

Charles Melton,

**`The Kirche` Barossa Valley Shiraz/Cabernet Sauvignon
2019****Barossa Valley, South Australia, Australia**

Grape Varieties	60% Shiraz 40% Cabernet Sauvignon
Winemaker	Charlie Melton
Closure	Stelvin Lux
ABV	14.5%
Residual Sugar	0.5g/L
Acidity	6.2g/L
Wine pH	3.4
Bottle Sizes	75cl
Notes	Vegetarian, Vegan

PRODUCER

Charlie Melton was among the first to recognise the value and tradition of Barossa Valley's old-vine Grenache, Shiraz and Mourvèdre (Mataro). While others were grubbing up Shiraz to plant more fashionable varieties, Charlie and a small band of Barossa winemakers convinced farmers to keep their historic vineyards. Since 1984, Charlie has produced premium Barossa red wines. Initially styled on those from the Rhône, they are now considered leading examples in their own right. Charles Melton is a family project, and today his daughter Sophie, a talented young winemaker, assists Charlie in the winery.

VINEYARDS

The estate is situated in a region called Krondorf, around 290 metres above sea level. The vines were planted in 1989 and 1974, so are relatively youthful, at around 40 years old. They produce some of the highest quality Cabernet grown in the Barossa, along with superb Shiraz. Most of the vineyard sits on loam and red clay, with the edge on the eastern side, heading into the seam of black cracking clay. The name comes from the surrounding area known as the Zum Krippen Christi Lutheran Church (Kirche in German), built in 1864.

VINTAGE

Quality triumphed quantity in the 2019 vintage, and it will be remembered as a year for texture, structure and richness. Spring frosts and dry conditions during the crucial growing stages reduced yields across the Barossa. Volumes were well down on average, with some vineyards losing 50% of crop, particularly in the Eden Valley. However, the harvested fruit showed exceptional depth of colour, vibrant yet concentrated fruit flavours and plenty of structure on the palate.

VINIFICATION

100% estate grown Shiraz and Cabernet, principally from the Kirche vineyard in Krondorf Village, gives the 2019 Kirche its distinctive aromatics and flavour. Both varieties from this block perform consistently at the top end of the quality spectrum. The blend is a mix of co-fermented Shiraz and Cabernet and single varietal ferments that are blended post-oak maturation. As always, a mix of French oak (50%) and American oak (50%) are used to mature the wine. A touch of new oak adds a fine cedar element to the bouquet, and the 30 month "sur lie" maturation gives a natural richness to the structure. A cool (18 – 23°C) ferment has helped give an elegance to the fruity aromas.

TASTING NOTES

Lovely deep colour, with excellent bright hue. Black fruits on the nose, blackberry with a touch of cedary, gently smoky oak. Plush creamy structure with some lovely round tannins and great length mouth filling, but fine and elegant.

AWARDS

International Wine Challenge 2023, Silver