

Food-friendly Australian Tempranillo



Tempranillo is Spain's great red grape. Grown all across the country in diverse climates, and made in many styles, it is the Spanish equivalent to Australia's Shiraz.

But it's still early days for Tempranillo in Australia. While the list of wine companies making the variety is growing rapidly, most have only been at it for a year or two. That's not true of La Linea, as winemaker Peter Leske's experience goes back to 2001, when he made probably the first Tempranillo in the Adelaide Hills, at Nepenthe. He left Nepenthe in 2006, and teamed up with Jason Quin to pursue the aim of making serious, seriously good, food-friendly Tempranillo. They were joined a year later by David LeMire, who has extensive knowledge of Tempranillo from many years of importing Spanish wines to Australia.

(Along the way Peter made the 2005 Nepenthe Tempranillo, which was the only non-Spanish wine to receive a Gold Medal in the 'Tempranillos Al Mundo' wine show held in Paris, in June 2008. We assume that the organisers, the 'Spanish Federation of Associations of Enologists', were happy about this... as the tasting venue is pretty impressive, Peter now wants to judge at the show! See the pictures: <http://www.enologo.com/tempranillo/uk/fotos071.html>).

Famous UK wine writer Jancis Robinson describes Tempranillo as "... capable of making deep coloured, long-lasting wines that are not... notably high in alcohol", with characters including "strawberries... spice, leather and tobacco leaves...". We could not have said it better! – and it's how we describe our first dry red Tempranillo.

The fruit was sourced from the Amadio Kersbrook vineyard in the northern Adelaide Hills, picked at just-on 13° baumé, and hand-made using simple techniques: open fermenters, pleasantly aged (4 year-old) French oak barrels – in which the wine was aged for 11 months – and careful racking prior to bottling without fining in February 2008.

The resultant wine is undeniably fragrant, with some of Jancis' strawberries, plus cherries and complex, earthy aromas. It is soft and fleshy, but with the dense, drying tannins on the finish for which Tempranillo is renowned. Its relatively low alcohol (13% v/v) means that it finishes with the savoury edge which we think is very important to the style. It will age well for several years (out to, say, 2012), but we suggest that it is best enjoyed relatively young, while the expression of this fascinating variety is at its greatest.

2007 La Linea Tempranillo

- **Recommended retail:** \$26.00
- **Wine details:** 13.0% v/v < 2 g/L RS pH 3.59 TA 6.5 g/L

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