

`Hilltops` Shiraz 2016

Canberra, Australian Capital Territory, Australia



Clonakilla



Grape Varieties	100% Syrah/Shiraz
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Winemaker	Tim Kirk
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Closure	Screwcap
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ABV	14%
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Bottle Sizes	75cl
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Notes	Sustainable, Vegetarian, Vegan
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PRODUCER

Dr John Kirk planted the Clonakilla vineyard at Murrumbateman, 40 kilometres north of Canberra, in 1971 after his scientific curiosity led him to question why vines were not being grown in this area. His research showed that the soil and climate seemed suited to certain varieties. Clonakilla means 'meadow of the church' and is the name of Dr Kirk's grandfather's farm in County Clare, Ireland. In 1997 Tim Kirk, the fourth of John's six sons, took over responsibility for winemaking. Today, Clonakilla is recognised as one of the leading estates in Australia. Tim was named Gourmet Traveller Winemaker of the Year in 2013.

VINEYARDS

The grapes for this Shiraz were selected from four vineyards in the Hilltops district around Young in New South Wales, the Canberra District's closest neighbouring wine region. The altitude is marginally lower than Canberra so the grapes tend to be harvested around two weeks before those grown on the estate. Soils are deep red loam over light clay, giving distinctive blackberry and blackcurrant notes to the wine.

VINTAGE

2016 was another remarkable vintage. The El Niño provided consistently warm and dry conditions, but this saw the rise of drought. In the last week of January, 90 mm of rain came as a blessing given the heat that followed. Temperatures hit the mid-30s through February and March. The grapes ripened steadily, with more grapes per bunch, which slowed down their progress.

VINIFICATION

The grapes were destemmed and fermented warm in open-top fermenters of various sizes. Each batch has either nil or up to 20% whole bunches and are soaked on skins for 2-3 weeks before being pressed to barrel. The wine is matured for 11 months in Allier oak barriques and puncheons, 15% new, with the remaining barrels varying from 2-5 years old. The wine was racked once during its maturation in oak, blended in November and bottled in late February the following year.

TASTING NOTES

The wine has signature 'Hilltops' ripe, dark fruit flavours with a deep, concentrated cherry and blackberry character. It has fine-grained tannins and a racy acidity, which allow it to be enjoyed now but also be aged for up to 10 years.