

THISTLEDOWN WINE COMPANY



‘THE VAGABOND’ GRENACHE 2021

Blewitt Springs, McLaren Vale, Australia

Technical Notes

From 4 separate, old, dry grown, bush trained vineyards in the revered Blewitt Springs district of McLaren Vale, planted in deep sands with some ironstone. The fruit was all hand-picked and about 2/3 was then wild fermented in a concrete pyramid which had layers of whole bunches and alternating layers of crushed fruit. This ferment had no mechanical extraction. The balance was wild fermented in an open fermenter with 35% whole bunches, and was hand plunged twice daily. This portion was aged in puncheons while the pyramid fermented was pressed back to a concrete egg and oak puncheons for maturation. The resulting layers of complexity and depth of flavor are exactly what was aimed for. Racked from there into blending tank and then straight to bottle, unfiltered and unfiltered. A mere 3833 bottles were produced.

UPC CODE: 858441006934

About this Wine

The benchmark for contemporary Aussie Grenache. It hails from Blewitt Springs, the Grand Cru of Aussie Grenache if ever there was one. Giles and Fergal have spent years searching out the best vineyard plots in this small Grenache enclave and now have enviable access to many of the best. In any given year, the Vagabond will be the sum of 3 - 4 different vineyards, all old, dry grown, bush vines planted on the characteristic sand. Exhaustive tasting in the vineyard leads to a harvest that is earlier than traditional and a vinification quite unlike any other wine. The core of this wine is wild fermented in a concrete pyramid layered with alternating whole bunches and crushed fruit. Fermentation begins spontaneously, the layers of whole bunches acting like a mesh through which the fermenting juice moves. Without any other form of extraction, this method retains the individual vineyard characters and energy of site that is the signature of Thistledown. More akin to Pinot than old school Grenache, the Vagabond is textural, aromatic, refined yet utterly delicious in equal measure.

Wine Analysis

Alcohol: 14.5%
Total Acidity: 5.45g/l
pH: 3.36
Residual Sugar: <2 g/l
SO2: 67 mg/l

- ✓ VEGAN FRIENDLY
- ✓ SUSTAINABLE
- ✗ ORGANIC
- ✗ BIODYNAMIC

Vintage Conditions

Rare is the vintage that combines good yields and high quality but 2021 was just that. A remarkable vintage in that it was once again pandemic affected but that it was measured and mild with none of the heat spikes or drought conditions of recent years. With good levels of winter rains filling soil profiles, the mild weather with intermittent rains throughout the growing and ripening season ensured that fruit ripened over a long period of time and the vintage was one of the longest in recent history. The results are spectacular!

Tasting Note

This wine possesses a beautifully complex, aromatic nose of violets, wild cherry, rosemary and warming spice. The palate is energetic yet polished and smooth with vibrant cherry, spice, wild strawberry and licorice on the palate. Medium bodied but multi-layered and textural with a very long, aromatic finish.

Scores/Reviews

95pts The Real Review (Huon Hooke)
(2020 - 96 JS, 95 JH, 93 HH)
(2019 - 96 JS, 95 JH, 93 WS)

