

THE FRUIT

The blending of Shiraz and Cabernet Sauvignon is a well known Australian tradition, and Grant has taken this style to the next step by making a serious, wine of great complexity and fruit integration, which deserves a name of great significance. The blend of 50% Shiraz and 50% Cabernet Sauvignon is sourced from Grant's vineyards on the Barossa Valley floor and the Corryton Park vineyards high in the Eden Valley. The 2004 vintage saw near perfect growing conditions with a mild January and warmer February proving ideal for producing fruit with the richness and intensity ideal for this bold wine style.

THE WINEMAKING

The fruit harvested by a combination of hand and machine harvesters at the optimal ripeness of 13.5° Baumè. The fruit was then crushed and fermented in stainless steel for seven days, and as the Cabernet Sauvignon was mainly from the cooler climate of Corryton Park, it was left on skins for a further 30 days for greater fruit flavour and intensity. The Shiraz, from the aged vineyards on the Barossa Valley floor was kept separate from the Cabernet during fermentation then blended together before being filled to new, and one year old French oak hogsheads for 20 months.

(2004 Nebuchadnezzar Shiraz Cabernet Sauvignon)

The 2004 Nebuchadnezzar is deep crimson colour, and shows an abundance of character from the first waft from the glass. Initially the wine presents with the classic raspberry and spice characters of Barossa Shiraz. Underlying these aromas are more complex earthy, chocolate and raspberry conserve characters from the cool climate Cabernet Sauvignon. The maturation in French oak adds a further dimension with toasted oak and cedar cigar box complexity. The palate has two distinct dimensions; the rich mouth filling upfront Shiraz fruit followed by the very distinctly structured Cabernet Sauvignon tannins, with long, fine grained, lingering tannins adding backbone to the wine. This is a wine structured for ageing, and with careful cellaring 10 years should not be a challenge for this wine.

