

Vintage Notes

McLaren Vale

2012

The 2012 vintage was one of the shortest vintages McLaren Vale has experienced with all fruit being processed by the end of March.

The main factors for this were light crops and ideal ripening conditions through February, with warm days but cool nights resulting in grapes maturing 2 weeks earlier than normal. March received double the average rainfall but dry weather with warm winds and low humidity after the rainfalls helped with avoiding disease problems in the vineyard. In the end crops were 15-30% down but of excellent quality. Reds showed beautiful colours and flavour while the whites were not affected by disease or sunburn.

2013

The 2013 vintage was another early vintage with all grapes being harvested by the end of March. There was barely any rain from December onwards for 3 months in a row. The 2013 growing season was also the warmest growing season on records. Together this explains the fast ripening of the grapes and yields that were 10-30% down on the average. The advantage of these warm and dry conditions was no disease pressure in the vineyards. In the end crop were of very good quality with the reds having excellent colour and flavour.

2014

The 2014 vintage delivered some of the most challenging and later some of the most favourable growing conditions. January and February saw two heat waves which pushed the heat tolerance of the vines resulting in the vines to shut down to limit their water stress. Next to this, high winds reduced berry set and reduced the size of the canopies, which increased the level of fruit exposure to the sun. Vintage turned around following some rainfall in February which rehydrated and freshened up the vines. Together with this the daytime temperatures became cooler. Altogether this helped improve the fruit balance and crop levels. March and April brought perfect long ripening conditions which resulted in harvest finishing in April and delivered one of the easiest harvests of this century.

2015

The 2015 growing season started with a higher-than-average rainfalls in June and July followed by the lowest rainfalls in 20 years all the way to December. Consequently, the disease pressure in the vineyard was minimal, but also limited the natural development of the vines, leading to smaller than normal canopies.

Budburst was delayed by cold nights in August. However, flowering started early due to warm and mild winds in late spring. Cooler than normal conditions prevailed in the weeks leading up to harvest. This changed as harvest started, with above average temperatures which sped up vintage. In the end picking only lasted 7 weeks from start to finish. Due to the warm weather during harvest the yields were slightly below average. Early picked Shiraz showed good characteristics, furthermore Mataro, Tempranillo and Grenache performed well due to their capacity to handle drier weather.

2016

The 2016 growing season saw rainfall at 50% below average due to a dry month of July followed by little rainfall all the way to the start of February. The warm and dry weather did help with the development of the shoots and the flowering. Thanks to this the yields were some of the highest in recent years but because of the balanced growing season the vines were not overcropped. At the start of February, the region received double its monthly rainfall in two days which had only benefits as it helped to increase bunch weight and relieved any possible water stress. This rain event also delayed the picking of red grapes until the middle of February. The March rainfall had little impact on the 2016 harvest as by then almost all grapes had been harvested. Due to the previous dry years, dry growing season and improved irrigation techniques, not many issues were encountered in the vineyards.

2017

The 2017 growing season started off with above average rainfall in winter and spring which provided excellent soil moisture. Spring temperatures were lower than average which delayed flowering by 2 to 3 weeks, but dry and stable conditions provided excellent conditions. The cooler weather also delayed veraison and harvest. Because of this majority of the grapes were harvested in March and late into April. Autumn was dry overall which provided the ideal conditions to harvest healthy fruit at perfect maturity. 2017 will be remembered as a successful vintage with Shiraz, Tempranillo, Grenache and Mataro all showing excellent characteristics.

2018

The 2018 vintage built onto the lush 2017 growing season, providing good foundation for the vines. Winter started off with average rainfalls followed by below average precipitation in Spring and Summer. Budburst was back to normal around mid-September. The lower rainfall prevented excessive canopy growth and pushed the vines to switch over to ripening fruit. January saw some very dry and warm weather, luckily this was followed by favourable growing conditions in February before harvest started at the end of the month. Because of these favourable growing conditions grapes were of excellent quality, particularly in the Blewitt Springs and Clarendon area which benefit from drier seasons.

2019

The 2019 growing season was marked by below average rainfall throughout the growing season from October onwards. November saw a large hailstorm which impacted the yield of some vineyards. Followed by a very warm January and February which saw the highest temperatures on record during the month of January. This dry and warm weather however helped with the disease pressure, which was minimal. The use of irrigation managed to limit the yield losses from the hailstorm, warm and dry weather. The benefit however of lower yields was that the flavour concentration was increased.

