

S.C. Pannell,

`Old McDonald` Blewitt Springs McLaren Vale Grenache 2020

McLaren Vale, South Australia, Australia



S.C. PANNELL
MCLAREN VALE



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 times. 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". As with all his wine projects, Stephen's winemaking philosophy remains steadfast: fruit grown in the right place with considerable attention in the vineyard requires minimal intervention in the winery.

VINEYARDS

Steve's interest in Grenache and desire to make medium-bodied styles stretches back to the mid 1990s when he first arrived in McLaren Vale. Given the warm, Mediterranean climate, Grenache grows as well in 'the Vale' as any of the more revered Grenache regions including France's Rhône Valley, Priorat in Spain and Italy's Sardinia. The grapes for this wine grow on 77 year old dry-grown vines in the Old McDonald vineyard in Blewitt Springs. Soils in this sub-region are sandy, with an underlying clay and ironstone base. The vines are south-east facing, in terraced contours and sit 80 metres above sea level.

VINTAGE

2020 saw a dry start to the season, with lower than expected rainfall. A day of intense heat around the time of flowering led to some initial concern about yields. A very hot and dry summer caused devastating widespread fires, which affected much of South Australia around Christmas, but this part of McLaren Vale was fortunately untouched. Thankfully, the days became cooler sooner than anticipated, allowing the grapes to ripen slowly and gradually. A complicated vintage that led to a wonderful expression of McLaren Vale Grenache.

VINIFICATION

The grapes were hand-picked on the 29th of February at a Baume of 14.0. Fermentation took place in an open top fermenter with 23% whole clusters, spending 14 days on skins, with daily pump-overs, before very gentle pressing to a 4,300 litre vat. After settling, it was racked off and sent to a 2,800 litre nine-year-old vat and a 1000-litre three-year-old vat for maturation. The wine was racked a further two times and bottled without filtration in June 2021.

TASTING NOTES

Aromas of ripe raspberry and damson plum compote are supported by notes of polished wood, dark chocolate, turkish delight and violets. A flavour invasion of cherry, cranberry, spice and rose petals. Ripe and velvety tannins complement the long exuberant finish.

Grape Varieties	100% Grenache
Winemaker	Stephen Pannell
Closure	Screwcap
ABV	14%
Acidity	6g/L
Wine pH	3.46
Bottle Sizes	75cl
Notes	Vegetarian, Practising Organic, Vegan