

THE DEAD ARM



Shiraz 2011

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

There was ample winter and spring rain which provided good sub soil moisture and resulted in healthy canopies and good vigour. Summer conditions were very mild. Grapes ripened gracefully with only a few small rain episodes, enough to keep the vines fresh and vibrant. Rainfall was only a little over average for the first months of the year.

The Winemaking

Small batches of grapes are crushed gently 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 2011 Dead Arm is all about style, poise and savouriness. The gods may have thrown us challenging conditions and admittedly, there is a slight shift in style when compared to the more classic years of The Dead Arm, but the quality of this wine speaks for itself and an avid Dead Arm drinker will identify all the hallmarks of this iconic Shiraz.

The nose gives a fair insight into what to expect. Sweet fruits are initially subdued, the wine appears all about cedar, peat, fresh turned soil, ironstone, fennel and cured meats. If decanted, (highly recommended), slowly the layers of savoury aromas unfurl, releasing an entirely new array of sweeter fruit characters which gently develop, eventually taking pride of place, front and centre. A raft of black and purple fruits, blackberry, satsuma plum, blackcurrant, liquorice and sweet beetroot.

The palate follows suit. Initially earthy and savoury, slowly giving way to sweeter and spicier fruits. The mouthfeel is very sleek and focused. Despite this it feels dense and compact, only fleshing out with time. It's amazing how much complexity is built into such a relatively elegant (in Dead Arm terms) package. Tannins are prominent and drive the wine to a long finish but never feel hard or extracted. All in all, an ethereal wine, that will reward the connoisseur with patience!



Harvest dates	23 Mar–6 Apr	Alcohol	14.3%
Residual sugar	0.8 g/l	Titratable acid	6.7
pH	3.61	Oak maturation	18 months
Chief Winemaker	Chester Osborn	Senior Winemaker	Jack Walton