



<i>Harvest dates</i>	<i>10 Feb - 3 Apr</i>
<i>Alcohol</i>	<i>14.6%</i>
<i>Residual sugar</i>	<i>.6 g/l</i>
<i>Titatable acid</i>	<i>6.8</i>
<i>pH</i>	<i>3.44</i>
<i>Oak maturation</i>	<i>9 months</i>
<i>Chief Winemaker</i>	<i>Chester Osborn</i>
<i>Senior Winemaker</i>	<i>Jack Walton</i>

The Custodian Grenache 2012

McLaren Vale, Grenache (100%)

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

A wet summer and winter in set the vines up perfectly for the 2012 vintage. Spring and summer were drier than normal, resulting in lower fruit yields. A small heat burst just prior to veraison assured a solid colour change, small berries and pronounced tannins in the grapes.

The red wines from this vintage are black, solid and quite structured, the biggest year for some time; not oily but definitely gutsy.

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

It can be hard to find a wine that will appeal to casual wine drinkers looking for something fruit driven and light on its feet, but also to more serious wine connoisseurs, who value subtle complexities and an ability to age. The 2012 Custodian offers just that with its pure fruit characters of mulberry, plum and blueberry complimented with a range of more savoury flavours, such as beetroot, cinnamon and nutmeg.

The palate, while displaying great depth, is medium bodied and svelte. It is defined by velvety tannins that turn slightly gritty towards the finish, guaranteeing the wine's longevity.