

# THE HERMIT CRAB

## Viognier Marsanne 2019

McLaren Vale, Viognier (71%) Marsanne (29%)



### The Name

Many of McLaren Vale's vineyards are on free-draining soils underlain with limestone, formed by the calcareous remains of the local marine fauna. One such creature was the Hermit Crab, a reclusive little crustacean that inhabits the cast-off shells of others. The Osborn family thought the name appropriate for this, McLaren Vale's first ever blend of Viognier and Marsanne. "Hermit" is also an abbreviation for the French appellation of Hermitage, where the Marsanne grape variety dominates.

### The Vintage

Winter was quite dry, with sporadic light showers that didn't penetrate the soil very deeply. This impacted budburst but was managed with some irrigation. During spring there was quite a strong wind event around the time of flowering, which upset some of the growth, especially in Shiraz. Summer was hot, with an extreme heat wave and a record high temperature of 46.6C, which burnt some varieties like Petit Verdot. Most other varieties managed to escape unscathed, which was surprising. Yields were down on most varieties. The quality, however, was excellent, exhibiting very varietal characteristics. Ferments had to be taken off a little earlier with higher sugar levels because of these strong tannins.

### The Winemaking

Small batches of grapes are crushed gently and transferred to stainless steel basket presses. Fermentation is long and moderately cool to retain fresh fruit characters. About 4% underwent wild fermentation for extra complexity. 14% of the Viognier is fermented in aged French Oak to add mouth feel and support the subtle Viognier tannins. The Marsanne component received similar treatment, but was not blended until the final stages of the winemaking process.

### The Characteristics

Golden yellow edging on pale yellow, The Hermit Crab Viognier Marsanne 2019 has an extremely expressive nose with orange peel, citrus, hints of ginger and an array of fresh fruit notes.

The palate is luscious and rich, with prominent lemon and lime citrus characters, lively granny smith apple brining great acidity, and a touch of sweetness. This vintage shows great intensity and leads to a wine with broad appeal. Chill and enjoy now.



Harvest dates	25 Feb–19 Mar	Alcohol	13.5%
Residual sugar	3.9 g/l	Titrateable acid	6.9
pH	3.18	Oak maturation	8 months
Chief Winemaker	Chester Osborn	Senior Winemaker	Jack Walton