

S.C. Pannell,

## `Basso` McLaren Vale Garnacha 2020

McLaren Vale, South Australia, Australia



S.C. PANNELL  
MCLAREN VALE



Grape Varieties	<b>100% Grenache</b>
Winemaker	<b>Stephen Pannell</b>
Closure	<b>Screwcap</b>
ABV	<b>14%</b>
Acidity	<b>5g/L</b>
Wine pH	<b>3.54</b>
Bottle Sizes	<b>75cl</b>

### 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

The idea for an early release, low sulphur, unfiltered Grenache had been bubbling away for a few years. Finally, in 2017, access to fruit from the right vineyard in Blewitt Springs: dry grown and pruned to single-bud spurs, sparked the Basso project in to life. The vineyard, planted in the late 1970s, lies at 80 metres above sea level on sandy loams over clays. From the Latin Bassus, meaning low, Basso is low in additions and speaks clearly of the place from which it comes.

### VINTAGE

A dry start to the season, with lower than expected winter and spring rainfall, followed by a day of intense heat right on flowering led to some early anxiety around yields. Fires struck parts of South Australia around Christmas, but fortunately this part of McLaren Vale was not affected. The days became cooler sooner than anticipated, allowing for long and even ripening.

### VINIFICATION

The grapes were hand picked at 13.7 Baume. Fermentation took place in open top fermenters with daily pump overs. The grapes spent 10 days on skins before gentle pressing. After undergoing malolactic fermentation, the wine was aged for ten months in large, old French oak vats. The wine was racked twice before bottling, without filtration, on the 8th of February 2021.

### TASTING NOTES

Raspberry liqueur, red apple skin, dark spice and cinnamon make for a vibrant, seductive perfume. The palate follows through with fresh blue and red berry fruit. Youthful and medium bodied, with super fine tea-like tannins that carry red fruits on the finish.