

GREYWACKE

VINTAGE 2016

The season kicked off in timely fashion and settled conditions during December allowed a generous crop to set. Extremely low rainfall during the early summer put pressure on water supplies, but rain in early January broke the drought and vineyards flourished as temperatures started to climb above average in the New Year. Considerable thinning was carried out across all varieties to establish ideal cropping levels.

Harvest started in mid-March with the hillside pinot noir achieving perfect ripeness at slightly lower sugars than previous years. In late March northerly airstreams brought a couple of dumps of rain, which put pressure on the harvest and led to remedial canopy and crop management being needed in many vineyards. Temperatures remained well above average and Marlborough's classic Indian summer made a welcome appearance allowing all vineyards to achieve full ripeness. The last sauvignon blanc was hand-picked on April 18 under sunny skies.

Challenging at times and the warmest season since 1998 weighing in at 1387 GDD.



THE LAST BLOCK OF SAUVIGNON BLANC, SETTLEMENT VINEYARD, OMAKA VALLEY

GREYWACKE

VINTAGE 2015

The season got off to a nervous start with frost causing a few minor casualties – nothing too serious. Spring and early summer were generally warm with the exception of early December when cold snaps experienced during flowering caused widespread but variable crop losses. By mid-summer Marlborough had really turned it on and temperatures in the low 30's had the locals flocking to cool off in the river. The hot dry conditions even saw some irrigation systems put to the test. Harvest started a little early with the first blocks achieving ripeness at slightly lower sugars than normal, but as the vintage progressed temperatures started to fall, which helped maintain acid levels and made for a relatively drawn-out, extremely orderly harvest.

A warm, dry, low-yielding season with plenty of mid-summer heat, but cooler at either end and one that finished up convincingly warmer than the long-term average at 1357 GGD.



NETTED PINOT NOIR VINES, SETTLEMENT VINEYARD, OMAKA VALLEY

GREYWACKE

VINTAGE 2014

A warm, dry spring and near perfect conditions during flowering resulted in one of the earliest, and potentially largest harvests on record. Further warm conditions throughout the growing season and strict crop-thinning regimes ensured the eventual moderate crops ripened evenly, well ahead of an average season. Harvest commenced on 4 March more than two weeks ahead of the long-term average. In mid-March cyclone Lusi made a brief appearance, fortunately bringing only an inch of rain and a stiff breeze; harvest resumed a couple of days later. The following two weeks reverted to classic Marlborough summer with high sunshine hours, relatively warm temperatures and zero rainfall. During the second week of April intermittent rainfall developed and the last of the Sauvignon Blanc was harvested between showers – just before tropical cyclone Ita arrived, bringing wide-spread rain across the region. She reminded us that we're making wine on a remote South Pacific island where weather can be unpredictable!

An early harvest producing superb wines but punctuated by cyclonic conditions that eventually closed down the harvest during Easter – warmer than average at 1340 GDD.



SAUVIGNON BLANC VINES AT SETTLEMENT VINEYARD, OMAKA VALLEY

GREYWACKE

VINTAGE 2013

Budburst was even and shoot growth got off to a good start, but November was exceptionally dry and cool. Things started to warm up in December providing excellent conditions for flowering with an average-sized crop set. As the summer got into full swing Marlborough recorded the warmest Christmas Day in 66 years and second highest number of February sunshine hours since record-keeping began. Notably however, mean daily temperatures during mid-summer were below the long-term average, providing an idyllic sunny and dry growing environment without excessive heat. Intermittent rainfall warded off the severe drought conditions experienced by much of the country. The most compressed harvest on record and one that tested the production facilities, but delivered top quality across all varieties.

In all a delightful summer with lots of sunny days – with heat summation marginally above the long-term average at 1302 GDD.



25-YEAR-OLD SAUVIGNON BLANC VINES IN THE LOWER BRANCOTT VALLEY

GREYWACKE

VINTAGE 2012

The season commenced with warm temperatures and an even budburst, but as spring progressed cool, overcast days became the norm and by mid-summer February posted the lowest sunshine hours since records began 84 years prior. Conditions over flowering were cold and inclement resulting in a very poor fruit set. This turned out to be for the best as a normal sized crop would never have ripened in what became the second coldest season since grapes were planted in Marlborough. The sunshine did eventually arrive as harvest commenced and the district experienced an extraordinarily long, cool and completely rain-free Indian summer that allowed the fruit to achieve sufficient ripeness with vibrant aromatics and firm acidity.

A very cool, low-yielding harvest – weighing in at just 1162 GDD.



ORGANIC MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AT YARRUM VINEYARD, BEN MORVEN VALLEY

GREYWACKE

VINTAGE 2011

An even budburst was followed by idyllic growing conditions and the flowering period culminated in a very good fruit set. Consistently fine weather and warm temperatures with timely, intermittent rains ensured excellent vine condition throughout the season and necessitated extensive crop thinning operations and a meticulous canopy management regime. The ripening period experienced a few rain events but dry windy conditions followed alleviating disease pressure. Harvest commenced under dry, settled conditions and night temperatures were slightly warmer than usual, resulting in ripeness being achieved at slightly lower sugar levels than normal. Intermittent showers fell during the final stages of vintage causing a few more grey hairs but in the end excellent flavour intensity and physiological ripeness was reached across all varieties.

An excellent Marlborough vintage – a little warmer than average at 1316 GGD.



HARVESTING SAUVIGNON BLANC AT YARRUM VINEYARD, BEN MORVEN VALLEY

GREYWACKE

VINTAGE 2010

A very cool spring delayed budburst and led to slow and irregular shoot growth. Flowering conditions were generally good although bunch numbers were low as was berry size; an average sized crop was set. By mid-summer the season was running two weeks behind normal, but extremely dry and relatively warm weather in the latter part of the growing season regained a lot of ground and harvest commenced a week before it did in 2009. Almost perfect weather through March and April resulted in an outstanding and orderly harvest – warm sunny days and cool nights led to slow but steady fruit ripening resulting in wines of great concentration and bright acidity.

A superb harvest across all varieties and an outstanding Marlborough vintage – very slightly above long-term average at 1300 GGD.



HARVESTING MCLEAN VINEYARD, OMAKA VALLEY

GREYWACKE

VINTAGE 2009

Spring growing conditions were very favourable following a wet winter and flowering was generally ideal, leading to high potential yields and vigorous vine growth, requiring control by diligent vineyard management. Mid-summer saw idyllic warm, sunny and dry weather prevail, but the lead-up to harvest was marred by unseasonably wet conditions in February putting botrytis pressure on earlier ripening sites, especially Pinot Noir and Chardonnay. Further canopy management was necessary to alleviate disease pressure before classic Marlborough autumnal conditions prevailed as harvest progressed. Excellent ripeness and idyllic balance was achieved across all varieties with superb, cool and sunny weather, continuing until the end of April.

A great vintage with a classic Marlborough autumn – heat summation almost identical to the long-term average at 1282 GGD.



GREYWACKE LADEN SOILS AT SIMMERLAND VINEYARD, RAPAURA, WAIRAU VALLEY