



2005 d'Arenberg The Laughing Magpie

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

Towards the end of its fermentation the colour of this wine is a wonderfully vivid purple hence the colour of the label.

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 Kookaburras 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 was a good choice for McLaren Vale's first ever Shiraz Viognier blend combining the (black) Shiraz and its white partner, Viognier.

The Vintage

A vintage summarised as a vintage that ripened without interruptions and producing moderate yields.

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, warm autumn which was unusual.

This allowed many varieties to ripen early and without interruptions. The fruit has great floral aromatics with good intensity and 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

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.

After about 2 weeks the must (the still fermenting juice) was then gently basket pressed by our 19th Century "Coq" and "Bromley & Tregoning" presses, and then transferred into American and French oak barriques for maturation.



The Characteristics

The appearance once poured is youthful and dark with a crimson hue. The aromas are loud and intense with the viognier having an impact throughout the wine. The wine has an initial mix of dark plummy fruits, spice and stone fruit characters with a mix of blueberries, plums, cured meats and flowery notes with white and green pepper characters.

As the wine opens up further notes of blueberry, cranberry and lavender/black tea characters come through with a mix of ginger and flower blossom which indicates the fragrance of viognier. Left to breath, the wine reveals further aromas of earth, roast meats, salami and prunes (highlighting several batches of fruit that experienced wild yeast fermentation)

The palate is juicy and long and tastes superbly integrated for such a young, full bodied wine. There are plenty of bold shiraz characters dominated by black fruits, satsuma plums, blueberry and licorice notes and a lovely level of juiciness and wild honey sweetness from the Viognier. A dried herbal edge of blackcurrant leaves is balanced with acidity and gritty, mineral-like tannins. The finish is long and pointed and would suggest this wine will greatly benefit with further bottle aging.



Artist Steve Panozzo ©

Technical Information

Harvest Dates:
14th March to 2nd April

Oak Maturation
12 mths in US and French oak barriques

Alcohol by Vol: 15.0%
Glucose & Fructose: 0.7g/L
Titrateable Acid: 6.8g/L
pH: 3.50

Bottling Date:
10 Oct 2006
Chief Winemaker
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