



2006 d'Arenberg The Hermit Crab

100% McLaren Vale Viognier (70%) Marsanne (30%)

This wine comes about from the understanding that Grenache, Shiraz, and Mourvedre thrive in McLaren Vale soils, and therefore the Rhone Valley white partners Marsanne, Viognier and Roussanne should also perform well in the area.



The Name

The close proximity of the vineyards to the Gulf St. Vincent induces a beneficial cooling effect on the grapes. 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 to this day inhabits the cast-off shells of others.

The Osborn family thought the name appropriate for this, McLaren Vale's first ever Marsanne Viognier blend and the fact that "Hermit" is an abbreviation for the name of the region in France where the Marsanne grape variety dominates.

The Vintage

Vintage 2006 was one of the most condensed vintages experienced here at d'Arenberg. After a dry winter we experienced heavy rains in spring which provided adequate levels of soil moisture to support growth across most soil types. Flowering and veraison was consistent and occurred with almost no interruptions. Once veraison was complete, ripening occurred very quickly and consistently, even when the initial start to summer was mixed with varied temperatures. This mild, early summer slowed vegetative growth in the canopies which encouraged the vines to channel their stored energy into the fruit. As the conditions were cooler than normal this was ideal for whites, producing very fragrant fruit with good acidity and long length.

The Winemaking

The grapes, once crushed were settled in tank before being basket pressed which ensures the gentle extraction of these varieties delicate fruit characters. The Marsanne is fermentation in tank to retain its more herbaceous and nutty characters while the Viognier is fermented in both tank and barriques to enable a wide spectrum of tropical and stone fruits characters to develop.

The Characteristics

A very pale watery appearance with tints of green and yellow suggesting a fresh young wine with little influence of oak. The aromatics are tight and controlled but show an array of fresh fruit notes from runner beans and green tropical fruits to mango pip/ melon rind. As the wine opens up further a mixture of apple and citrus tones appears with notes of nectarine stone.

The palate is tighter than previous years; generous but still the focus is on ripe fruits, fresh and juicy, with tightness and control. Flavours range from quince, ginger and passionfruit notes with tropical flavours then a mix of almond notes with lemon, kaffir lime and nectarines. The mid palate shows good intensity and softness with a hint of lees character to add a little more complexity. The finish is quite broad and quite balanced considering the Viognier is quite dominate this year but the Marsanne comes through with a nutty mineral, olive stone, dried herb influence that cuts the Viognier back. Chill it down and enjoy.



Artist: Eric Lobbeke

Technical Information

Harvest Dates
13 March – 7 April

Oak Maturation
4% in 5 yr old and older
French Oak Barriques

Alcohol by Vol: 13.5%

Residual Sugar: 2.8g/L

Titrateable Acid: 6.3 g/L

pH: 3.39

Bottling:
From 23 January 2007

Chief Winemaker:
Chester d'Arenberg Osborn

Additional Information
Vegetarian/ Vegan friendly

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