

# LA LÍNEA

## Adelaide Hills Tempranillo



*Tempranillo is Spain's great red grape. Grown all across the country in diverse climates and made into many styles, it is the Spanish equivalent of Australia's Shiraz. Famous UK wine writer Jancis Robinson describes it 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!*

*But it's still early days for Tempranillo in Australia. While the list of companies making the variety is growing rapidly, most have only been at it for a short time. That's not true of La Línea, as winemaker Peter Leske's experience goes back to 2001, when he made probably the first Tempranillo in the Adelaide Hills, at Nepenthe. His experience is complemented by the extensive knowledge of David LeMire MW, who knows Spanish wines as well as anyone in Australia.*

This is the fourth La Línea dry red Tempranillo, and for the second consecutive time is a blend of the two La Línea vineyard sources. These two sites are very different from each other. One, at the far northern end of the Hills at Kersbrook, is as warm and dry as a site can be in this typically high, cool region. In 2010 it was picked on 24<sup>th</sup> February, in stark contrast to the second site near Echunga, which was not picked until 16<sup>th</sup> March. The difference between the two can be attributed in part to temperature and altitude differences, but also to their soils. The Kersbrook soil is quite 'hungry': low in nutrients, shallow, and with moderate water-holding capacity. At Echunga it is deeper, wetter, and richer, and the vines are more vigorous.

The 2010 blend proportions are 70% Echunga, and 30% Kersbrook. The blend shows the bright, fragrant aromas that we love from Echunga: ripe cherries, raspberries and mulberries, plus a hint of dried tobacco. It follows through onto the palate, which is lively and instantly mouth-filling, with flavours that echo the nose, and a twist of regional cool-climate acidity. The bigger, darker, richer Kersbrook fruit is most evident as mid-palate flesh, and distinctive gritty yet fine tannins on the finish.

As always, we kept the two components separate until final ex-oak blending; each was harvested and vinified entirely separately. Maturation was as always in 'pleasantly aged' 3 and 4 year-old French oak barrels, and continued until we racked, blended and bottled in November 2010, to allow several months in bottle prior to release. On release in February 2011, the wine is decidedly youthful; it probably has the greatest ageing potential of our four wines to date. The savoury tannins will meld into the wine with time; we suggest that it will hit its peak in 2013/14.

We are very pleased that despite the considerable variation in the past four vintages, by working with the two sites and carefully assembling after maturation the best wine from one, the other, or both, we have made four wines which are very consistent. All have been proudly medium-bodied and of modest alcohol content. All have been very varietal, but also with a regional signature. All have the fragrance and plushness of Tempranillo, but with a tannic heart which beats firmly.

It's still early days, but we are pleased with our progress toward our aim of being one of Australia's finest Tempranillo specialists.

### 2010 La Línea Tempranillo

- **Recommended retail:** **\$28.00**
- **Wine details:** **14.0% v/v; RS 1.5 g/L; pH 3.71; TA 5.3 g/L**

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