



2008 d'Arenberg The Ironstone Pressings

Grenache (55%) Shiraz (38%) Mourvèdre (7%)

McLaren Vale



The Name

Most of McLaren Vale's acclaimed and historic vineyards are impregnated with ancient, decomposed laterite granite known as ironstone. Its extraordinary rusty red-brown colour is derived from the iron oxides present in the stone. The larger pieces were cleared from the vineyards in the late 1880's and utilised in many of the buildings at d'Arenberg, most notably the old stables.

The Vintage

Sufficient winter rains set up the vines well with good canopies. December and most of January were very cool with only three days above 30°C until late in the month. There was a string of days above 40°C in late January, Grenache vines were going through veraison at this time and therefore had no negative impact. The mild weather that followed ensured that ripening was stress free and grapes showed good levels of natural acidity and balanced tannins. Grenache was clearly the stand out variety from this vintage.

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 balance will ensure that it will develop lovely secondary characters while maintaining poise. The Mourvedre component will play a vital role in maturation as the Grenache tannins slowly fade over time.

The Winemaking

Walking the dry grown bush vines 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. These batches remain separate until final blending.

Foot treading is undertaken on selected parcels 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 used French and old American oak barriques to complete primary and secondary fermentation. The barrel ferments are aged on lees to keep the wine fresh 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 Ironstone Pressings does not undertake fining or filtration prior to bottling.

Tasting Notes

The lifted red fruits expected from Grenache are met with darker fruit characters and lovely spice. As the wine opens in the glass, the true depth is revealed with layers of gravelly earth, iron and graphite along with licorice and anise. There is also a pretty nuance of fresh roses and dried petals adding an elegant touch.

The palate has immediate impact with pungent, rich dark fruits and earth. The dark plum and mulberry fruit make way for rich, gritty and vibrant fruit tannins which build nicely before slowly fading to reveal oodles of spice and dark earthy fruits.

There is considerable structure, restrained power, focus and great depth focus which will ensure it ages with grace.

Technical Information

Harvest Dates:

19 Feb to 13 March

Oak Maturation:

10 months in 2- 5 year old

French Oak barriques

Alcohol by Volume: 14.5%

Titrateable Acid: 6.6

pH: 3.4

Glucose + Fructose

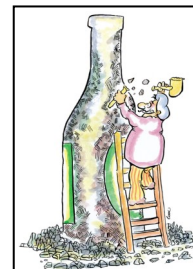
0.6 g/L

Chief Winemaker:

Chester d'Arenberg Osborn

Senior Winemaker:

Jack Walton



Artist Patrick Cook ©