

THE HERMIT CRAB

Viognier Marsanne 2020

McLaren Vale, Viognier (75%) Marsanne (25%)



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 where the Marsanne grape variety dominates.

The Vintage

Winter and Spring rains were quite good which meant vigour was high. October and November saw some cooler weather which made flowering and set spread out over a long period with an intense short heat wave in the middle of set reducing the crop significantly. A nice rain on the 1st of February set the vines up well and mild to cool, dry, weather prevailed. A few slightly warmer nights in the later part of ripening helped the last sugar push. Yields were down significantly, the lowest in memory, however, quality is exceptional. Some of the best wines seen for years. Great colour, fruit characters, flavours and length.

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

Pale straw in colour. A lovely perfumed orange and citrus blossom, green papaya, tropical pineapple and grapefruit notes. A slight whiff of almond kernel and hazelnut presents itself the more you swirl the wine in the glass, add a sneaky complexity. Some ginger flower spices thanks to the Viognier component. Refreshing style with great vibrancy, mouth filling generosity and lovely long finish.



Harvest dates	26 Feb - 25 Mar	Alcohol	13.5%
Residual sugar	3.8 g/l	Titrateable acid	6.2
pH	3.29	Oak maturation	8 months
Chief Winemaker	Chester Osborn	Senior Winemaker	Jack Walton