

GREYWACKE

VINTAGE 2024

A relatively dry winter was followed by unsettled spring conditions, including isolated frosts which had the team on their toes monitoring temperatures and directing frost fighting efforts. Minimal damage was sustained, but the intermittent cold nights continued well into spring, disrupting flowering and causing low berry numbers and millerandage (uneven berry size) in some varieties.

As summer progressed, El Niño settled into its signature warm, dry conditions and Marlborough recorded a record high of 34.9 C in early February. Extremely low rainfall was recorded throughout the summer, to the point of a drought being declared in mid-March. Bunch numbers were low across the region from the get-go and the hot, dry summer condensed berry size, so reduced yields were inevitable – but on the flipside the loose bunches minimised disease risk and resulted in immaculately clean, ripe fruit.

Marlborough was strutting its classic golden-brown landscape as harvest commenced with hillside pinot noir on the last day of February. The pace ramped up quickly and hand-picked chardonnay was off the vine and into barrel at lightning speed. Sauvignon blanc ripeness levels were excellent across all sites, cooler nights in February stretched out the ripening and led to surprisingly crisp acids given the generous brix levels. The team cooled their heels over Easter and then worked around the clock to cross the finish line at the end of the first week of April.

A superb, near-perfect harvest of pristine fruit with generous depth of flavour across all varieties. Growing degree days tallied 1348, slightly warmer than the long-term average.



SAUVIGNON BLANC AND THE RICHMOND RANGES – CLOUSTON VINEYARD, WAIRAU PLAINS

GREYWACKE

VINTAGE 2023

The winter of 2022 was notably wet, with 220mm of rain in July breaking all records, filling aquifers and providing an excellent resource for the season ahead. Spring conditions were nerve-racking, with warm sunny days, very cold nights and several frosts, including a polar blast in early October. The vineyard team fought the good fight and remarkably all source vineyards emerged unscathed, subsequently an excellent flowering period resulted in healthy crop levels.

Early summer was warm but became changeable with intermittent wet spells. Obliging, the rain dried up by late February and a very settled autumn ensued, providing all varieties with an extended ripening season. With pandemic restrictions lifted, hand-picking crews back on deck and pristine picking conditions, 2023 felt like a breeze compared to the previous two harvests.

As usual, pinot noir was the first variety to arrive at the winery, Southern Valleys fruit being hand-harvested between 8 to 26 March, with impressive concentration of flavour. Chardonnay was next and picked in immaculate condition over 11 days from 20 March. The sauvignon blanc harvest was completed in the typical two-week timeframe but concluded ten days later than usual – a significant difference in the context of fruit ripening and flavour development. The single riesling vineyard and two parcels of pinot gris were harvested mid-April and the first botrytis fruit since 2018 was the final pick of the season on 15 May.

Sauvignon blanc was a stand-out but harvest 2023 delivered excellent quality across all varieties. Growing degree days tallied 1385, slightly warmer than the long-term average.



HILLSIDE PINOT NOIR VINES – GREYWACKE FARM VINEYARD, OMAKA VALLEY

GREYWACKE

VINTAGE 2022

The growing season commenced with a warm, wet spring and flowering was highly successful across all varieties, setting the vines up for healthy crop levels – a pleasing result after the tiny 2021 harvest. December and January continued warm and excellent vineyard growth was experienced across the region when ex-tropical cyclone Dovi dropped 160 mm of rain over the first three weekends of February. Fortunately this coincided with cooler temperatures and southerly breezes, minimising disease pressure, but some of the early ripening hillside pinot noir vineyards did sustain some losses due to an untimely onset of berry shrivel.

Careful hand-harvesting of pinot noir kicked off on March 11 and lasted two weeks, with the final parcel from Greywacke Farm being a standout in terms of fruit condition and flavour concentration. Chardonnay, riesling and pinot gris were all hand-harvested during late March with excellent ripeness levels, especially pinot gris which averaged 24 Brix. The sauvignon blanc harvest was unusually compact, hurried along by further minor rain events and successfully completed with the teams working relentlessly 24/7 to bring everything safely into the winery.

The third New Zealand vintage under pandemic restrictions and the most challenging, with Covid being widespread in the community, heavily impacting labour availability. However, Greywacke's efficient harvesting, fruit handling and sorting table processes were integral to the resulting quality and we are delighted with how all the young wines are looking.

Growing degree days tallied 1400, slightly warmer than the long-term average of 1318.



