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| <i>Harvest dates</i> | <i>16 Feb - 2 April</i> |
| <i>Alcohol</i> | <i>13.8%</i> |
| <i>Residual sugar</i> | <i>2.0 g/l</i> |
| <i>Titatable acid</i> | <i>7.4</i> |
| <i>pH</i> | <i>3.12</i> |
| <i>Oak maturation</i> | <i>7 months</i> |
| <i>Chief Winemaker</i> | <i>Chester Osborn</i> |
| <i>Senior Winemaker</i> | <i>Jack Walton</i> |

The Olive Grove Chardonnay 2012

McLaren Vale / Adelaide Hills Chardonnay (100%)

The Name

Since European settlement in the 1840's, olive trees have thrived in McLaren Vale. They are alongside roads, in gardens and occasionally, in the middle of our chardonnay vineyards blocking our harvester!



The Vintage

A wet late summer followed by a wet winter in 2011 set the vines up perfectly for the 2012 vintage. Spring and summer were considerably dryer than normal, but a small amount of rain and considerably cooler weather in early February slightly enlarged the berries but reduced the stress of the vines keeping fruit character and acidity.

The whites are beautifully expressive with lovely flavours, balance, and length and with no coarseness or broadness. Reds are black, solid and quite structured, the biggest year for some time; not oily but definitely gutsy. All red varieties performed fantastically.

The Winemaking

Small batches of grapes are crushed gently, chilled and then transferred to specially designed steel basket presses. Gentle extraction of the juice is critical in these early stages to retain the delicate fruit characters.

To add complexity and mouthfeel the wine is fermented and matured in a mixture of French and American oak for seven months.

None of the white wines at d'Arenberg are subject to malolactic fermentation as we aim for the retention of fresh, natural acidity, which is integral to the balance and longevity of the wine.

The Characteristics

For those of us old enough to remember the matchmaking TV show Perfect Match, this wine is beautifully summed up by its theme song:

"Like peaches and cream, a coach and a team, oyster and a pearl, a guy and a girl. What have you got? You've got a perfect match!"

Well maybe not all of it, but this wine certainly does display lovely peach and creamy notes, with an oyster shell minerality that runs through the palate.

Full flavoured and textured but with a vibrant acidity and a long lingering finish, this wine delivers a plethora of stone fruit, blossoms and savoury notes. The oak influence is minimal allowing the true flavours of the fruit to shine. Even Greg Evans and his computerised robot Dexter couldn't deny a high compatibility score for this wine.