



2008 d'Arenberg The Wild Pixie

McLaren Vale - 95% Shiraz, 5% Roussanne

2008 is the very first vintage of this exciting wine which blends one of the red variety stalwarts of McLaren Vale with an exciting white variety as is done in Hermitage.

The Name

In a 2006 blending session of The Stump Jump White fourth generation winemaker Chester Osborn took the unusual step of adding a small parcel of the relatively unknown variety Roussanne. A well known wine journalist reviewed the finished wine and described Chester as a 'wild pixie' for concocting such a crazy blend. Taking the moniker as a compliment Chester was inspired to make an even more audacious blend involving Roussanne, this time combining it with Shiraz. This exciting blend is a first for McLaren Vale and follows in the footsteps of the highly awarded d'Arenberg The Laughing Magpie Shiraz Viognier.

The Vintage

2008 is a tale of two vintages for red wines in McLaren Vale.

Winter rain ensured the soil reached filled capacity and set the vines up perfectly with healthy balanced canopies.

A normal spring and an unseasonably cool January and February meant most vines remained stress free and flavour ripeness was achieved at reasonably low sugar levels and high natural acidity.

A sustained heat wave in early March forced frantic picking and resulted in ripe characters. The Wild Pixie is a blend of the early picked parcels only.

The Winemaking

Walking the vineyard rows and tasting grapes, Chester Osborn classifies and determines the ideal picking time for each individual vineyard.

Small batches are crushed in the Demoisy open-mouthed, rubber toothed crusher and then transferred to five tonne headed-down open fermenters where the Roussanne and Shiraz are co-fermented.

Foot treading is undertaken two thirds of the way through fermentation. When tannin extraction is just right the wine is basket pressed and transferred to a mixture of new and old French and old 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 Wild Pixie does not undertake fining or filtration prior to bottling.

The Characteristics

Intensely dark, almost black with a purple hue. The nose is lifted and fragrant with blueberry and violets leaping from the glass before a complex background of licorice, boot polish, freshly turned earth and cooked meat emerges. Each sniff reveals more intriguing characters.

The palate carefully balances ripeness and elegance opening with fruit characters of plum and blackberry leaf before nuances of smoked meats, forest floor and cinnamon stick are revealed. The earthy character is a real highlight and provides wonderful elegance as the palate builds nicely to a long finish with fine powdery tannins rounding it out nicely.

Roussanne ages very well and will fill out the mid palate further in time with careful cellaring. Decanting encouraged.

Technical Information

Harvest Dates:

19 Feb - 1 April

Oak Maturation:

12 months in new and older French and American Oak Barriques

Alcohol by Volume: 14.5%

Titrateable Acid: 6.4

pH: 3.46

Additional Info:

Vegan friendly

Bottling Date

25 February 2009

Chief Winemaker:

Chester d'Arenberg Osborn

Senior Winemaker:

Jack Walton



Artist: Jason Chatfield

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