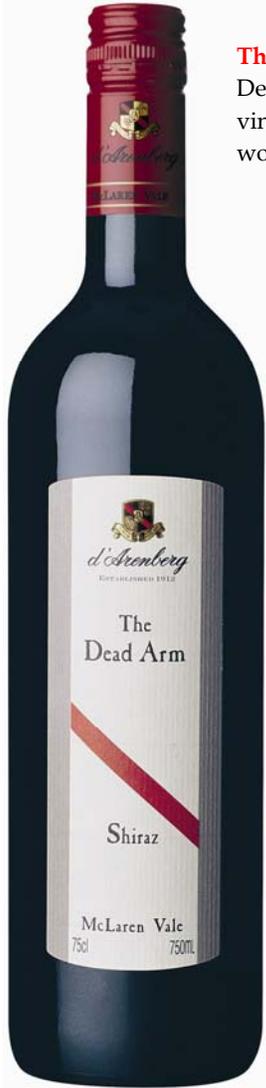




2005 d'Arenberg The Dead Arm

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 clay give the fruit its late-emerging liquorice characters and firm gutsy tannins. The ripening periods in our vineyards differ such that we pick individual parts of each vineyard at separate times to ensure correct fruit flavour and character.

The Vintage

Vintage 2005 could be summarised as a vintage that ripened without interruptions. It was early, it was late. After a slightly dry winter, spring rains in November sent vines booming and set up a quick condensed flowering and set with good berry numbers. Summer was cool with intermitted rains throughout December and January on a fortnightly basis which made for a mild but steady lead up to harvest without interrupting veraison. Vigour was nominal due to only moderate reserves of soil moisture from a relatively dry winter which restricted shoot length. With the onset of autumn we experienced a burst of warm to hot, dry weather with above average day and night time temperatures throughout March, April and May which secured an early intake of every variety.

The resulting wines are very tight wines, with very good red fruit fragrance and lovely acidity. Crops were above average although slightly under 2004.

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

A very dark almost black appearance with a dense purple-red hue. The aroma upon opening is very intense with a complex combination of fragrant spices, red fruits, plum dark cherries, cranberry and blueberry notes with a back drop of very fine oaks, liquorice, white pepper, boot-polish and edges of parsley stalks. The taste is rich, gutsy and virile, dominated with red fruits, cherries, plums and dried black olive. The palate is very controlled, tight and has a wonderful liveliness about it. Even the tannins feel cool and silky with mineral grittiness and wonderful acidity. The length is excellent and beautifully pointed with soft red fruit flavours and spice suggests this wine will have great ability to age.

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

28 February to 16 April

Oak Maturation

21 months in new & aged French and American oak barriques

Alcohol by Vol:

14.5%

Titrateable Acid:

7.1 g/L

Bottling Date:

11 January 2007

Glucose+Fructose

0.8 g/L

pH:

3.46

Chief Winemaker

Chester d'Arenberg Osborn



Artist Mick Tate©

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