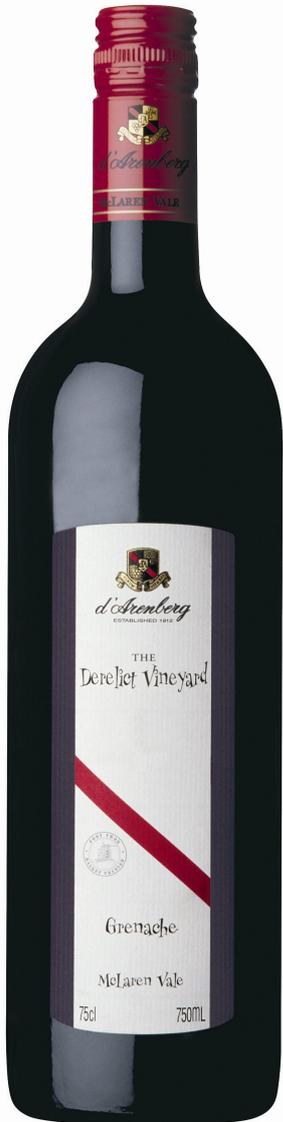




2009 d'Arenberg The Derelict Vineyard

McLaren Vale Grenache

Grenache has been central to d'Arenberg since its inception, comprising 50 percent of the very first wine to carry the red stripe.



The Name

At a time when Grenache was considered un-fashionable Chester Osborn maintained a vigilant search for old vine McLaren Vale Grenache vineyards, showing faith in a variety that has been central to d'Arenberg since the very beginning. His search unveiled a number of old bush vine and poorly maintained trellised vineyards in various states of disrepair. Many of these 'derelict' vineyards were overgrown with native grasses and bracken ferns and weren't being used for grape production—one was even being used to graze horses! Restoring these vineyards has been a time consuming labour of love, and while they still have a slightly dishevelled appearance they are back producing very low yields of exceptional fruit.

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.

Grenache was one of the stand out varieties from this vintage.

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 to complete primary and secondary fermentation. The barrel fermented component is aged on lees to keep the wine fresh 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 Derelict Vineyard does not undertake fining or filtration prior to bottling.

The Wine

The nose is an inviting swirl of flowers, spice, earth and red fruits including strawberries and freshly-picked mulberries. This is serious stuff, layered, lifted and complex.

The palate is a textural wonderland, slippery graphite then grainy, gritty fruit tannin flows into earthy grip betraying its old-vine concentration. All the while the ripe red fruits dance about, keeping everything fresh and zingy.

This is an intense, structured Grenache worthy of ageing to build upon its already complex character. Decanting prior to serving will allow this wine to open, cellaring over the next 10 to 15 years will reward the patient.



Artist George Haddon ©

Technical Information

Harvest Dates: 4 Feb to 8 April	Alcohol: 14.5% pH: 3.24	Bottling Date: 6 May 2010
Oak Maturation: Average of 12 months in new and old French and old American Oak Barriques.	Titrateable Acid: 7.2 g/L Additional Info Vegan friendly	Chief Winemaker: Chester d'Arenberg Osborn Senior Winemaker: Jack Walton

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