



*Harvest dates* 7 Mar - 22 Apr

*Alcohol* 14.5%

*Residual sugar* 2.7 g/l

*Titrateable acid* 6.0

*pH* 3.33

*Oak maturation* 9 months

*Chief Winemaker* Chester Osborn

*Senior Winemaker* Jack Walton

# The Custodian Grenache 2011

*McLaren Vale, Grenache*

## *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*

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, and there is no racking until final blending.

## *The Characteristics*

The 2011 Custodian is a jewel of a wine that is perfectly balanced and harmonious. The first look suggests an enticing simplicity displaying primary fruit characters of mulberry, blueberry and plum. Deeper inspection however starts to reveal more complex layers, conjuring images of aniseed, fennel and coriander seed.

The palate is warm and juicy. The sweet and savoury fruits are laced by fine silken tannins which lead to a super persistent finish, again displaying a delightful fruitiness, accompanied by more savoury, cedary, baking spice like notes. Simply put, this wine is liquid velvet.

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