



# 2005 d'Arenberg The Feral Fox

100% Adelaide Hills Pinot Noir

*This, the fifth release, shows the hallmarks of Adelaide Hills Pinot Noir sourced from a selection of vineyards in Hope Forrest, Kuitpo, Carey Gully and Mount Carey.*



## The Name

The feral foxes that inhabit this area have developed an appetite for grapes as a replacement for their favourite, the local rabbit population, whose numbers have reduced substantially in recent years due to the Calici virus. We're not fussed though, because these bushy tailed critters act as crop thinners, which enhance the quality of the grapes they find too high to reach. An additional consequence is the laxative effect on the foxes, resulting in increased aromas and tell-tail signs of their dining habits spread around the vineyards, providing natural organic fertilisation of the soil. Hence, this Pinot is known in the winery as the Funky Feral Farting Fox.

## The Vintage

This was clearly one of most exciting Adelaide Hill's vintages yet, with a mild winter and a late, wet spring. November rains invigorated the vines for an exceptional period of condensed flowering and set. From then on rainfall occurred just when the vines needed something to drink and always at the volume resulting in the fruit having an obvious lack of stress prior to veraison. Post veraison (where the berries soften from being hard and green and develop in colour while expanding in size) the fruit experienced an uninterrupted ripening period up to 11 or 12° Baumé (Bé) without a cold snap or spike of heat which often occurs in the Hills region. In all, the fruit 'traveled in balance' as we experienced the most ideal ripening period in a very long time due to the above average and consistent daytime and night time temperatures right through Autumn.

## The Winemaking

Under the supervision of Chester Osborn, the fruit, once picked, was crushed in our gentle Demoisy open-mouthed, rubber-toothed crusher. Natural yeast fermentation took place in our special 2 tonne open fermenters with a very large percentage of whole clusters included. An extended maceration period ensued in order to achieve structure, body and length of flavour, followed by traditional foot-treading in wader-clad feet. The still fermenting juice was then taken gently basket-pressed using our 19<sup>th</sup> century 'Coq' and 'Bromley & Tregoning' presses, followed by nine months maturation in French oak Barriques.

## The Characteristics

The colour has a tamarillo – mulberry appearance with a rhubarb pink hue suggesting a complex, medium-bodied dry red. The lifted aroma exhibits the superb, rich, ripe fragrance of dark cherries, ripe Satsuma plums, boysenberries and strawberries with a background of complex spices and fragrant dried herbs, cured ham, cinnamon, roasted fennel and black olives.

A sort of Marlborough/Chambolle cross on the palate. The wine has overwhelming fruit softness as it opens up with a gorgeous mix of ripe fruits; boysenberry, strawberry, sour cherries and tiny wild bush plums, mixed with a red berry puree. The vivid fruity texture is kept in check with edges of elevated acidity and ripe firm tannins that push right out to a pointed red-berry finish.

For a medium-bodied wine the overwhelming character is its punchy fruit purity and the wall of complex tannins balanced with piercing acidity and superb oak handling. Resistance to cellar this wine past 3 years will be an act of self control which I feel will be very low.



Artist Brendan Akhurst ©

## Technical Information

### Harvest Dates:

17 – 21 April 2005

### Oak Maturation:

9 months in new and 1 to 3 y.o  
French oak barriques.

**Alcohol by Vol:** 14.5%

**Residual Sugar:** 0.7g/L

**Titrateable Acid:** 6.8g/L

**pH:** 3.49

**Bottled:** 4 April 2006

**Chief Winemaker:**

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