



HENSCHKE

Exceptional wines from outstanding vineyards

Lenswood Abbotts Prayer 2008

Grape Variety

57% merlot and 43% cabernet sauvignon grapes grown on Stephen and Prue Henschke's Lenswood vineyard in the Adelaide Hills.

Technical Details

Harvest Date: 3-10 April | *Alcohol:* 14.5% | *pH:* 3.59 | *Acidity:* 6.37g/L

Maturation

Matured in 60% new and 40% used French hogsheads for 16 months prior to blending and bottling.

Background

Stephen and Prue Henschke, fifth-generation winemakers at the family cellars at Keyneton, selected Lenswood in 1981 as a new vineyard site, just 50km from their ancient Mount Edelstone and Hill of Grace vineyards. At 550m, the Lenswood vineyard slopes offer not only beautiful views towards the older vine country but also higher rainfall and humidity at the right time of the year, cooler temperatures to retain natural acidity, and still enough sunshine to fully ripen the grapes. The Abbotts Prayer label links together the history, religion and pioneers of this mountainous region. This property along Coldstore Road, including the vineyard, was pioneered by T N Mitchell, the first settler, and originally known as Abbotts Flat. Vineyards were previously established in this area in the late 1800s.

Vintage Description

There was a below average winter rainfall lead up to the 2008 vintage in the Adelaide Hills. Spring was mild with rainfall periods in October, early mid November and mid December. Fine flowering weather at the end of November allowed for good flowering and above average yields and the vines also showed vigorous growth. A dry and hotter than average early summer followed (November 2007 was the warmest for 25 years), which encouraged good growth and some restriction on berry and bunch size followed by hot summer temperatures around New Year. From mid-January through February mild temperatures and cold nights followed which ensured excellent development of fruit colour, flavour and balance of pH and acidity. It was the coolest February since 1978.

Harvest began three weeks early at the end of February with the white varieties. However, in early March South Australia suffered an unprecedented record heatwave of 15 days over 35C. The unexpected continual heat seemed never ending and resulted in some varieties suffering leaf drop, escalating sugar levels in the fruit and some shrivel. Although the heat had a marked affect in the Adelaide Hills it was not as bad as in the other regions in South Australia. The natural advantage afforded by the hills is the altitude (600 metres), which provides cooler growing conditions during summer and a greater day night temperature differential for acid retention in the grapes and greater purity of fruit flavours. The cool change which followed brought welcome relief, however some fruit was adversely affected. Careful hand picking allowed selection of the best quality fruit producing some excellent to exceptional wines. It was an ideal season for organic viticulture and a season that demanded Biodynamics to keep the vines healthy.

Wine Description

Vivid deep crimson in colour. A sweet, spicy, complex nose of blueberries, mulberries, blood plums, cardamom and thyme with underlying hints of toasty French oak. The palate is beautifully svelte and complex with layers of flavour and fine-grained, silky tannins. Very textural, elegant and long.

Reviewed July 2010



Cellaring Potential

Excellent vintage,
drink now to 15+ years