



2004 THE LUCKY LIZARD CHARDONNAY

Region

Adelaide Hills, South Australia

Variety

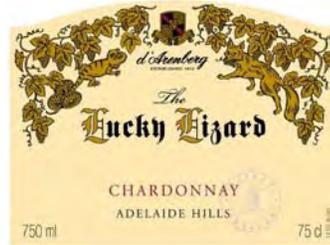
Chardonnay

Maturation

9 months in French oak barriques

Technical Analysis

14.5 % alc/vol



Background

Since 1912 the Osborn family has tended the 19th century vineyards at their d'Arenberg winery, located in South Australia, where the family often procures top quality fruit from the cool climate Adelaide Hills region, which has become one of Australia's finest Chardonnay districts.

During the summer months, native Bearded Dragon Lizards sun themselves on the vineyard posts and watch out for potential prey. Occasionally during harvest, these lizards are dislodged and find their way into a load of grapes headed for the winery. Lucky for these lizards, d'Arenberg uses a very gentle Demoisy crusher, which allows these lizards to pass through the ordeal slightly shaken, yet unharmed. The gentleness of the crusher also plays an important role in retaining the delicate fruit flavors.

Tasting Notes

After excellent winter rains and then a warm wet spring the vineyards were set for a good start to vintage. Flowering was consistent, and in general crop loads were higher than normal. McLaren Vale experienced the coldest January for 12 years followed by a warm February which provided perfect ripening conditions and the result was fruit of outstanding character, concentration and excellent natural acidity. The success of this wine is put down to the evenness of the ripening period leading up to picking in the early autumn and extremely protective handling in the winery to preserve the wonderful fruit characters.

The fruit is gently crushed in a Demoisy crusher and then directly basket pressed off skins. The juice is settled and then racked to barrel maintaining minimal solids during the ferment which takes place in refrigerated cool rooms. The wine undergoes full barrel fermentation in refrigerated cool rooms, nearly on full solids. 20% of the ferment is a natural ferment and malolactic is discouraged.

The nose is immediately inviting with volumes of pear, pineapple, tropical fruits, guava, hints of peach, green melon, citrus and very fine sweet toasted oaks. Medium to full in style with the level of ripeness in perfect balance with the elevated acidity and the characteristic cool climate flowery granny smith apples that linger to the end with fine oak spices, and citric passionfruit character. Probably the best Lucky Lizard yet.

Additional Notes:

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