



2009 d'Arenberg The Hermit Crab

McLaren Vale (79%), Adelaide Hills (21%)

Viognier (72%) Marsanne (28%)

The red varieties of Grenache, Shiraz and Mourvèdre have thrived in McLaren Vale for over a century. Believing the white equivalents would have the same affinity with the region's climate and soil, d'Arenberg planted Viognier, Marsanne and Roussanne in the mid 1990s.



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 of Hermitage where the Marsanne grape variety dominates.

The Vintage

Sufficient winter rains set up the vines well with good canopies, particularly in the Adelaide Hills.

December and most of January was very cool with only three days above 30°C until late in the month. Then there was a string of days above 40°C which caused some loss of yield.

However there was little negative affect on quality and the mild weather that followed. This allowed the vines to recover and finish ripening in low stress conditions.

The Winemaking

During vintage, Chief Winemaker, Chester Osborn, chooses when to pick the fruit by walking the vineyard rows and tasting grapes.

The grapes were passed through the gentle Demoisy rubber toothed crusher before being basket pressed.

Fermentation was long and moderately cool to retain fresh fruit characters. About 6% underwent wild fermentation for extra complexity. 22% of the Viognier was fermented in aged French and American Oak to add mouth feel and support the subtle Viognier tannins.

The Viognier and Marsanne components received similar treatment, but were not blended until the final stages of the winemaking process.

The Characteristics as Tasted in June 2010

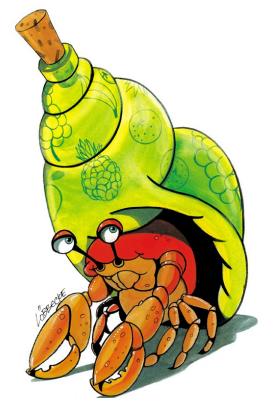
The nose is expressive and rich with orange peel, candied ginger and citrus blossom complimenting the varietal apricot character. The Marsanne shows itself in the peach and nutty complexity which is married nicely with an appealing straw like vegetal character.

The palate has a lovely balance of sweetness, palate weight and acidity. Lemon and lime characters are prominent on the luscious palate with a lively granny smith apple acidity providing great focus.

With some bottle age the stone fruit characters become more prominent with less emphasis on the citrus spectrum. This wine will drink well until 2013.

Technical Information

Harvest Dates: 24 February to 4 April	Glucose + Fructose: 5.6 g/L	Bottling Date: 12 February 2010
Oak Maturation: 22% in old French and American oak barriques	pH: 3.24	Chief Winemaker: Chester d'Arenberg Osborn
Alcohol: 13%	Titrateable Acid: 7.1 g/L	Senior Winemaker: Jack Walton



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