

LA LÍNEA

Adelaide Hills Tempranillo



Tempranillo is Spain's great red grape. It is best known for the stellar red wines of the high-altitude regions of Rioja and Ribera del Duero, but it is widely planted and grown in diverse climates, and made into a wide range of styles.

All great grape varieties result in wines that express the site on which they are grown, but some are particularly good at this. Pinot Noir is perhaps the leader of this pack, but Tempranillo is not far behind.

As we have made our home in what is almost certainly one of Australia's most complex and diverse regions, the Adelaide Hills, we have observed considerable, fascinating differences between the fruit of the vineyards with which we work. And as we have now accumulated almost a decade of experience with this fruit, we are confident that these differences are consistent, and a true expression of what these individual vineyards have to offer.

And so it seems the logical time to bring the expression of the soil and site to bottle, as is.

Peter Leske has made wine from the two vineyards with which we work for many years, during his 'previous life' at Nepenthe, and of course since our first vintage in 2007. The two are quite different: one is a relatively cool, vigorous site between Echunga and Mount Barker (approximately 400 m above sea level). The other is north of Kersbrook, on less fertile soil, and is lower (at approximately 350 m), warmer, and drier. The Kersbrook fruit therefore ripens earlier, with different fruit expression, and substantially greater tannin presence.

We have always been very careful to make the wines from each site separately: picking each at optimum ripeness, fermenting and pressing separately; maturing in barrel separately; blending only when the wines are mature and show their final expression, and when we are sure that the blended wine shows the best of each component.

In 2009, after tasting through every barrel in the cellar, we decided that four barriques of the wine from that warmer, northern site showed specific qualities that justified bottling on their own. Consistent with what we have observed over the years, they had slightly darker colour, bigger and more assertive tannins, a 'darker' fruit character, and arguably greater ageing potential. And so we blended and bottled them separately. The remaining barrels of wine from that vineyard comprise 60% of the La Linea 2009 Tempranillo; the balance is from the cooler southern site.

We have called this barrel-selection wine *Norteño*, Spanish for 'Northern', reflecting its origins. Given its slightly bigger structure and more robust nature, it has been aged in bottle for several months more than our blended wine prior to release, and will probably reward cellaring for longer, too. However, only time will tell...

2009 La Linea 'Norteño' Tempranillo

- Recommended retail: **\$33.00**
- Wine details: **13.5% v/v; RS 1.2 g/L; pH 3.67; TA 5.6 g/L**

Peter Leske 0437 652 743 David LeMire MW 0412 252 744

Further information? Please email info@lalineau.com.au