

Yalumba

2003 The Virgilius Eden Valley Viognier
Australia CSPC 291214, \$45

Despite its many alternatives to Chardonnay, Australia has only recently adopted the Viognier grape thanks to Yalumba's pioneering development. Yalumba now produces five Viogniers, one of which is the Virgilius—the Aussie answer to Condrieu (the grape's home in France).

Louisa Rose, Yalumba's winemaker, nurtures a passion for Viognier, and the Virgilius she crafts from twenty-four-year-old vines (Australia's oldest commercial planting of the variety) is one of the finest expressions of the wine to be had anywhere on the planet. It was hand picked from a single, prized vineyard and fermented and aged in mature French oak barrels. The 2003 Virgilius is the first vintage bottled under a screw cap, which will eliminate the random effects of cork.

The trademark Viognier's lusciousness is clearly evident delivering deep flavours of apricot, pineapple, and peach. It is rich and fleshy with a refreshing acidity and notes of mineral on the powerful finish. This wine may be found at specialty wine stores such as Bin 905.



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Two Hands

2003 Lily's Garden McLaren Vale Shiraz
Australia CSPC 501041 \$70

Australian icon wines usually cost between \$100 and \$200 a bottle, but you need not spend quite so much to get your hands on knockout Aussie reds. To identify the wines that might become the next icons, look for new wineries.

One winery that reflects the rapidly changing landscape at the top of the Australian wine firmament is Two Hands. Started in 2000 by two young Adelaide businessmen, the winery has quickly blossomed with an impressive range of offerings. Two Hands sells six Shirazes that carry specific regional appellations at around \$70 a bottle.

By buying grapes from the best vineyard sites they can find in the best regions for Shiraz, Two Hands produces wines that consistently score in the nineties. Lily's Garden McLaren Vale Shiraz is a voluptuous wine with concentrated dark berry flavours and hints of chocolate. Supple, fine tannins flow through to a long and persistent finish. This wine can hold its own with cult favourites that cost two or three times as much. Look for it at The Wine Cellar at Vineyard South. —Peter Blattmann



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