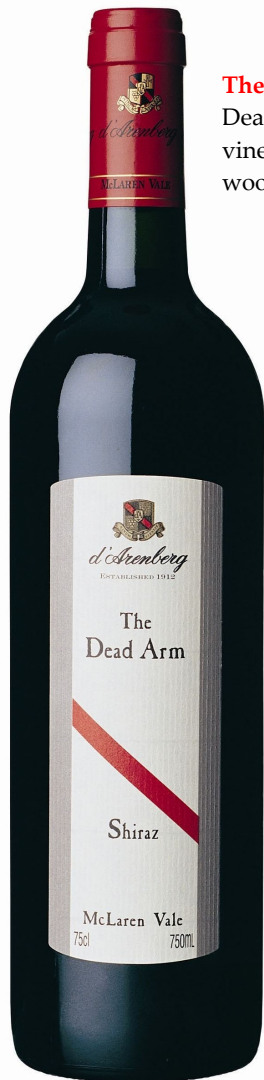




2004 d'Arenberg The Dead Arm

100% McLaren Vale Shiraz

The name for this wine is often joked about. Some thought the wine to be so big and heavy that your arm hardly worked after consuming a reasonable amount.



The Name

Dead Arm is a vine disease caused by the fungus *Eutypa Lata* that randomly affects vineyards all over the world. Often vines affected are severely pruned or replanted. One half, or an 'arm' of the vine slowly becomes reduced to dead wood. That side may be lifeless and brittle, but the grapes on the other side display amazing intensity.

The Vineyards

The d'Arenberg shiraz vineyards vary greatly in their soil composition. Despite their similar appellation (McLaren Vale) individual plots are markedly different due to the fact that the area features glacial deposits, beach sand and limestone. Soils influence the fruit characters significantly. Vineyards with shallow sands on clay impart the vibrant perfume and length. The red earth on limestone soils across the hill tops adds an extra level of spice and a lively intensity to the fruit and tannins. Shallow loams on marley limestone clays gives the fruit its late emerging liquorice characters and firm gutsy tannins. The ripening ranges in many of our vineyards differ such that we pick individual parts of each vineyard at separate times to ensure correct fruit flavour and character.

The Vintage

After excellent winter rains and then a warm wet spring the vineyards were set for a good start to vintage. Flowering was consistent, for the first time crop sizes looked more normal than previous years. We experienced the coldest January for 12 years followed by a warm to hot February and mild March which carried on into April to eventually become a very long Indian summer.

As vintage proceeded the vineyards with rich, dense soils ripened with good acidity and weight. Berries were turgid, and expressed excellent fruit characters and rich, ripe tannins. While some early picked parcels of red varieties were exciting, free of mould, good sugar acid ripeness it was the vineyards picked in the mid to latter stages of harvest produced substantially bigger and beautifully balanced parcels of fruit with outstanding colour, levels of flavour richness and tannin structures.

The Winemaking

Each batch of fruit received is gently crushed in our Demoisy open-mouthed, rubber-toothed crusher so as many of the berries as possible remain whole. After crushing, the must is transferred to open fermenters where the seeds and skins are permanently submerged beneath the free run juice. The must receives no plunging or pumping over while fermentation occurs. Once the primary fermentation is nearly complete, traditional foot-treading takes place prior to basket-pressing. The wine is then transferred to barrel to complete its primary and secondary fermentation. After 20 months every barrel is individually assessed for quality. Only the best barrels are selected to be bottled as The Dead Arm Shiraz.

The Characteristics

Upon release, 'The Dead Arm' Shiraz has a vivid, young, dense, purple-red colour. Very intense aromas with a complex combination of fragrant spices and violets, dark cherry, blackberry and blueberry, are made more complex with great liquorice, pepper and integrated svelte of boot-polish like characters. The taste is rich, gutsy and virile, with attacking spice, dark liquorice, cherry, blackberry, plum and dried black olive. The level of fruit weight masks the framework of oak tannins; however, the mineral fruit grittiness is balanced with a very long fruit-fragrant, persistent spice will yield a wine of great ageing power.

The Cellaring Potential

This wine will be relatively closed and backward in style if not allowed some opportunity to develop in the bottle. After time in bottle, 'The Dead Arm' gains a biscuity, cinnamon, chocolate, earthy, eucalyptus-based bouquet on top of rich blackberry pie smells.

Tobacco, mushroom, malt and earth aromas play a part on the long, fleshy, chocolate mint and spice flavours. This wine will develop with a great balance of tannins, acidity and fruit. Classic McLaren Vale...

Technical Information

Harvest Dates 5 March- 26 April	Alcohol by Vol: 14.5%	Titrateable Acid: 7.0 g/L	Bottling Date: From 7 December 2005
Oak Maturation 21 months in new & aged French and American oak barriques	Residual Sugar 0.6 g/L	pH: 3.44	Chief Winemaker Chester d'Arenberg Osborn



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