



2008 d'Arenberg The Dead Arm Shiraz

McLaren Vale



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, while low yielding, display amazing intensity.

The Vintage

2008 is a tale of two vintages for red wines in McLaren Vale. Winter rain ensured the soil reached filled capacity and set the vines up perfectly with healthy balanced canopies.

A normal spring and an unseasonably cool January and February meant most vines remained stress free. Flavour ripeness was achieved at reasonably low sugar levels and high natural acidity for early picked parcels. A sustained heat wave in early March accelerated ripeness and picking, resulting in riper in some wines. However The Dead Arm only receives the finest parcels, most of which were picked before the heatwave, therefore reflecting the best part of the 2008 vintage.

Cellaring Potential

While enjoyable in youth, this wine will reach its full potential with bottle age up to at least 20 years. The considerable structure and depth will ensure that the fruit characters will develop over time revealing more complexity and providing immense interest. This wine is best stored in an environment free on direct sunlight and with consistent temperatures between 10°C and 15°C.

The Winemaking

Walking the old Shiraz vineyards 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 on most parcels 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 used French and old American oak barriques to complete primary and secondary fermentation. The barrel ferments are aged on lees to keep the wine fresh while also reducing the oak influence. There is no racking until final blending. Chester undertakes an extensive barrel tasting process to determine the final blend. The Dead Arm does not undertake fining or filtration prior to bottling which may result in a harmless deposit in or adhering to the bottle.

Tasting Notes

The heady aroma is both powerful and pretty with notes of fennel, purple flowers and blossom mingling with ripe, varietal purple fruits and black pepper. The oak is hardly evident which allows fruit and soil complexities to emerge with edges of rhubarb and red mulberry and savoury characters of dried herbs, game and spice.

The palate opens with anise, black pepper, graphite and restrained dark cherries before it gives way to seductive mulberry, plum, licorice and spice. It has great power, depth and length with very vibrant, gritty fruit tannins providing immense structure. Notes of anise and spice linger for a long time after the last sip.

The Dead Arm 2008 strikes a rare balance of power, complexity and finesse with impressive structure that will reward those with patience to cellar it.

Technical Information

Harvest Dates:

19 Feb to 1 April

Oak Maturation:

18 months in new & used
French Oak barriques &
old American Oak barriques

Alcohol by Volume: 14.5%

Titrateable Acid: 7.1

pH: 3.29

Glucose + Fructose

3.2 g/L

Chief Winemaker:

Chester d'Arenberg Osborn

Senior Winemaker:

Jack Walton



Artist: Mick Tate