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## Geoff Merrill 'Henley' McLaren Vale Shiraz 2005

**Grape Varietal:** 100% Shiraz  
**Growing Region:** McLaren Vale, Australia  
**Owner / Winemaker:** Geoff Merrill



If you were ever looking for a true icon of the Australia wine industry - the Geoff Merrill 'Henley' Shiraz is not a myth, but a genuine benchmark wine which you can find. Crafted from strict selection of only the best vintages of McLaren Vale Shiraz. Named in honour of Geoff's Grandfather, who passed away at the ripe old age of 102. The *'best of the best'* - crafted from only 10 barrels of this vintage, set aside to become the 'Henley' Shiraz.

If you ask Geoff and Scott about 2005, you will see a reflective smile grow and pause across their face. Then in a calm, one could say controlled voice - *"overall we regard 2005 as a very good vintage"*. Don't be fooled by an Australian showing modesty and constraint. This wine is something to shout about.

Ideal growing conditions from the dormant winter season, through to harvest time, meant healthy vines with good canopies. The fruit achieved optimal ripeness, and brought the harvest forward by about two weeks being picked in early April.

After approximately 15 months in French oak Geoff and Scott do a series of tastings to first select the best parcels of Shiraz from the vintage, then they re-sample and taste each individual barrel from the selected batches to make the 'Henley' Shiraz and then their 'Reserve' Shiraz.

Geoff and Scott then go through a sensory evaluation of each barrel to determine which barrels will make the 'Henley' grade. Once the barrels are determined, the final blend is carefully made and placed into the very best French oak barrels for further maturation of around 34 months. I have had the pleasure of working through a few of these resting barrels last summer with Scott.

As you pour into an appropriate wine glass, you will be greeted by wonderful depth and intensity of colour for its age. The aroma is nothing but generous and inviting showcasing McLaren Vale Shiraz characters. Which means dark cherries and sweet plums which are complemented by toasty French oak and a myriad of tertiary aromas developing as the wine matures. The palate is full and engaging and yet showing controlled restraint and perfectly shuffling its fine layers perfectly and seamlessly onto your senses. The tannins which are also powerful but not raw come forward supporting and lifting the ripe dark fruit flavours giving a distinctive and elegant structure, balance and length to this exceptional wine. Truly a wine to be sipped and savoured as time in the glass reveals more layers and hidden qualities. *Treat yourself - this wine is definitely worth sharing.*

This 2005 Geoff Merrill 'Henley' Shiraz has 14.5% Alc. Decant for 20-30 minutes (*mainly as a mark of respect*) and serve in a generous shaped glass at 16-18°C.

### Cellaring Potential:

With respectful decanting, drinking perfectly well this season; and will continue to age well for another 8-10 years.

### Food Pairing Suggestions:

Perfect wine with lamb shanks in a wine jus, slow cooked aged prime meats, game pasta dishes, earthy vegetarian cuisine, plus aged hard cheeses - *enjoy.*

***The 'Henley' Shiraz showcasing power and elegance in perfect balance.***

