

THE LAUGHING MAGPIE



Shiraz Viognier 2011

McLaren Vale, Shiraz (90%) Viognier (10%)

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

There was ample winter and spring rain which provided good sub soil moisture and resulted in healthy canopies and good vigour. Summer conditions were very mild. Grapes ripened gracefully with only a few small rain episodes, enough to keep the vines fresh and vibrant. Rainfall was only a little over average for the first months of the year.

The Winemaking

Walking the vineyard rows and tasting grapes, Chester determines the ideal picking time for each individual vineyard.

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 a mixture of old French and American oak to complete fermentation and mature for up to 10 months.

The Characteristics

A dark, complex nose, highlighted with a twist of peppery spice and a subtle undertone of apricot and florals from the Viognier. The palate is similarly dominated by the dark and brooding Shiraz. Fennel, cured meat and beetroot like flavours combine initially but over time some of the more savoury and closed notes lift, revealing the fruit sweetness that lies beneath; plums, blackberry and dark cherry. The palate is rich and generous and the tannins have a certain silkiness to them.

An exotic, mysterious wine that, in youth, will benefit enormously from a liberal dose of air through decanting.



Harvest dates	7 Mar - 7 Apr	Alcohol	14.2%
Residual sugar	1.1 g/l	Titrateable acid	6.6
pH	3.52	Oak maturation	10 months
Chief Winemaker	Chester Osborn	Senior Winemaker	Jack Walton