2020

The 2020 vintage growing season started in the continuation of the previous two vintages with lower-than-average rainfall. At the end of November multiple days of high winds, coinciding with the flowering of the Tempranillo, resulted in reduced fruit set. These dry and windy condition contributed to low yields overall. Summer started with the hottest month of December on record, which had vines showing signs of stress much earlier than usual. On the other hand, this had as a benefit that disease was virtually non-existent in the vineyard. The season turned around at the start of January thanks to the arrival of the monsoon season in northern Australia, as a result temperatures dropped to below average in South Australia. The second half of January saw 13 consecutive days below 30°C, a first in almost 30 years for the month of January. At the start of February, the McLaren Vale region saw three days of thunderstorms, this was just enough to freshen up the vines without having any side effects. February continued in the same steps as January with much lower temperatures than average, including no above 35°C day. The cooler temperatures in the second half of summer and low yields resulted in a late but short vintage, with picking starting in the first week of March and completed at the start of April. Overall, the quality was good for vintage 2020.

2021

The 2021 vintage will be remembered as one of the best vintages of the 21st century. The growing season saw average rainfall which primarily fell at the start of the season. Both day and night-time temperatures were above average. November was the driest in the last 30 years together with average daily maximum temperatures equal to those encountered in January. December and February both saw mild weather with day temperatures hovering around 30 degrees for the month of February. This led to veraison of red grapes being later than usual, around the start of February. All these mild and excellent growing conditions led to a long and late vintage, with picking starting in the first week of March and almost lasting for two months. In the end, yields were higher than previous years and fruit was of excellent quality.

2022

The 2022 vintage is very similar to the 2021 growing season. Like the previous year, the start of the growing season saw above average rainfall in the first half followed by below average rainfall in summer and autumn. Overall, McLaren Vale received below average rainfall. Spring saw below average temperatures together with windy weather during flowering, this resulted in lower fruit set, hence lower yields. Summer was mild overall with no heatwaves, followed by a warm autumn, creating perfect conditions for ripening. Similarly to 2021, veraison and start of harvest were late following the mild summer temperatures. Harvest started again in the first week of March and finished almost two months later. Due to the very favourable growing condition, Vintage 2022 is another excellent year with reds showing intense, rich and well-balanced flavours and colours.

2023

The 2023 growing season was overall cooler and more wet than usual. Good winter rainfall prepared the vineyards well for the growing season. Rainfall didn't stop and numbers were above winter average during spring. This created some challenges in the vineyard to control the disease pressure. The end of spring was cool, wet and windy with little sunshine through the month of November during flowering season, reducing yields. From the start of summer, rainfall stopped, and mild temperatures persisted all the way through February. The late flowering and mild summer temperature resulted once again in a late start to Vintage. The cool and wet conditions in autumn resulted in a late and long harvest. The combination of cooler seasons translates in elegant wines beautifully expressing vineyard characteristics.

2024

The 2024 growing started with a mild winter and average rainfall. The start of spring was drier than normal, together with cooler than average night temperatures and higher than average day temperatures, resulting in delayed budburst. The dry weather helped with keeping the disease pressure low. November brought a few challenges with a combination of cool, wet and high wind condition, whilst also experiencing a 40°C day in the midst of it all. These overall cooler conditions extended the flowering season with higher or lower fruit set rates depending on the variety and their flowering time. Summer was the wettest in the last 20 years with above average rainfall from the start of December to the first week of January. From mid-January onwards until the end of vintage, no major rainfall event was experienced. Due to high temperatures as from January and low yields, veraison happened in a very short period, resulting in a short harvest period with all grapes picked by the end of March. Grenache fared particularly well with good fruit set and veraison occurring after the main weather events.

2025

The 2025 growing season was overall warmer and drier resulting in an early vintage. Above average winter temperatures resulted in an early budburst, 2 weeks ahead of the long-term average. Warm, dry and calm wind conditions in spring favoured an early and even fruit set. These favourable conditions continued into summer with veraison also happening around 2 weeks earlier than normal. The benefit of this drier and warmer weather was a reduced disease pressure in the vineyards. Harvest was compact, starting in the first week of February and was completed in early March. Overall temperatures were warmer than average during vintage without being unusually high, this increased concentration in the fruit without having a negative impact. Overall quality was very good thanks to the favourable conditions throughout the growing season and harvest period, resulting in wines with depth, concentration, vibrancy and fine natural tannins.

