

THE LAUGHING MAGPIE

Shiraz Viognier 2017

McLaren Vale, Shiraz (94%) Viognier (6%)



The Name

The Kookaburra is a native Australian bird famous for its distinctive laughing call, Chester's young daughters named them "Laughing Magpies". The Magpie plumage is black with a stripe of white feathers, representing McLaren Vale's first ever blend combining the (black) Shiraz and its white partner, Viognier.

The Vintage

A healthy winter and plenty of spring rains set the vines up very well. Bud burst was on time, but very cool for the first part of spring. Shoots grew to 5 or 6 inches long and then stopped for a month. Flowering was quite late, by three weeks, which meant a late start to harvest, and long, slow ripening periods. The summer rains stopped in mid-January, so disease pressure was low. It was very dry from February to April, with only a few millimetres of rain. Days were mild with a lot of cool nights, the first few weeks of April was around two degrees hotter than usual, which help that last bits of fruit to ripen. Overall, a great vintage with minimal disease pressure and above average crop levels.

The Winemaking

Small batches of grapes are gently crushed and then transferred to open fermenters, where the Viognier and Shiraz are co-fermented. Foot treading is undertaken two thirds of the way through fermentation, the wine is basket pressed and transferred to old French oak to complete fermentation and mature. The barrel ferments are aged on lees, there is no racking until final blending and no fining or filtration.

The Characteristics

Quintessential McLaren Vale Shiraz, with the added alchemy of the co-fermented viognier skins this wine makes a statement. Bold, fragrant aromas and some peppery spice. The black Doris plum, mulberry and boysenberries are overlaid with a perfume of red fruit sweetness. All the berries! Rounded yet chalky tannins add great structure and mouth feel to this core d'Arenberg wine. Cellar me now for the good times ahead.



Harvest dates	6 Mar -10 Apr	Alcohol	14.0%
Residual sugar	1.4 g/l	Titrateable acid	6.4
pH	3.50	Oak maturation	10 months
Chief Winemaker	Chester Osborn	Senior Winemaker	Jack Walton