

S O U M A H

of YARRA VALLEY

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MUSING ON VIOGNIER

Viognier (“vee-oh-nyay”) is a genetic cousin of Nebbiolo so it must have originated out of Italy at some point, probably in the first Millennia. The name is obscure but may have something to do with the town of Vienne, which was an ancient Roman outpost on the Rhône and is just north of the present day Condrieu area (its modern-day home). Viognier is the only permitted grape variety in the French Condrieu white wine.

Viognier was almost extinct in the mid-20th century until its popularity was revived, firstly by new world interest in the variety.

It produces the most luscious of white wine. It is the only variety that envelopes the tongue in a silky liquid texture. This combined with the innate peach bouquet and flavour combine to produce descriptions like ‘peaches and cream’.

It is this ‘peaches and cream’ that we are after at Soumah. We have planted three clones of Viognier, some planted at the rate of 3,700 vines per acre! But it is not only about the creamy lusciousness of the wine, it is also about a fine acid spine that will leave a fresh, clean and dry wine.



“It is quite an ugly vine in the vineyard, spindly and light green which is highlighted by being beside the dark green and strong Savarrio vines,” says Brett Butcher our Vigneron. “It throws small weak shoots and then wants to develop three large bunches per shoot. That is crazy! We can’t fill the wire in order to strengthen the remaining shoots. Even after this, we have to green harvest!”

At the end of the season, it is also trouble. We almost need to ‘camp out’ in the vineyard to time the pick perfectly. If we pick too early, we miss the ‘peaches and cream’ goal. If we pick too late, we will get an oily, clumsy wine. And as its ripening is fastest of anything we tend, there is only one day of the year when it is perfect to harvest. It has a very finicky nature — perhaps the ‘Goldilocks’ in our vineyard, temperament-wise — can’t be like this, can’t be like that, has to be just right!

And we endeavour to get it just right every year!

S O U M A H O F Y A R R A V A L L E Y

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ACCOLADES + REVIEWS | SINGLE VINEYARD VIOGNIER

ACCOLADES

[2018 Vintage]

Bronze Medal at 2019 Royal Melbourne Wine Awards
Silver Medal at 2019 ANZ Boutique Wine Show
Silver Medal at 2019 Yarra Valley Wine Show
Silver Medal at 2019 Perth Royal Wine Show
91 Points by James Halliday, Halliday Wine Comp 2020
Double Gold Medal at 2019 Melbourne Int'l Wine Show

[2017 Vintage]

Gold Medal at 2018 Japan Wine Competition
94 Points by James Halliday, Halliday Wine Comp 2019
Silver Medal at 2018 Royal Melbourne Wine Awards
Bronze Medal at 2018 Sydney Royal Wine Show

[2016 Vintage]

94 points by James Halliday, Halliday Wine Comp 2018
Bronze Medal at 2017 Yarra Valley Wine Show

[2015 Vintage]

Trophy & 94 Points, Best Other Dry White at 2016
International Cool Climate

REVIEWS

“Light straw-yellow hue with a spicy, nutty complexity of aromas, toasted almond from barrel fermentation complementing spicy fruit with hints of cinnamon and honey. There’s a buttery, butterscotch note too. The palate is intense and dry, vital and positive, with good penetration and persistence. Delicious. 93 Points.”

Huon Hooke, The Real Review, March 2020 [2019 Vintage]

“A mouthful of pleasure awaits as this effortlessly rolls through. Yellow flowers, expected apricots and lashings of yellow peach. Canned apricot nectar floods the mouth with a lick of furry peach skin. A faint nuttiness ticks away in the background with a dash of ginger spice to close. An absolute beauty!”

QWine, July 2019 [2018 Vintage]

“...Vibrantly lemony yellow with an intense nose and a complex aroma profile. Young on the dry side but the fruit is also there. The acidity is sharp fresh and crisp and will carry the fruit for some decent cellaring time to come. A savoury Viognier but as I implied with the fruit focus to carry on and make it enjoyable drinking. Think freshly cut green herbs, mineral slate, green apples, honeysuckle, pears and white peaches, drier than fruitier. A medium dry finish with a crispness. Try this with Chicken Tikka.”

Paul Ippolito, July 2019 [2018 Vintage]

“Aromas sit firmly in the stone fruit realm with apricot leading the way, and a touch of skins character providing a more savoury element. Displays the typically textured mouthfeel of the variety, the flavours ripe but not sweet, and a juicy, mouthwatering acidity running through the palate.”

Halliday Wine Companion 2019 [2017 Vintage]

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