



2003 THE DERELICT VINEYARD GRENACHE

Region

McLaren Vale, South Australia

Varieties

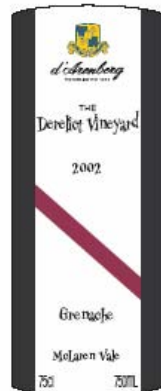
Grenache

Maturation

12 months in 2-4 year old French & American oak barriques

Technical Analysis

14.5% alc/vol



Background

Some years ago, chief winemaker, Chester Osborn, sought out additional premium Grenache fruit from McLaren Vale to meet the high demand for d'Arenberg's Grenache-based wines. Amongst others, a particular vineyard planted thirty years ago with Grenache appeared promising, and was the inspiration in the naming of this wine. Last used for grape production two decades ago, the vineyard fell into neglect and was utilized as a horse paddock. Horses had trampled on the vines making them unproductive. Vine pruning occurred sporadically when the horses snacked on them. Long bracken ferns and native grasses up to a meter high entwined with, and hid the vines. The vines themselves resembled Medusa's hair - wild, thick, struggling and gnarled. Taming and rejuvenation of the vineyard occurred over several years with weeding, reposting, trellising and pruning undertaken. The exceptionally low yielding Grenache was hand-picked late in vintage.

Tasting Notes

The 2003 season was characterized by a very low winter rainfall which signaled the vine to minimize potential crop load. The ripening period was warm producing a crop load of small berries and very pure ripe fruit characters. Amongst the best batches, the skin to pulp ratios was exceptional which shows in this wine.

A very dark black wine in appearance with an intense purple hue. Given time to breath you are struck with very intense old vine, earthy, brooding Grenache aromas with its distinctive characters of red berries, lifted florals, spicy red potpourri, and with an additional elements of stalks and skins notes from the extended extraction period in our open fermenters.

The palate typifies the low yield due to its mid palate softness, fullness of flavor and intensity of cured meats, rich plum, roasted olive, prunes, dark licorice, spices, dried herbs. The tannins are youthful, complex, gritty and quite chunky which indicates the wines youth while adding an additional level of complexity to the palate. Balanced by elevated acidity and a subtle oak influence of spice and vanilla bean the oak gives the fruit support, direction and control. The finish is dominated by red berries, licorice and lingering black cherry flavors.

As this wine develops over the next 8 to 12 years or more the intensity of flavors and overall complexity of its body will increase producing a wine unique in character and typifies the very vibrant red flavors and soft middle palate of d'Arenberg Grenache and McLaren Vale as a wine region.

Additional Notes:

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