



D'ARENBERG THE CUSTODIAN GRENACHE 2017/\$19.99



DESCRIPTION

d'Arenberg is one of the undisputed kings of Australian Shiraz and other Rhone varieties that have historically defined the region. A century on, their vineyards have grown to some 450 acres in McLaren Vale, including Shiraz dating back to d'Arenberg's first plantings in 1912, and nearly one-third of McLaren Vale's old bush-vine Grenache. Fourth generation winemaker, Chester Osborn, recently converted all of the family's vineyards to organics and biodynamics and moved to solar energy in the winery. All the while, in terms of winemaking, not much has changed--all the wines are basket-pressed, the reds foot-trodden during fermentation; everything is done in small batches, leading to an impressive array of bottlings every year, each showing a different facet of McLaren Vale terroir. Having been inducted into Wine & Spirits Magazine's Hall of Fame for earning a place on its Top 100 Wineries nine times, this accolade is a reflection of d'Arenberg's revered reputation worldwide.

Grenache thrives in any warm, Mediterranean climate where ample sunlight allows its clusters to achieve full phenolic ripeness. While Grenache's birthplace is Spain (there called Garnacha), today it is more recognized as the key player in the red blends of the Southern Rhône, namely Châteauneuf-du-Pape, Côtes du Rhône and its villages. The Italian island of Sardinia produces bold, rustic, single varietal Grenache (there called Cannonau). California, Washington and Australia have also achieved success with Grenache, both single varietal and in blends.

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Small batches of grapes are gently crushed and then transferred to open fermenters. Foot treading is undertaken two thirds of the way through fermentation, the wine is basket

pressed and transferred to a mixture of old French and American oak to complete fermentation and mature. The barrel ferments are aged on lees, and there is no racking until final blending. This wine does not undertake fining or filtration prior to bottling. The secret is in the old vines and the minimal input approach to the grape growing and winemaking that allows the fruit to express itself.

Tasting Notes

Nose:

A beautiful crimson purple, edging toward a purple hue. On the nose we find tomato leaves, violets and red fruits.

Palate:

This wine showcases both the sweet, generous berry fruit and the darker, earthier notes that well crafted McLaren Vale Grenache can offer. The cooler conditions have similarly produced a more refined palate than normal, leaning more to medium bodied silky although with a bit of air the wine certainly grows in opulence.

It's medium bodied with more of those red fruits, pomegranate, and rhubarb. A little on the ripe side, with some green edges. There's some lovely, beautiful crisp acidity. A gloriously dry finish. Velvety tannins envelop the wine. Light easy drinking in it's youth. With time, this wine will become a showstopper.

Pairing:

Grenache pairs well with lamb, hamburgers, grilled vegetables and olives.

Winery Website: [2017 The Custodian Grenache\(1\).pdf \(darenberg.com.au\)](#)

Fun Fact

The Custodian has always been big boned for a Grenache, but perhaps due in part to the relatively cool 2017 vintage, this bottling offers freshness and poise. It opens with aromas of cherry and mocha, underscored by spice and floral tones. There's a lovely crunch to the red berry fruit in the mouth. The tannins creep up slowly and then are raspy and a bit austere. The fruit wears them well, though, making this an appealing barbecue wine. **Wine Enthusiast - 90 Points**

Aromas of red fruit and flowers abound with earth, bracken and spice. The palate has assertive, punchy red fruit and a wrap of juicy, vibrant tannin. Medium body. **James Suckling- 90 Points**

McLaren Vale, South Australia, Australia

