



FREEMAN VINEYARDS

Freeman Vineyards is located in the Hilltops region of New South Wales. This family wine company was established in 1999 by viticulturist Dr Brian Freeman, previously professor of Wine Science at Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga.

The 200-hectare estate comprises several elevated vineyard blocks located within a radius of 10 kilometres on a 560-meter ridge. This high and cool location and the well-structured free-draining decomposed granite soils are ideally suited to viticulture.

Two varieties that have adapted well to this location are Rondinella and Corvina – the classic Amarone varieties that originate from the Veneto region of northern Italy. Brian Freeman secured just six cuttings of each to establish Australia's only planting of these unique grapes, which he crafts into an Amarone-inspired savoury red wine.

True to Italian tradition a portion of the grapes are dried – conveniently in a neighbour's solar-powered prune dehydrator – and added to the fresh grapes during fermentation. Subsequently, the wine is aged two years in selected old oak barrels to mature the wine rather than impart oak flavour. It is bottle aged for an additional two-plus years before release.

VITICULTURE & WINEMAKING

The 2016 vintage was our earliest harvest ever, starting in late January, a result of a low rainfall year and consistently warm conditions leading to a hot, persistently dry summer. In other words, it was a season that conjured full ripeness and powerful balanced flavours. These later ripening varieties were picked in April.

A selection of both varieties was dried slowly for up to 10 days, the desiccated grapes added to the remaining harvest for fermentation. The young wines characterised by very intense tannins were aged separately in old oak barrels for two years, prior to blending and bottling. Subsequently, the wine has been cellared at 14°C to allow the tannins to integrate and enrich the palate.

TASTING NOTES

In a generous glass this mid-weight **FREEMAN Secco 2016** displays garnet red hues and attractive enveloping aromas of spiced berries mingled with earthy cacao aromas and lingering umami notes leading to a mellow balanced palate. This mature deceptive wine is modelled on northern Italy's classic Ripasso-styles, opening as a lighter red then revealing its true form – beguiling flavours draped over a savoury tannin frame. With an elegant captivating charm it will continue to evolve for many years yet.