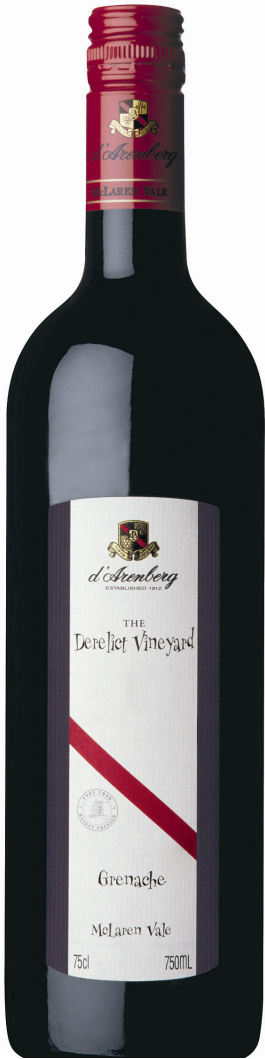




2005 d'Arenberg The Derelict Vineyard

100% McLaren Vale Grenache



Restoration of 'The Derelict Vineyard' and the quality of its premium fruit characterizes the faith the Osborn's have in Grenache and these old vineyards.

The Name

Some years ago, chief winemaker Chester Osborn, sought out additional super premium Grenache fruit from McLaren Vale to meet the high demand for d'Arenberg's Grenache-based wines. Many very old vineyards showed promise and some of these vineyards have not been used for grape production for two decades. Some vineyards fell into neglect with weeds and native grass becoming more dominated than the vines, making them unproductive. Long bracken ferns and native grasses entwined and hid the vines and the vines themselves resembled Medusa's hair - wild, struggling and gnarled. This was the inspiration in the naming of this wine. Taming and rejuvenation some of these vineyards have occurred, patiently over several years.

The Vintage

A vintage summarised as a vintage that ripened without interruptions though yields were moderate.

Low to moderate winter rain with good follow up rains in November enabled adequate moisture to support the potential crop load and allow it to slowly develop over summer. The summer was cool and dry followed by a very dry, warmer autumn which was unusual.

This allowed many varieties to ripen early and without interruptions from spikes of heat. The fruit has great floral aromatics with good intensity. The wines produced are perfectly balanced with excellent concentration, flavour development and length as well as lovely ripe, gritty tannins. Nearly every variety we have harvested exceeded classified expectations due to the exceptional autumn conditions.

The Winemaking

The exceptionally low yielding Grenache was hand-picked from bush vines late in vintage. After gentle crushing in the 'Demoisy' crusher, separate parcels were fermented in traditional headed-down open fermenters and foot-trodden by wader-clad feet.

Gentle pressing took place in our 19th century 'Coq' and 'Bromley & Tregoning' basket-presses with fermentation completed in barrels.

Maturation took place in the same one, two and three year old French and American oak barriques for 12 months before blending and bottling.

The Characteristics

The appearance is vibrant and dark with an almost black centre. Immediately when the wine is poured the aroma has a distinctive, brooding, old vine character. It is quite earthy but with a juicy red berry mix of maraschino cherries, cranberry, plums and tarry leather notes that is extremely complex and deep. As the wine opens further, the notes become more savoury and spicy with more exotic juicy characters coming through such as toasted fennel seeds, allspice, ground mountain pepper, quondong, vanilla bean and flowery notes.

The palate is richly flavoured with a mix of ripe cranberry, mulberry, Turkish delight notes then you hit a wall of black fruits, jubes and dark red, sour cherries. The wine is very concentrated and powerful but trapped in a frame work of lively tannins and elevated acidity of which the finish is dominated by a mix of minerals and vibrant red berry notes. The wine is very elegant, dry and powerful yet has a wonderful softness about it which is what Grenache is all about.

This wine will continue to develop for some time and will take you on a great journey.

Technical Information

Harvest Dates:

25 February to 28 April

Oak Maturation:

12 months in 2 - 4 year old French & American oak barriques

Alcohol by Vol: 14.5%

Glucose+Fructose: 0.3 g/L

Titrateable Acid: 6.7 g/L

pH: 3.45

Bottling Date: 18 June 2006

Chief Winemaker:

Chester d'Arenberg Osborn

Senior Winemakers:

Philip Dean & Jack Walton

Artist George Haddon ©



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