



# HENSCHKE

*Exceptional wines from outstanding vineyards*

## Croft Chardonnay 2014

### Grape Variety

100% chardonnay grapes grown on Stephen and Prue Henschke's Lenswood vineyard in the Adelaide Hills.

### Technical Details

Harvest Date: 31 March-4 April | Alcohol: 13.5% | pH: 3.30 | Acidity: 6.6g/L

### Maturation

Whole-bunch pressed, fermented in 28% new and 72% seasoned French barriques and aged for 10 months with fortnightly lees stirring for the first two months, followed by gentle stirring as required thereafter.

### Background

Fifth-generation winemaker Stephen Henschke and his wife Prue purchased the property in the Adelaide Hills in 1981. At 550m, the Lenswood vineyards offer not only magnificent views over the traditional vine country but also higher rainfall and humidity at the right time of the year, cooler temperatures to retain high natural acidity, and still enough sunshine to fully ripen the grapes. The chardonnay vineyard, which consists of seven clones, has taken its name from Frederick Croft, an orchardist who took up a neighbouring property in 1938.

### Vintage Description

The 2014 moon cycles put Easter quite late in the season and so the expectation of a late harvest prevailed until South Australia experienced its record number of heat days over 40C in January, culminating in the worst bushfire in Eden Valley in living memory. This ended in the wettest February in 44 years, with between 115 and 150mm of rain, all in 48 hours. Fortunately, Eden Valley and the Adelaide Hills were still in veraison, which allowed the quenching rain to rebalance the fruit, particularly in the older dry-grown vineyards. The yields appeared depressingly minuscule, due to a severe black frost in spring and cold windy weather during flowering in early December. Early picks of semillon and shiraz after the heat wave were in response to vine stress. The change to mild autumnal weather in late February after the rains allowed for a focus on other early vintage varieties, riesling in Eden Valley and pinot noir at Lenswood. Mild weather with cold dewy mornings and windy days prevailed. Disease pressure increased as March became colder and wetter, which seemed to change to a winter pattern after the equinox. It was indeed a late vintage and also resulted in one of the longest. The picking of Eden Valley cabernet and Lenswood merlot brought the season to a close at the beginning of May, where skilled vineyard teams played a critical role by hand selecting and picking the best quality fruit during the onset of rain and cold wintery weather. In summary, a challenging season with excellent quality but very low yields.

### Wine Description

Pale straw with lime hues. A complex, lifted nose showing fragrant white peach, pear skin and custard apple, with almond blossom florals and nuances of clove spice, lime peel and nougat. The palate is pure with flavours of white peach and pear skin balanced by linear minerality and a creamy texture around a tight framework; hints of anise and well-integrated French oak on a long, seamless finish.

Reviewed June 2015



### Cellaring Potential

Excellent vintage,  
10+ years (from vintage).

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