

THE DEAD ARM

Shiraz 2008

McLaren Vale, Shiraz (100%)



The Name

Dead Arm is a vine disease caused by the fungus Eutypa Lata that randomly affects vineyards all over the world. Often vines affected are severely pruned or replanted. One half, or an 'arm' of the vine slowly becomes reduced to dead wood. That side may be lifeless and brittle, but the grapes on the other side, while low yielding, display amazing intensity.

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. Flavour ripeness was achieved at reasonably low sugar levels and high natural acidity for early picked parcels. A sustained heat wave in early March accelerated ripeness and picking, resulting in riper in some wines. However The Dead Arm only receives the finest parcels, most of which were picked before the heatwave, therefore reflecting the best part of the 2008 vintage.

The Winemaking

Small batches of grapes are gently crushed and then transferred to five tonne headed down open fermenters. These batches remain separate until final blending. Foot treading is undertaken two thirds of the way through fermentation. The wine is then basket pressed and transferred to a mixture of new and used French and old American oak barriques to complete fermentation. The barrel ferments are aged on lees, there is no racking until final blending and no fining or filtration.

The Characteristics

The heady aroma is both powerful and pretty with notes of fennel, purple flowers and blossom mingling with ripe, varietal purple fruits and black pepper. The oak is hardly evident which allows fruit and soil complexities to emerge with edges of rhubarb and red mulberry and savoury characters of dried herbs, game and spice.

The palate opens with anise, black pepper, graphite and restrained dark cherries before it gives way to seductive mulberry, plum, licorice and spice. It has great power, depth and length with very vibrant, gritty fruit tannins providing immense structure. Notes of anise and spice linger for a long time after the last sip.

The Dead Arm 2008 strikes a rare balance of power, complexity and finesse with impressive structure that will reward those with patience to cellar it.

Cellaring Potential

While enjoyable in youth, this wine will reach its full potential with bottle age up to at least 20 years. The considerable structure and depth will ensure that the fruit characters will develop over time revealing more complexity and providing immense interest. This wine is best stored in an environment free on direct sunlight and with consistent temperatures between 10°C and 15°C.

Harvest dates	19 Feb - 1 April	Alcohol	14.5%
Residual sugar	3.2 g/L	Titrateable acid	7.1
pH	3.29	Oak maturation	18 months
Chief Winemaker	Chester Osborn	Senior Winemaker	Jack Walton