



HENSCHKE

Exceptional wines from outstanding vineyards

Croft Chardonnay 2008

Grape Variety

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

Technical Details

Harvest Date: 11-17 March | Alcohol: 13.5% | pH: 3.34 | Acidity: 6.8 g/L

Maturation

Aged in 40% new, 60% one-year-old French barriques and lees stirred for 6 months.

Background

Stephen and Prue Henschke pioneered Lenswood as a vineyard site in the Adelaide Hills in 1981. At 550m, the Lenswood vineyards offer not only beautiful 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 five selected clones, has taken its name from Frederick Croft, an orchardist who took up a neighbouring property in 1938.

Vintage Description

There was a below average winter rainfall lead-up to the 2008 vintage in the Adelaide Hills. Spring was mild with rainfall periods in October, early mid-November and mid-December. Fine flowering weather at the end of November allowed for good flowering and above average yields and the vines also showed vigorous growth. A dry and hotter than average early summer followed (November 2007 was the warmest for 25 years), which encouraged good growth and some restriction on berry and bunch size followed by hot summer temperatures around New Year. From mid-January through February mild temperatures and cold nights followed which ensured excellent development of fruit colour, flavour and balance of pH and acidity. It was the coolest February since 1978. Harvest began three weeks early at the end of February with the white varieties. However, in early March South Australia suffered an unprecedented record heat wave of 15 days over 35C. The unexpected continual heat seemed never-ending and resulted in some varieties suffering leaf drop, escalating sugar levels in the fruit and some shrivel. Although the heat had a marked effect in the Adelaide Hills it was not as bad as in the other regions in South Australia. The natural advantage afforded by the hills is the altitude (600m), which provides cooler growing conditions during summer and a greater day/night temperature differential for acid retention in the grapes and greater purity of fruit flavours. The cool change which followed brought welcome relief, however some fruit was adversely affected. Careful handpicking allowed selection of the best quality fruit producing some excellent to exceptional wines, in particular sauvignon blanc and riesling. It was an ideal season to practise organic viticulture and a season that demanded biodynamics to keep the vines healthy

Wine Description

Bright pale gold in colour. Lifted aromas of pear and white peach with underlying notes of baker's dough and cashew nut. A lush, complex, sweet fruit palate showing excellent structure and depth, a very textural mouthfeel, but focused, with a crisp acid backbone and great length.



Cellaring Potential

Great vintage,
10+ years.