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Exemplar: Commitment, skill and experience transform virtual top-end shiraz into reality

- Exemplar 2010 Heathcote Shiraz and Exemplar 2010 McLaren Vale Shiraz — \$390 for three of each in a six-pack.

Four years ago, Peter Mornement, a specialist Melbourne wine merchant, conceived the idea of a “virtual winery” dedicated to producing nothing but top-end Australian shiraz.

In pursuit of the dream he contracted leading winemakers in viticultural areas renowned for their shiraz. Peter financed the annual purchase of 10 tonnes of fruit and 30 new oak barrels for each of them, and gave them a free hand to make the very best they could.

The three winemakers involved so far are John Ellis (Heathcote), Walter Clappis (McLaren Vale) and Kym Tuesner (Barossa Valley).

“I’ve given these talented, highly experienced winemakers an opportunity to make the very best shiraz they can. They are given a choice of fruit and a choice of new oak; there are no commercial restraints in the production of our ultra-premium shiraz,” said Peter.

“We’ve paid \$3000 per tonne for Heathcote and McLaren Vale fruit and this year we paid \$4000 per tonne for Barossa fruit. John and Walter have selected American oak and Kym has selected a combination of American and French.”

Today, that “virtual winery” — trading as Palmarium (Latin for ‘outstanding’) and using the brand name Exemplar (Latin for ‘original’)— boasts very limited quantities of ultra-premium shiraz made by its three chosen winemakers.

The first two of Palmarium’s wines — Exemplar 2010 Heathcote Shiraz and Exemplar 2010 McLaren Vale Shiraz — have just been released in a six-pack featuring three of each:

- Exemplar 2010 Heathcote Shiraz. Made by John Ellis using fruit purchased from Joe Marton, who owns one of Heathcote's smallest vineyards. Matured in new American oak.
- Exemplar 2010 McLaren Vale Shiraz. Made by Walter Clappis using fruit from his own biodynamic McLaren Vale vineyard. Matured in new American oak.

The only way to buy Exemplar Shiraz is through www.palmarium.com.au.

The second Palmarium six-pack will be released in 2013 and will comprise two bottles of each of three wines: Exemplar 2011 Heathcote Shiraz, Exemplar 2011 McLaren Vale Shiraz and Exemplar 2011 Barossa Valley Shiraz.

For further information, please contact Peter Mornement on 0422 546 825 or visit www.palmarium.com.au. High-resolution colour images can be downloaded from WineMedia's website (www.winemedia.com.au).