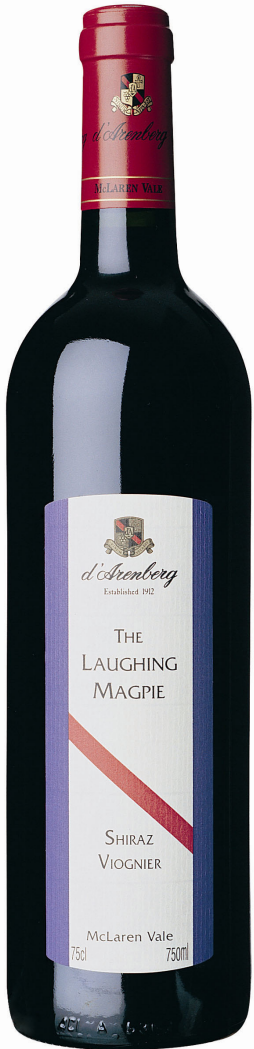




2003 d'Arenberg The Laughing Magpie

100% McLaren Vale Shiraz (94%)/Viognier (6%)



d'Arenberg led the way in McLaren Vale to produce the region's first ever Shiraz Viognier blend and we haven't looked back since with numerous medals attesting to this fine blend.

The Name

The vineyards and bushland that surround the d'Arenberg winery are home to the unique native Australian bird, the Kookaburra, famous for its distinctive laughing call. Much to the amusement of the family, Chester Osborn's daughters, Alicia and Ruby, named their two wild pet Kookaburra's the "Laughing Magpies".

The Magpie plumage is black with a stripe of white feathers and bears no resemblance to its famous cousin, but to this day the name has stuck. The Osborn's thought the name a good choice for McLaren Vale's first ever Shiraz Viognier blend combining the (black) Shiraz variety and its white partner, Viognier.

The Vintage

The 2003 season was characterised by a mild spring. This, coupled with the primary bud necrosis from the effects of the poor spring the year before, resulted in very low yields. Scattered showers through the summer period kept freshness and fragrance in the grapes from the dry grown vines.

The Winemaking

Very concentrated ripe bunches of Shiraz and Viognier were gently crushed by the "Demoisy" open mouthed, rubber toothed crusher, then co-fermented together in traditional, headed down open fermenters where the traditional foot-treading in wader-clad feet takes place. With a considerable portion of this wine being naturally fermented (no yeast added), the wine reveals earthy aromas of roast meat, salami, game and lipstick. The still fermenting juice was then gently basket pressed by our 19th Century "Coq" and "Bromley & Tregoning" presses, followed by 12 months maturation in American and French oak barriques.

The Characteristics

Upon release, 'The Laughing Magpie' has a vivid, dark-purple colour. The Viognier adds fragrant flower and perfume aromas, and flavours of nectarines, apricots, ginger and herbs, serving to enhance the very ripe flavour spectrum of the Shiraz, which primarily exhibits blackberry, blueberry and boysenberry.

With a considerable portion of this wine being naturally fermented (no yeast added), the wine reveals earthy aromas of salami, game, and lipstick. These characters prevail on the palate with a smooth glycerol impact following through to the mid-palate, with the exotic characters growing and combining with tannins and a long complex finish.

Structurally, the 2003 'Laughing Magpie' is as full-bodied as the 2002 release with a more complex, rich mouth-feel, ending with a beautifully balanced array of fine, rich tannins.

Technical Information

Harvest Dates	Residual Sugar	Chief Winemaker
23 March – 2 April 2003	0.4 g/L	Chester d'Arenberg Osborn
Oak Maturation	Alcohol by Vol	Senior Winemaker
Av. of 12 mths in US and French oak barriques	14.5% alc/ vol	Philip Dean



Artist Steve Panozzo ©

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