

innocent bystander

Innocent Bystander, Yarra Valley Syrah 2016

PRODUCER

This winery changed hands in May 2016, with one family company, Brown Brothers, taking it off the hands of another, its founder, Phil Sexton. So associated is Innocent Bystander with the Yarra Valley that the new owners made the intelligent decision to build a new winery in Healesville, just across the parking lot from Giant Steps. They quickly signed contracts with all the grape growers that Phil used for Innocent Bystander, so that the style of the wines remains unchanged. This regional and varietal style, reflecting the soil, climate and topography of the cool climate in the Yarra Valley is the base upon which the reputation of Innocent Bystander has been built.

VINEYARDS

Fruit was selected vineyards in the Central Yarra. Vineyard management is intensive, with tasks such as shoot thinning, crop thinning and harvesting all carefully carried out by hand. The Yarra Valley climate is cool - slightly cooler than Bordeaux and slightly warmer than Burgundy - and, although alpine, gets some maritime influence due to being on the southern (seaward) side of the Great Dividing Range. This results in slow and steady ripening.

VINTAGE

The Yarra Valley experienced slightly above average rainfall for the 2015 winter. This replenished the soils of much needed moisture leading into the growing season. The dry mild conditions through spring lowered the potential for disease. This enabled the winegrowers to keep the vineyards in a clean healthy state. Very good yields and excellent quality appeared to be the theme from all vineyards this year.

VINIFICATION

Whole bunches were used in batches at varying percentages based on fruit structure and source. The overall blend incorporates 30% whole bunches. A three day cold soak was followed by fermentation in stainless steel open top fermenters with mainly indigenous yeast strains. Variations of hand plunging, pigeage and 'drain and return' were applied to the ferments, the frequency varying from parcel to parcel. Fermentation peaked at 32°C. The wine was then matured for nine months in French oak barriques and puncheons during which time malolactic fermentation was allowed to take place.

TASTING NOTES

Black pepper, cherries, tar and dried rose perfumes. On the palate, soft tannins run through flavours of cherry compote and mocha. Dry to finish with a touch of spice.

PRESS AND AWARDS

AWARDS

SILVER - Decanter World Wine Awards 2018



VINTAGE INFORMATION

Vintage	2016
Region	Victoria
Grape Varieties	100% Syrah/Shiraz
Winemaker	Geoff Alexander
Features	Sustainable, Vegan, Vegetarian
Closure	Screwcap
ABV	14%
Residual Sugar	2.8g/L
Acidity	5.6g/L
Wine pH	3.5
Bottle Sizes	75cl