were gently crushed in our rubber-toothed crusher, and fermented in small batches in traditional headed-down open fermenters, followed by foot-treading.

The skins from the still fermenting wine were basket-pressed in our 19th century 'Coq' and 'Bromley & Tregoning' basket presses with fermentation completed in barrels. Maturation took place in French and American oak barriques for 10 months prior to bottling. Natural minimal processing ensures maximum flavour, which results in a harmless deposit in, and adhering to the bottle.

The Characteristics

The floral nose is wonderfully earthy and balanced with blood plum and hints of violets. A subtle aged soft leather character is evident as the wine opens up.

The palate is medium bodied with good weight. Red fruit and a pleasant boot polish character opens to tea leaves, spices, cracked pepper and dried herb on the back palate.

The Grenache and Tempranillo work beautifully together and the Portuguese varieties of Tinta Cao and Souzao provide wonderful complexity and depth. Slaty minerality runs right through the palate with juicy acidity providing the backbone.

The fine tannins are in check and provide for a long finish with spice characters lingering. Previous vintages of The Stick and Stones have benefited from bottle age and it envisaged this vintage will drink well through to 2018 or beyond.

Technical Information

Harvest Dates:

6 March – 26 April

Oak Maturation:

Old French and American oak barriques

Alcohol by Vol: 14.5%

Residual Sugar: 0.6 g/L

Titrateable Acid: 6.9 g/L

pH: 3.44

Bottling Dates:

6 August 2008

Chief Winemaker:

Chester d'Arenberg Osborn

Artist © David Bland



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