

# THISTLEDOWN



## The Vagabond Grenache, Blewitt Springs, McLaren Vale 2015

We're convinced that, of all of the regions of Australia, the greatest potential for Grenache greatness is in the McLaren Vale. We therefore set about finding unique plots throughout the region, looking for specific soil formations that would imbue the Vagabond with finesse, varietal purity and texture.

### Vintage Conditions

The season began well with good winter rains followed by a dry spring which resulted in consistently good fruit set. November and December were cool and this pattern was only briefly punctuated by a burst of heat over the New Year period which had people thinking back to the 14 days of plus 40 heat last year. Thankfully, January continued with cooler weather, some 2 degrees cooler than normal. Predictions at this time seemed to suggest a normal or even late harvest. Steady, though not extreme, heat saw ripening accelerate to the extent that by the middle of February, there was a mad rush to harvest fruit right across the McLaren Vale. With every winery full and fruit ready to go, there were more than a few stressed winemakers and grape growers. Even Grenache, normally picked in April, came in by the end of February!

### Winemaking

From a single vineyard in Blewitt Spring, 70 year old, dry grown, bush vines planted in deep sands with some ironstone. The fruit was hand picked, 20% whole bunch, the balance gently crushed to retain whole berries and then cold soaked for 5 days prior to fermentation. Twice daily hand plunging during fermentation was followed by gentle pressing before running to 500 litre puncheons. 20% new French oak was used, with the balance being made up of used French. A savage selection was made after 6 months ageing with the selection exhibiting pure, lifted raspberry and savoury strawberry fruit coupled with subtle spices and a creamy texture.

Alcohol: 14.5%

Total Acidity: 6.5g/l

pH: 3.35

Residual Sugar: <2g/l

SO<sub>2</sub>: 78mg/l

Fining: None

Vegan: Yes

Vegetarian: Yes