



VILLA MARIA

NEW ZEALAND

VINTAGE SUMMARY 2014

AUCKLAND



GISBORNE



MARLBOROUGH



HAWKES BAY



2014 VINTAGE

AUCKLAND

Chardonnay, Gewürztraminer, Pinot Noir, Verdelho

The Auckland vineyard had an outstanding season. Swift flowering meant great bunch set for the Chardonnay, Verdelho and Gewurztraminer. Early season shoot thinning followed by fruit thinning close to veraison was needed to bring the Chardonnay down to target cropping levels. The Verdelho and Gewurtztraminer vines carried naturally balanced yields.

Auckland kick started the vintage for the company on the 14th February with the Pinot Noir sparkling wine base. With superb dry weather for the majority of the later season, fruit condition was possibly the best ever. Gewürztraminer, a highlight with the ripest and healthiest looking fruit taken from the vineyard yet - with excellent Verdelho and Chardonnay too. Final pick was 14th March, making the earliest season on record.



GISBORNE

Arneis, Chardonnay, Gewürztraminer, Merlot, Muscat, Pinot Gris, Viognier

Despite some challenges Gisborne experienced a fantastic follow up to the 2013 vintage with Growing Degree Days the highest it has been for the last 5 years.

The cold wet weather at the start of the season meant the fruit set was poor in some varieties. Some Gewurztraminer blocks and Chardonnay were particularly affected with isolated hail storms. Conditions leading up to harvest were dry with the majority of fruit harvested slightly earlier and in excellent condition. Yields were down 15% across the region resulting in wonderful flavoured fruit. Highlights include no botrytis, our first Albarino grapes, excellent Pinot Gris, Gewürztraminer, Viognier and some outstanding Chardonnay.



MARLBOROUGH

Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay, Riesling, Pinot Gris, Pinot Noir

Marlborough experienced one of the warmest starts on record this season. Few frosts through spring with warmer soil conditions saw a great start for all varieties with a good bud burst with high fruitfulness.

Regular rain kept the canopies healthy through to January. There was some rainfall through the Pinot Noir and Chardonnay flowering, meaning some smaller potential bunch weights.

Sauvignon Blanc, Pinot Gris and Riesling all had good flowering and bunch weights. Pinot Noir yields were higher than average, a very strong performer this year. Additional thinning was required to bring the yields back into balance.

The majority of Pinot Noir was picked in pristine condition before any rain. Chardonnay, Pinot Gris and Riesling were also picked in great condition with superb flavour intensity.

Sauvignon Blanc was harvested across a wide picking window, starting on the 13th of March and finishing on the 20th of April - tonnages above average across the vineyards.

The intense ripe flavours shined through, with quality looking fantastic for Sauvignon Blanc.



HAWKES BAY

Pinot Gris, Chardonnay, Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah, Malbec, Merlot

Another great summer in Hawkes Bay meant bountiful produce. The season started with a mild spring with a lack of frosty nights, an excellent start to the season with ideal green leaf canopies.

On the back of last year's good season, vines carried more bunches and the spring saw these set well. This year further thinning was required to bring the yields back into balance. The warm dry weather meant an early season and fruit condition remained clean and botrytis free. The threat of Cyclone Lusi before Easter led to a record harvest week for the company, with the majority of the regions white grape varieties picked.

Ideal conditions leading up to this meant the fruit was in superb condition - the cellars quickly filled with exciting parcels of Chardonnay, Viognier, Pinot Gris and Organic Gewürztraminer. Great weather allowed the red varieties to ripen with the intense flavours we look for. Merlot yielded well and Malbec was a late starter with fantastic flavours as the fruit ripened. Syrah was harvested behind Merlot and Malbec and looks to be a standout vintage. For Cabernet Sauvignon the warm season and balanced yields worked in our favour.

