



2007 d'Arenberg The Custodian Grenache

McLaren Vale

The very first wine to bear the famous red stripe contained 50% Grenache and it has been a variety central to d'Arenberg ever since. The d'Arenberg portfolio now contains eight wines with a component of this stunning and charismatic red grape.

The Name

During the vine pull scheme of the early 1980's d'Arry Osborn refused to touch his old Grenache vineyards. When his son Chester started in the business as Chief Winemaker in 1984 he set about acquiring more old vine Grenache grapes and vineyards at a time when it was considered un-fashionable. Today d'Arenberg is the keeper of nearly one third of McLaren Vale's old Bush vine Grenache and has earned the title of 'Custodian' of the variety.

The Vintage

Owing largely to drought and a warm start to Summer, the 2007 vintage started early. These conditions caused short shoot length and reduced berry and bunch sizes.

In late January a 50mm downpour reduced yields further, but was a welcome relief for many of the dry grown vineyards that contribute to The Custodian Grenache

Moderately warm weather followed to ripen the fruit in low stress conditions that resulted in good flavour concentration and excellent levels of natural acidity.

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. These batches remain separate until final blending.

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 and large casks 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. There is no racking until final blending.

Chester and the winemaking team undertake an extensive barrel tasting process to determine the final blend. The Custodian does not undertake fining or filtration prior to bottling.



The Characteristics

The nose is complex and inspires intrigue with bright red fruits, lavender, violets and spicy lift. The raft of flavour and complexity remains focused and in the varietal spectrum.

The palate is full bodied and darker than previous years with a structural backbone of boney fruit tannin that runs the length of the palate. Plum, raspberry, mulberry and dark cherry open before a second layer of earth, smoked meats, dried herb and cinnamon emerge with a subtle hint of cedar oak emerging on the mid palate.

A serious and savoury expression of Grenache, this will age well for up to ten years and will make a great accompaniment to food.

Technical Information

Harvest Dates:

21 Feb to 23 March

Oak Maturation:

12 months in new and older French and American Oak and large casks

Alcohol by Volume: 14.5%

Titrateable Acid: 7.1 g/L

pH: 3.34

Additional Info:

Vegan friendly

Bottling Date

22 April 2008

Chief Winemaker:

Chester d'Arenberg Osborn

Senior Winemaker:

Jack Walton



Artist Tom Jellett ©

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