



<i>Harvest dates</i>	<i>5 Mar - 2 Apr</i>
<i>Alcohol</i>	<i>14.1%</i>
<i>Residual sugar</i>	<i>2.3 g/l</i>
<i>Titatable acid</i>	<i>7.2</i>
<i>pH</i>	<i>3.3</i>
<i>Oak maturation</i>	<i>18 months</i>
<i>Chief Winemaker</i>	<i>Chester Osborn</i>
<i>Senior Winemaker</i>	<i>Jack Walton</i>

The Sticks & Stones 2009

McLaren Vale, Tempranillo (54%) Grenache (25%) Tinta Cao (17%) Souzao (4%)

The Name

The inspiration for this name comes from the age-old proverb; 'sticks and stones may break my bones but names will never hurt me'. The unusual and quirky names of d'Arenberg's range of wines has never done the winery any harm. We also plant sticks of vines (cuttings) into stony soils to produce the grapes that make this wine.



The Vintage

Sufficient winter rains ensured good sub soil moisture and set up the vines well with healthy canopies. Early summer was very cool with only three days above 30°C until late in January.

There was a string of days above 40°C in late January which caused some loss of yields, but the mild weather that followed ensured that ripening was stress free and grapes showed good levels of natural acidity and balanced tannins.

The Winemaking

Small batches are crushed and transferred to five tonne headed-down open fermenters where the Tempranillo, Grenache, Tinta Cao and Souzao are fermented separately.

When tannin extraction is just right, the wine is basket pressed and transferred to a mixture of old French and American oak barriques to complete primary and secondary fermentation. The barrel fermented component is aged on lees to slow aging and keep the wine fresher 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 the final blend. The Sticks & Stones does not undertake fining or filtration prior to bottling.

The Characteristics

To taste this exotic mix of Iberian varieties is to embark upon a tantalizing journey of the senses. The nose exhibits an enticing mix of red, black and purple fruits such as plum, blackcurrant and dark cherry truffle. There is another layer of secondary aromas though, that makes this a seriously complex wine, mushrooms, autumn leaves and earth.

A similar theme is found on the palate with flavours of red licorice, spice and peat all evident. The hallmark of this vintage though is a rhubarb, ironstone-like note that adds an incredible core of mineral tannins and bright acidity. The wine is both lively and complex at the same time.

Like all d'Arenberg reds, this wine will benefit from careful cellaring for up to 15 years.