

VINTAGE REPORT



HARVEST 2017

In the growing season leading up to vintage 2017, rainfall was above average and temperatures were more or less in line with the long term averages. Frosty conditions during August and then wet conditions during September delayed budburst to a week later than normal. Thankfully, the frosts that occurred in late August did not cause any damage as the vines were still in dormancy period. Conditions for the start of spring were a little unusual as wet and windy conditions prevailed for most of September and then a flood event at the end of the month resulted in some soil erosion damage to blocks nearest to the Wakefield river banks. Luckily the flood event was followed by warm and windy weather which helped dry out the soil and reduced the threat of mildew diseases. Cool and wet conditions persisted from October through to December which prolonged budburst and delayed flowering. A significant frost event occurred in the last week of October but thankfully the measures deployed – helicopters, sprinklers and cold air drains – were effective in reducing the levels of damage although some fruit was still lost unfortunately. Due to the conditions, veraison was delayed by around 3 weeks but thankfully the weather for the next six weeks was dry and warm, resulting in higher yields reaching maturity without quality concerns. Some rainfall on the 20th of April slowed down the finish to the harvest with the last grapes picked on the estate at the start of May 2017.

From a varietal perspective, the first grapes to be picked were Pinot Gris on the 1st of March, quickly followed by Pinot Noir for our sparkling base. The following week the vast majority of Riesling and Chardonnay was harvested with the remaining white varieties all picked by the 6th of April. Harvesting of the red varieties began with our Tempranillo on the 8th of March, and this was followed by Merlot around mid-March and then Shiraz and Cabernet Sauvignon in the last week of March. The Carmenere was again the last block to be harvested for vintage 2017 on the 1st of May.

WEATHER DATA FOR SEASON 2016 / 2017

	May-16	Jun-16	Jul-16	Aug-16	Sep-16	Oct-16	Nov-16	Dec-16	Jan-17	Feb-17	Mar-17	Apr-17
Monthly Rainfall (mm)	58.2	73.6	94.4	47.8	142.6	47.6	23.6	69.8	51.8	36.4	6.8	35.2
YTD Rainfall (mm)	58.2	131.8	226.2	274.0	416.6	464.2	487.8	557.6	609.4	645.8	652.6	687.8
Av. Daily Max (°C)	18.3	13.4	12.7	15.1	14.9	18.9	23.8	27.7	30.3	28.0	29.7	21.8
Max Temp (°C)	26.5	18.8	21.4	22.1	21.9	28.3	35.3	40.5	38.8	41.0	38.1	30.3
Lowest Maximum (°C)	13.8	10.0	7.6	10.6	9.8	11.8	14.0	16.8	21.9	18.3	17.3	13.3
Days over 35°C	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	4	7	5	4	0
Av Daily Min (°C)	9.0	6.2	5.4	4.5	5.5	6.8	8.0	12.0	14.6	13.2	12.8	9.5
Min Temp (°C)	4.0	0.0	-1.0	0.0	1.6	0.4	2.1	4.5	7.8	7.1	2.1	3.1
Highest Minimum (°C)	13.1	11.1	11.6	11.1	12.8	17.6	16.8	20.3	23.6	22.6	18.6	17.6
Days below 0°C	0	1	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

VINTAGE 2017

With the growing season characterised by higher than average rainfall this vintage, Mother Nature has blessed us with good, healthy yields. The fruit into the cellars was of a very high standard and the resultant wines are exhibiting wonderful colours and lifted varietal aromas. The palate structure of the wines from this vintage lean more toward delicacy in comparison with those from a warmer vintage the prior year - being fuller and more robust. This bodes well for those wines from 2017 that are destined for long term cellaring. This vintage, the winemaking team were excited to use new grape bins specifically developed for harvesting the grapes that go into our Rosé wines. They are designed to separate juice from skins in the field during harvest and transport and have contributed to our Rosé styles being very delicate in nature and pale in colour this year. The use of these new bins of course also extends to those styles of white wines crafted from dark or even red grapes – like Pinot Gris and Pinot Noir in Sparkling wine. Another new addition this vintage was the installation of a brand new destemmer in the cellars. This piece of equipment is designed to ensure less fruit maceration and therefore less aggressive phenolic or tannin lines in the juice. Another practical example of our winemaking philosophy of 'respect the fruit'. With the post vintage assessments of both the white and red wines from 2017 now completed, the winemakers have reported exciting results across the portfolio of wines. Of the whites, the Riesling in particular looks outstanding with the team declaring these wines some of the best they have seen in the last decade – a big call! The other white varieties have benefited from the seasonal conditions; displaying lifted aromatic profiles and delicate structure. Of the reds, the winemakers have reported that there are some amazing parcels of both Cabernet and Shiraz from this vintage.

Mitchell Taylor