



2009 d'Arenberg The Laughing Magpie

McLaren Vale - Shiraz (92%), Viognier (8%)

Towards the end of its fermentation the colour of this wine is a wonderfully vivid purple hence the colour of the label.

The Name

The vineyards and bushland that surround the d'Arenberg winery are home to the native Australian bird, the Kookaburra, famous for its distinctive laughing call. Much to the amusement of the family, Chester Osborn's daughters, Alicia and Ruby, named two wild Kookaburras who regularly visited their house the "Laughing Magpies". The Magpie plumage is black with a stripe of white feathers and bears no resemblance to its famous cousin, but to this day the name has stuck. The Osborn's thought the name was a good choice for McLaren Vale's first ever shiraz viognier blend combining the (black) shiraz and its white partner, viognier.

The Vintage

Sufficient winter rains ensured good sub soil moisture and set up the vines well with healthy canopies.

Early Summer was very cool with only three days above 30°C until late in January.

There was a string of days above 40°C in late January which caused some loss of yield of the final crop.

The mild weather that followed ensured that ripening was stress free and grapes showed good levels of natural acidity and balanced tannins.

Walking the vineyard rows and tasting grapes, Chester Osborn classifies and determines the ideal picking time for each individual vineyard.

The Winemaking

Small batches are gently crushed into five tonne headed-down open fermenters where approximately 15% Viognier and 85% Shiraz are co-fermented. Two-thirds of the way through ferment we foot tread to encourage gentle extraction of the tannins and colour.

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 to complete primary and secondary fermentation. The barrel fermented component is aged 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. Declassified parcels from The Dead Arm shiraz are used to blend back the viognier to 5-10% of the final blend.



The Characteristics as Tasted July 2012

The nose is beautiful with primary, dark fruits and a lifted, flowery cool-mint style note. With time in the glass the more savoury characters of spice and cooked meat begin to appear.

The palate is robust and concentrated with great intensity. The fruit is more expressive on the palate with a touch of raspberry, plum, blackcurrant and blueberry with strong underlying spice.

The fragrant mineral silky tannins build nicely on the palate and provide great structure and very impressive length. This wine will benefit from bottle age and if cellared correctly will drink well over the next 15 years.



Artist Steve Panozzo ©

Technical Information

Harvest Dates:

19 February to 29 March

Oak Maturation:

10 months in new and older French and American Barriques

Alcohol by Volume: 14.6%

Titrateable Acid: 7.4g/L

pH: 3.31

Additional Info:

Vegan friendly

Bottling Date

17 April 2010

Chief Winemaker:

Chester d'Arenberg Osborn

Senior Winemaker:

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