

innocent bystander

Innocent Bystander, Yarra Valley Syrah 2013

PRODUCER

Innocent Bystander wines are a pure expressions of the region, reflecting the soil and varied topography of the cool climate Yarra Valley. Founded in 1997 by Phil Sexton, Innocent Bystander is a Yarra Valley based winery producing Pinot Noir and Chardonnay alongside Pinot Gris and cool climate Syrah. They are also now renowned for their fun and fizzy pink Moscato. Located in Healesville, the winery is an exercise in function over form, much like the strongly expressed views of its owners and winemaking team: "Make great wine for drinking and enjoying; not crowing over". Innocent Bystander wines are an expression of pure regional varietal wines which reflect the soil, climate and topography of the cool climate Yarra Valley.

VINEYARDS

Shiraz fruit was selected from the Tarraford, Sexton and Lone Star vineyards in the Central Yarra. Innocent Bystander's vineyard management is intensive, with tasks such as shoot thinning, crop thinning and harvesting all carefully carried out by hand. The vineyards are adapting to biodynamic practices with the express purpose of further distinguishing each site and improving grape and wine quality. 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 of grapes.

VINTAGE

A moderate year but with an accelerated final stage to ripening due to some relatively warm nights. Fruit flavours are very much in the primary zone. Small crops resulted in intense flavour and solid natural acidity for the 2013 vintage, which was largely completed before Easter.

VINIFICATION

After hand-picking, whole bunches were used in batches at varying percentages based on fruit structure and source. The overall blend incorporates 40% whole bunches. A three to seven day cold soak at 8°C was followed by fermentation with mainly indigenous yeast strains. Variations of hand plunging, pigeage and 'drain and return' by gravity were applied to the ferments, the regularity of which varied from parcel to parcel depending on the fruit structure. Fermentation peaked at 32° C. Maceration lasted three days. The wines was then matured in French oak, lightly fined with egg white but not filtered before bottling.

TASTING NOTES

Black pepper, orange zest and red summer berries come together on the nose. Dusty tannins and wild blackberries and raspberries lead to an earthy, spicy palate with a savoury long finish.



VINTAGE INFORMATION

Vintage	2013
Region	Victoria
Grape Varieties	100% Syrah/Shiraz
Winemaker	Steve Flamsteed & Tim Shand
Features	Sustainable, Vegetarian
Closure	Stelvin
ABV	14%
Wine pH	3.6
Bottle Sizes	75cl