



T O R B R E C K

BAROSSA VALLEY

2008 Laird

Every now and then, in life and in wine, we are presented with unique opportunities to express ourselves and create something truly remarkable. When these rare opportunities arise, we need to capture, nurture and develop them so that their potential is fulfilled. So when we were given the opportunity to work with one of the most famous vineyards in the Barossa Valley, We were determined to use all our experience to ensure the resulting wine was truly remarkable.

The Vineyard

Every great wine in the world has its roots buried in the terroir of a breathtaking vineyard, and the Laird is no exception. Owned by the legendary Malcolm Seppelt, fruit for the Laird comes from the Gnadenfrei vineyard, nestled on a gentle south facing slope on the eastern side of a ridge separating the Seppeltsfield and Marananga appellations in the Barossa Valley. Bearing the 'Seppelt' family name, Malcolm has his roots in this area buried as deep as the old vines on his property. Planted in 1958, the 5 acres of Shiraz is embedded in very dark heavy clay loam over red friable clay. The vineyard is meticulously hand tended, un-irrigated and littered with the footprints of Malcolm himself. The resulting small, concentrated Shiraz berries produced consistently on the property make it the envy of all winemakers in the valley.

The Barrels

The oak selected for the maturation of this wine is considered to be some of the finest barriques in the world - Dominique Laurent's 'Magic Casks'. Dominique Laurent is an extraordinary individual and a truly great winemaker in his own right. He was so frustrated by the sales-driven and mass-production methods of the larger cooperages in France that he decided to make his own barrels. He left nothing to chance when developing his cooperage, selecting a site that was very high in wind and rain on the côte at the edge of La Forêt de Citeaux. The coopers he selected to craft his barrels had deep ties to artisanal barrel production, proud and driven by traditional techniques.

The oak was personally harvested from Forêt de Tronçais in Allier and more specifically from the original area of this forest that was known to produce the finest oak. The oak trunks were split by hand and then again hand split into staves, producing staves that are almost twice as thick as traditional machine split staves. These were then aged for 48 to 54 months at a location that is already more exposed and weathered than the average maturation site. After this aging, the staves were hand-made into barrels. As part of this process, they were heated over three differing flames for several hours. This again is much longer than the standard process; however it does not result in a heavy toast because of the remarkable density of the wood.

The Winemaking

Malcolm Seppelts' vineyard is hand picked in two separate parcels a few days apart depending on vintage conditions. It is immediately taken to the winery where the fruit is gently de-stemmed into wooden & concrete open top fermenters. It is then carefully nurtured for 6-7 days on skins with pumpovers occurring twice daily, varying in duration and intensity. When primary fermentation is almost complete, the wine is drained from the skins and the must is gently basket pressed for 8 hours. The wine remains in a stainless steel tank until primary fermentation is completed. It is then run directly into new French barriques coopered by Dominique Laurent where they spend 36 months in their own temperature controlled ancient stone shed. Once the oak and the wine have melded perfectly the wine is blended and bottled without the use of filtration or fining.

The Laird is a wine born from perfectionists following the highest possible standards.

The Vintage

2008 proved to be a very difficult year for Torbreck with a great growing season ruined by a record heat wave in March that lasted for 16 days. The majority of our Shiraz was shriveled and over ripe but the dry grown, old vines that yield and sustain the Laird fruit produced phenolic ripeness with uncanny timing. The Laird was the 16th block we picked in 2008 and came in on the 3rd of March; just as the heatwave began. The wine is rich and complex with perfectly judged tannin and divine balance. The 2008 Laird is truly a testament to the mastery of Malcolm Seppelt and his patch of dirt. It is amazing that such a special wine can still be created under such difficult circumstances.

VARIETAL:	100% Shiraz
VINEYARD:	Gnadenfrei Vineyard – Planted 1958
SUB REGION:	Marananga
pH:	3.45
ACIDITY:	6.54g/L
ALCOHOL:	15.27% Alc/Vol
BOTTLING DATE:	26th July 2011