

2014

Vintage Report



Hawkes Bay

A mild and unusually dry spring led to a very early budburst, but temperatures stayed above zero negating any loss to frost. October and November were also unseasonably warm resulting in a successful and very early flowering. Things were set up well for a promising harvest. Regular rainfall over December and January coupled with high temperatures meant this was always going to be an early season and so it was.

Harvest began as always with Verdelho from our Gimblett Gravels vineyard, unusually though on the last day of February. We were seemingly 10 days ahead of our long term average. Chardonnay followed on the 4th March and although temperatures had cooled through early March, harvest continued under clear skies with grapes in excellent condition.

A forecasted rain incident on the 6th of April signaled the end of the season so a last frenzied harvest allowed us to bring in the last blocks of Cabernet Sauvignon and The Terraces on the 4th April.

This has been an excellent Hawkes Bay harvest, and an amazing follow up to the 2013 "vintage of the century". The records will show these to be the hottest vintages on record with heat summation figures well above historical averages. I'm sure for many years to come wine enthusiasts will be debating which is the better of the two harvests. Much like the Bordeaux harvests of 2009 and 2010.

Highlights seem to be reds across the board, not only from the Gimblett Gravels but also our Terraces Vineyard, and special mention should be made of Syrah. The wines have excellent colour and richness, soft and forward. I'm sure they will drink well as young wines as well as offering excellent cellaring potential. Both the Chardonnay and Verdelho were very successful in highlighting the elegance we are now seeking for these two varieties.

Marlborough

Higher than average yields and late season rain posed problems for a lot of Marlborough vineyards, but intensive viticultural management enabled us to harvest early and with moderate crops. Flavours seem to be ripe with a mix of passionfruit and pineapple from the Wairau vineyards and the classic herbaceous notes derived from the cooler sites in the Awatere. Pinot Noir seems mid weight but very aromatic and pretty. something special. Would it be too much to ask for another in 2016?

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