

S.C. Pannell,

`The Vale` McLaren Vale Grenache/Shiraz 2018

McLaren Vale, South Australia, Australia



S.C. PANNELL
MCLAREN VALE



Grape Varieties	51% Syrah/Shiraz
Winemaker	Stephen Pannell
Closure	Screwcap
ABV	14.5%
Residual Sugar	1.59g/L
Acidity	5.7g/L
Wine pH	3.63
Bottle Sizes	75cl
Notes	Vegetarian, Vegan

PRODUCER

In a very short space of time, Stephen Pannell has gone from being one of Australia's best and brightest young talents to one of their most lauded winemakers.

He is a two-time winner of the fabled Jimmy Watson Trophy, the most prestigious wine award in Australia, and also won the top prize at the Alternative Varietals Wine Show three out of the last five years. Stephen moved into his own McLaren Vale winery in 2014, and now owns 36 hectares of vineyard. This control over his fruit has enabled him to take quality to an even higher level.

One of the key factors behind his success is the freshness in all his wines, something he achieves by picking earlier. "I can only pick early due to better viticulture", he says. He is looking for the varietal 'stamp' rather than 'varietal character' in his wines, causing him to create blends such as the Grenache/Shiraz/Touriga, where the sum is greater than the parts. Because of this fresher 'stamp', he is also actively reducing oak influence in his wines by moving to larger, more neutral oak vessels.

VINEYARDS

Having made wine in McLaren Vale for many years, Stephen Pannell considers this Grenache Shiraz blend to perfectly capture the sense of place, or 'The Vale'. The Grenache came from 50-year-old vines in the west-facing 'Aldersey' vineyard, situated in the Seaview sub-region of McLaren Vale. The Shiraz came from 30-year-old vines in Steve's south-facing 'Koomilya' vineyard at Upper Tintara, which boasts ironstone and rich siltstone soils and was originally planted by the Hardy family in the late 1800s.

VINTAGE

2018 was truly a winemaker's vintage, with every scrap of experience tested and measured. Lower than average winter rainfall levels set up for a dry growing season, resulting in dramatically reduced yields. In low-yielding wines such as this one, acidity levels in the grapes are good, setting up the wine for great stability and the potential to age for a long time.

VINIFICATION

Both parcels of grapes were hand picked on the 3rd March, which was unusual given that the two grape varieties do not tend to ripen at the same time. The grapes were fermented in small, open-top fermenters and spent eight days on skins with gentle daily pump-overs. Malolactic fermentation occurred in French oak puncheons, followed by 12 months of maturation in 2,800-litre French oak vats. The wine was bottled without fining or filtration.

TASTING NOTES

This Grenache Shiraz blend brings pure aromas and flavours of McLaren Vale, with layers of woody herbs, earth and iodine mingling with rich red fruits, dark chocolate and spice. The palate is medium-bodied, with the Grenache controlling the mid-palate exuberance of the Shiraz and providing great length on the finish.