



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 2017 vintage season is acknowledged as an excellent year in the Hilltops creating intensely coloured and flavoured wines. A dry summer led into the cool, dry autumn providing ideal ripening conditions. Corvina and Rondinella grapes take time to reach maturity even in the Australian climate, an ideal long, slow evolution that is the key to their intensity and seductive richness. The grapes were harvested in late 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 Rondinella Corvina 2017** displays garnet red hues and attractive enveloping aromas of spiced berries, sage and lingering umami notes that lead to a mellow, persistent and balanced palate. This wine is inspired by northern Italy's classic ripasso styles opening as a deceptively lighter red that reveals beguiling flavours draped over a savoury tannin frame. With an elegant, captivating charm, the 2017 will continue to evolve for many years to come.