THE LAST DAY OF HARVEST 2022 – SETTLEMENT VINEYARD, OMAKA VALLEY

GREYWACKE

VINTAGE 2021

The Marlborough winter of 2020 was abnormally dry and warm, leading to an early spring and a budburst that was slightly ahead of normal. Spring brought with it a handful of frosts which, coinciding with the early budburst, led to reduced crops in some sites. Cool, wet weather during flowering negatively affected fruit set across the region and hot, dry conditions during the summer months further compounded the already reduced yields.

The warm summer and moderate crops led to an early harvest, with the first pinot noir block harvested on March 2nd in the Omaka Valley. Weather during March and April was near-perfect, allowing the fruit to achieve optimal ripeness without disease pressure and allowing a relatively leisurely harvesting schedule. Sadly, the tonnages that arrived at the winery were surprisingly modest, under-delivering on even the most conservative crop estimates.

The wines show great promise, particularly sauvignon blanc which shows intense flavours and great concentration. However, as with most producers in Marlborough, the very small harvest caused considerable frustration, something which will be felt for some time in the markets.

A small harvest producing vibrant flavours from a season that was slightly warmer than average, totaling 1360 GDD.



HAND-HARVESTING GREYWACKE RIESLING – THE LAST DAY OF HARVEST 2021

GREYWACKE

VINTAGE 2020

The season got off to a relatively nervous start with frost incidences in early October claiming some early vineyard sites including one of our chardonnay blocks in Rapaura. The rest of spring however was fairly typical and abundant soil moisture levels provided for good vineyard growth. Weather during flowering was settled and fruit set was very good. Late December saw a significant dump of rain, but this was followed by four months that only yielded 43mm making it the driest period in nearly eighty years.

In March, following the extremely dry and sunny summer, the weather during the ripening period cooled down somewhat, extending the growing season and producing near perfect conditions to get things ripe whilst retaining amazing fruit intensity and excellent acidity levels. Harvest started on March 15 with hillside pinot noir and on March 25 New Zealand moved to Level 4 lockdown as a response to the global pandemic. Fortunately wine production was deemed an essential service so the Greywacke production team were able to work as a big family isolation bubble on the property in the Omaka Valley, whilst a separate team managed the pinot noir intake down the road. Despite the very uncertain beginnings the entire harvest functioned efficiently, although somewhat un-orthodoxically.

A slightly warmer than average season, totalling 1350 GDD, that delivered superb quality across all varieties despite the peculiar working conditions.



TIPPING HAND-HARVESTED MENDOZA CHARDONNAY INTO THE PRESS

GREYWACKE

VINTAGE 2019

A relatively wet and mild spring ensured soil moisture levels were well topped up and the growing season raced off to a frost-free start. Late spring was ideal, with intermittent rain creating perfect growing conditions, but cool periods during December resulted in variable fruit set. Sauvignon Blanc set relatively small and open bunches in most vineyard sites, leading to modest yields with no need for crop thinning.

The new year brought sunny, settled weather and the district received no significant rainfall for the first two months. In typical Marlborough fashion, the hills to the south became parched and the very dry conditions necessitated careful management of water resources. The drought was partially quenched by a brief period of rain in early March just after harvest had commenced, evoking considerable anxiety, but thankfully being followed by more settled weather.

The harvest ran smoothly with all varieties reaching optimum ripeness, albeit slightly lower yields than expected. In all, an excellent, very dry season that has provided superb quality and the young wines show great concentration and promise.

A warmer than average season, totalling 1460 GDD



HILLSIDE PINOT NOIR AT SETTLEMENT VINEYARD, OMAKA VALLEY

GREYWACKE

VINTAGE 2018

Marlborough experienced a very wet and mild spring with absolutely no frost events in any of our vineyards. Summer temperatures stepped up a notch with December being the second warmest on record. As the province basked in warm settled weather, January topped the charts around the country with the warmest temperatures since records began.

As February approached it was looking like an early harvest. Superb flowering conditions elevated expectations towards a sizeable crop necessitating thinning in almost all of our vineyards. However, two ex-Tropical Cyclones, Fehi and Gita, made unwelcome appearances on the 1st and 20th of the month respectively, bringing considerable rainfall and resulting in February setting yet another benchmark; the wettest on record.

Harvest started mid-March with pinot noir being handpicked at good physiological ripeness but needing careful hand-sorting to eliminate botrytis. All the chardonnay and pinot noir were tucked away safely in the winery when another wet front came through at the end of the month bringing a considerable dump of rain. The picking pace ramped up, but despite the rain most of the fruit was able to hang on the vine to achieve very good ripeness levels. Vintage 2018 concluded at the end of April with the harvest of superb botrytis affected pinot gris at 34 Brix.

