



2010 d'Arenberg The Wild Pixie

McLaren Vale - 95% Shiraz, 5% Roussanne

The inaugural vintage of this wine was 2008 and was the first blend of its kind to emanate from McLaren Vale.

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 follows in the footsteps of the highly awarded The Laughing Magpie Shiraz Viognier.

The Vintage

Above average autumn rains set the vines up well. There was some heat during flowering which reduced crop levels, but with no ill-effects on quality.

There was some more warm weather in January as the reds were going through veraison, this did no damage, but did encourage an early start to vintage. The day time temperatures were mild through out ripening with mild to cool nights.

2010 was a very strong vintage in McLaren Vale with the reds in particular showing excellent varietal characters and balance.

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 skins 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 matured on lees to slow aging and keep the wine fresher while also reducing the oak influence. No fining agents are used in the filtering of this wine, and there is no racking until final blending.

The Characteristics

Do not be mislead by the name, this wine is far from Pixie-ish. On the contrary it is a dark, concentrated and structured beast that needs more than one look to understand its true value.

Initially it appears savoury and spicy with a whiff of funkiness (perhaps "wild" is somewhat appropriate), think fennel, black olive, bitter chocolate and earth. Given a moment to relax in the glass, we are struck by the nuances of sweeter fruit, plums, blackberries and mulberries that build.

Layer upon layer of flavour carried along by a wave of mouth watering tannin that draws you in for another look.

Technical Information

Harvest Dates:

11 Feb - 30 March

Oak Maturation:

12 months in new and older French and American Oak Barriques

Alcohol by Volume: 14.5%

Titrateable Acid: 6.4

pH: 3.43

Additional Info:

Vegan friendly

Chief Winemaker:

Chester Osborn

Senior Winemaker:

Jack Walton



Artist: Jason Chatfield

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