



HENSCHKE

Exceptional wines from outstanding vineyards

Cranes Eden Valley Chardonnay 2009

Grape Variety

100% chardonnay grown in the Henschke Cranes Vineyard at Eden Valley.

Technical Details

Harvest Date: 4-6 March | Alcohol: 12.5% | pH: 3.31 | Acidity: 5.7g/L

Maturation

14% aged on lees for 8 months in seasoned 225L French barriques. Remainder aged on lees in tank for complexity without any obvious oak character and blended prior to bottling.

Background

Eden Valley is located in the cooler South Mount Lofty Ranges, east of the Barossa Valley, with an altitude of 450-500m, rainfall of around 700mm and well-drained soils consisting of sandy loam over clay. The Cranes Chardonnay has taken its name from Charles Crane, who pioneered the region at the source of the North Para River near Eden Valley in 1866 and after whom the village of Craneford was named.

Vintage Description

The 2009 vintage was preceded by another cold, drought winter, with 399mm rainfall in Eden Valley for the year (a good year would see 500mm). It was the coldest August since 1951. Spring had a few heat spikes up into the mid to high 30s, some frost damage in low-lying areas, but very little rain during September and October. In fact, it was the driest September for 30 years and the driest October on record. Staggered flowering resulted from cool weather which reduced the fruit set. Some varieties were also pruned back hard to just a few spurs to allow them to survive with no water. Rain arrived in mid-December with around 65mm recorded, making it the wettest month of the whole year. The cool southerlies continued through into the new year, reminiscent of 2005. December didn't record any days over 32C. January tended warm to hot with a couple of heat spikes into the high 30s and low 40s. Late January brought a record six days over 40C, not seen since 1908, causing vine stress, exacerbated by drought conditions and empty dams, followed by another week of hot weather culminating in a 46C day on Black Saturday on February 7. Fortunately subsequent weather was mild and dry, with perfect ripening weather from March 1 moving into autumn mode. A strong change brought a general rain across the state with 10-20mm in early March, which helped with ripening and flavour development. The Indian summer in late March brought ripening forward with all the whites finished and in the winery by early April.

Wine Description

Pale straw in colour with lime hues. The sweet, fragrant nose exhibits pear, citrus and clove and is complex and tight with nougat and yeasty hints. The rich, full palate is soft and textural with great balance and intensity and a long crisp finish.

Cellaring Potential

Exceptional vintage,
5+ years.