It was a year of extremes and considerably warmer than average totalling 1510 GDD



PICKING HILLSIDE PINOT NOIR AT GREYWACKE FARM VINEYARD, OMAKA VALLEY

GREYWACKE

VINTAGE 2017

A mild, frost-free spring and warm conditions through to early summer provided ideal growing conditions. November will be remembered more for the magnitude 7.8 earthquake that shook the upper South Island than the unseasonably high rainfall in Marlborough. Early December was cool leading to poor fruit set in chardonnay and pinot noir, but good conditions resumed for most of the sauvignon blanc flowering and an average sized crop was set.

December-January was very dry, cooler than normal and often very windy. Vintage commenced slightly later than normal with hillside pinot noir starting on March 23 and chardonnay soon after, small crops and fine conditions led to superb fruit in tip top condition. On April 4 the first of two cyclonic fronts passed through Marlborough bringing unseasonal rain and leading to an all-hands-on-deck flurry of rapid harvesting and all the sauvignon blanc was picked by the middle of the month.

The combination of prime sites, low-cropping and efficient night harvesting saved the day and despite the climatic conditions the wines of 2017 are displaying good ripeness and structure – we are thrilled with the results from the shortest and most challenging harvest at Greywacke to date – warmer than average totalling 1330 GDD.



HILLSIDE PINOT NOIR VINES AT GREYWACKE FARM VINEYARD, OMAKA VALLEY

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 GDD.



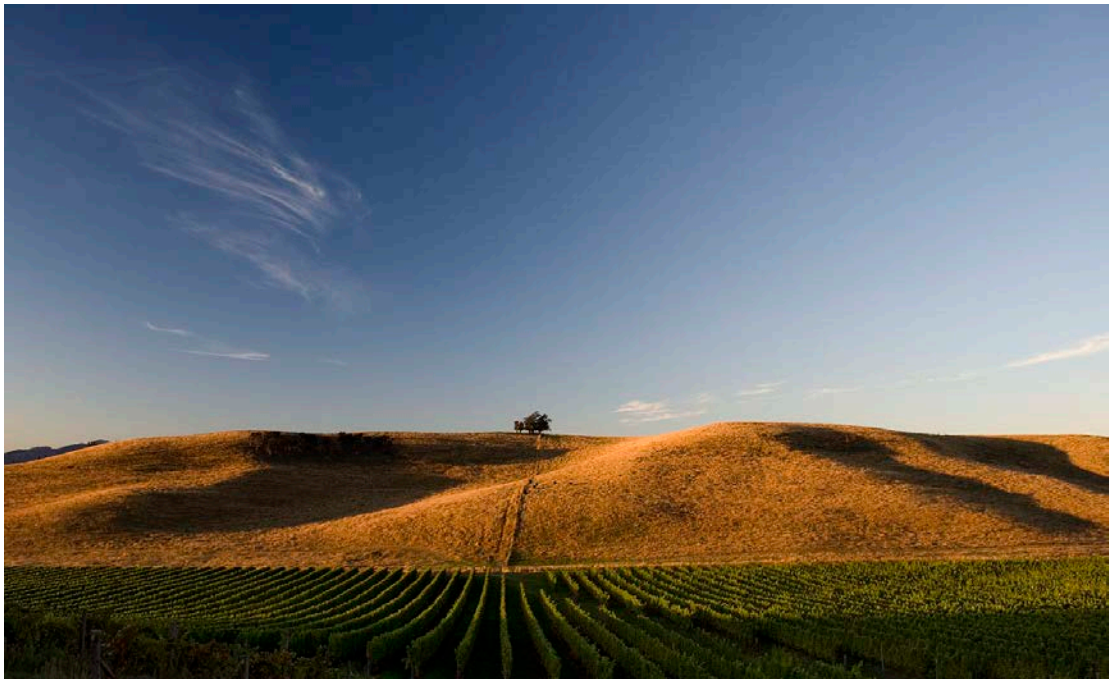
NETTED PINOT NOIR VINES, SETTLEMENT VINEYARD, OMAKA VALLEY

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 GDD.



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 GDD.



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 GDD.



GREYWACKE LADEN SOILS AT SIMMERLAND VINEYARD, RAPAURA, WAIRAU VALLEY