



## FREEMAN VINEYARDS

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

The 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 Corvina and Rondinella – 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 two different Amarone-inspired savoury red wines – the original **FREEMAN Secco** and **FREEMAN Robusta**.

This third riff on Amarone is made entirely from handpicked Corvina grapes that are all dried in a neighbour's prune dehydrator. It is a statuesque savoury red that is only released after at least four years' careful maturation. Two years in selected old oak barrels and a further two in bottle.

## VITICULTURE & WINEMAKING

The 2015 vintage season is acknowledged as an outstanding year in the Hilltops region creating intensely coloured and flavoured wines. A dry summer led into the cool, dry autumn providing ideal ripening conditions. Corvina takes time to reach maturity even in the Australian climate, an ideal long, slow evolution that is the key to the final wine's seductive richness. The grapes were hand-harvested in late April.

The grapes (100% Corvina) were partially dried for 10 days prior to a prolonged two-month fermentation assisted by the determined 'Prunevale Princess', the wild yeast that is part of the local terroir. She probably evolved as a result of a century of prune production, once the mainstay horticulture in Prunevale, and it has the unique capacity to create high alcohol wines up to nearly 20%. [Most wine yeast is only capable of fermenting to 14% - 16%]

Corvina is characterised by very intense natural grape tannins when youthful, which mellowed with two years ageing in old oak barrels, prior to blending, bottling and cellaring to allow the tannins to fully integrate and enrich the palate.

## TASTING NOTES

**FREEMAN Robusta 2015** packs a punch. It displays complex aromas ranging from ripe blackberries to dried cherries, star anise and panforte mingled with undertones of earthy mushroom, typically associated with classic Amarone wines. The fruit richness extends onto powerful and penetrating palate – savoury, complex and textural, mouth-warming with a mellow balancing tannin frame, ensuring this wine will continue to evolve for years to come. An unashamed blockbuster.