

THISTLEDOWN WINE COMPANY



'THORNY DEVIL' GRENACHE 2021

McLaren Vale, Australia

Technical Notes

The aim at Thistledown is to make wines of great purity, precision and energy. Thorny Devil comes from a variety of fine, old sites, all of which have in common that they are old, bush trained and dry grown. With Grenache, they are always looking to maximize fruit purity, texture and finesse and do so through earlier picking, on the way up, rather than the way down which allows them to couple concentration of flavor with balance and elegance. In the winery, it's very much a low intervention, small-batch approach as befits high quality fruit, picked at the right time. Natural (wild) ferments, whole bunch inclusion, gentle or passive extraction followed by judicious use of oak and a few concrete eggs, which are used for their unique "layer cake" fermentations. In 2021, fermentation began naturally and hand plunging twice a day was carried out through to dryness. Gently pressed off skins before 10 months in old oak hogsheads, before being bottled unfinned and unfiltered.

UPC CODE: 858441006903

About this Wine

Thistledown's strong relationships with the growers of some of the finest vineyard in McLaren Vale provide the foundations for this wine. Giles is always looking to maximize fruit purity, texture and finesse rather than making another rich red wine and, while there is no denying that Grenache is more burly than Pinot, he always has the vision of making Pinot style wines within the, albeit, challenging framework of Grenache! That pursuit is made all the easier when you have access to numerous old vine, dry grown, bush trained vineyards. Extensive walking and tasting is done pre-vintage to ensure that the fruit is picked on the way up to capture the brighter fresher personality of the variety. Though the vineyards are seriously low yield (1.5-3 ton/acre) the approach is let the fruit infuse rather than extract too hard. Fruit is handpicked, and each vineyard is separately vinified. Wild ferments are preceded by cold soaking. Gentle hand plunging ensures subtle tannin extraction, prior to pressing off to larger French oak barrels.

Wine Analysis

Alcohol: 14%
Total Acidity: 5.52 g/l
pH: 3.47
Residual Sugar: <2 g/l
SO2: 74 mg/l

- ✓ VEGAN FRIENDLY
- ✓ SUSTAINABLE
- ✗ ORGANIC
- ✗ BIODYNAMIC

Vintage Conditions

Rare is the vintage that combines good yields and high quality but 2021 was just that. A remarkable vintage in that it was once again pandemic affected but that it was measured and mild with none of the heat spikes or drought conditions of recent years. With good levels of winter rains filling soil profiles, the mild weather with intermittent rains throughout the growing and ripening season ensured that fruit ripened over a long period of time and the vintage was one of the longest in recent history. The results are spectacular!

Scores/Reviews

91 Points - The Real Review (Huon Hooke)
(2020 - 93 JS, 91 HH)
(2019 - 95 JH, 93 JS, 91 HH, 90 WS)
(2018 - 93 HH, 90 WA)

Tasting Note

The resulting wine has the characteristic McLaren Vale perfume and spice with a beguiling texture and perfume that unfolds, layer by layer.

