

THE LAUGHING MAGPIE

Shiraz Viognier 2018

McLaren Vale, Shiraz (95%) Viognier (5%)

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

Quite a wet winter with July, August and September being way above average in rainfall. October, November and December were a little below average and January, February and March were more or less bone dry. Temperatures were mild until late January, so vines seemed to be delayed and harvest appeared like it was again going to be late. However, a few hot days and nights brought the ripening forward with slight sacrifice of acidity. The above average temperatures of February and March and the dryness made everything ripen relatively quickly. Yields appeared on the lighter side, because the heat and dry conditions did reduce them significantly, however they were still quite respectable across all varieties.

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

A classic northern Rhone blend, Shiraz with a little touch of Viognier. Very perfumed, black and red berries. A vibrant concoction. the Shiraz brings black fruits, plums, black cherries, and the small parcel of co-fermented Viognier brings stone fruits like peach and a touch of apricot. This makes for a very savoury and harmonious bond between the two varieties. This is certainly a wine that will benefit from careful cellaring for many years to come.



Harvest dates	12 Feb - 12 Apr	Alcohol	14.5%
Residual sugar	1.5 g/l	Titrateable acid	7.4
pH	3.38	Oak maturation	10 months
Chief Winemaker	Chester Osborn	Senior Winemaker	Jack Walton