2026

The 2026 growing season was marked by both wet and dry weather, and cool and warm temperatures. The start of the growing season started with a cool and wet winter on the back of a very dry autumn, this resulted in a slow start of the season. Spring started with below average rainfall, followed by above average rainfall around flowering time. Consequently, low fruit set was observed, especially for Grenache and Tempranillo, resulting in lower yields but higher concentration and quality at harvest. Overall summer was dry with above average temperatures. Heatwaves in January delayed the start of vintage again until the end of February. Cooler temperatures and rainfall events during vintage slowed ripening and extended picking until early April. In the end the variable conditions balanced each other out and together with the extended ripening period supported high quality fruit with good concentration, freshness and varietal expression.

Adelaide Hills

2021

The 2021 growing season started on the back of two low yielding years due to extreme weather conditions. Winter rainfall managed to restock soil moisture levels to provide perfect condition for budburst. Warm temperatures in September and seasonal rainfall through spring ensured even budburst, canopy growth and good flowering conditions. Summer was the coolest in the last decade, with no heat waves. Late January and early February saw multiple rain events generating good soil moisture levels for veraison and berry growth. Autumn temperatures were below average resulting in slow ripening conditions, ideal for flavour development. Similar picking dates were recorded than in the 1980/90s.

2022

The 2022 growing season will be remembered for its long cool ripening conditions, delivering clean and full flavoured grapes. The season started with perfect soil moisture at the end of winter, followed by a dry and mild month of September which created the perfect conditions for even budburst across the region. October and November saw cool to cold temperatures which delayed flowering and fruit set and did not help with the fruit set of Pinot Noir and Chardonnay. Mid-November and end of January rain events challenged the protection of grapes against diseases but did not affect the fruit in the end. Overall summer temperatures were just below average. The Hills region did not see any major rain events from end of January until the end of harvest. Autumn temperatures were mild with cool nights, enhancing the flavour development because of the longer hang-time on the vine. Vintage was delayed due to the cool spring temperatures with the last red grapes picked in May. Overall yields were down compared to 2021 but close to the region's average. In the end, conditions were favourable to produce excellent cool climate wines representative of the region.

2023

The 2023 growing season started off once again with full soil moisture following close to average rainfall in winter. October and November saw above average rainfall which were challenging to handle for the disease pressure in the vineyard. During the entire spring season, temperatures were cold, which together with the wet conditions delayed shoot growth and flowering. Weather changed to more favourable conditions as from December, however reduced fruit set could not be avoided. The rest of the growing season and harvest was relatively dry which reduced the disease pressure considerably. Warm temperatures in February together with good-sized canopies and smaller than average crops accelerated ripening. However, cool weather in March and April slowed ripening considerably. In the end, the cool weather and wet start of the growing season delivered below average yields and delayed vintage to one of the latest in the last 30 years. The favourable autumn conditions helped to deliver high quality fruit.

2024

The 2024 growing season started with optimal soil moisture level following average winter rainfall, mainly driven by a very wet month of June. Warm and dry weather in September generated earlier budburst than in previous vintages. Spring was overall cooler than usual but good soil moisture ensured good canopy and flower development. The cooler weather continued during flowering which resulted in poor fruit set in early flowering varieties. December and January saw above average rainfall which had the potential to increase disease pressure in the vineyard, however this risk was negated by no rainfall in February and very little rainfall in March. The only heatwave encountered mid-March was not a problem due to the good-sized canopies and soil moisture, which delivered well balanced fruit.

2025

The 2025 growing season will be remembered as one of the driest on record. Budburst started early followed by favourable weather enabling good fruits set and well balanced canopies. Because of the low rainfall the disease pressure was easy to be managed, and the fruit was in perfect health condition. Soil moisture management was probably the biggest challenge of the season for growers. The warmer than average days but without heat waves and cool night favoured flavour development and excellent sugar-acid balance. All these conditions resulted in an early vintage with high quality fruit.

2026

The 2026 growing season started with ideal soil moisture after winter rainfall in line with the long-term average. Overcast weather and slightly below average temperatures kept the soil temperatures low resulted in a delayed, slow but even budburst. Wet and cold conditions prevailed through October and into November. With the delayed start to the growing season flowering happened when temperatures got warmer and weather got drier, resulting in an excellent fruit set. These favourable conditions helped canopies to develop and reach a good balance for ripening of the fruit. December and January were above average in temperature but the benefit of a cool climate region like the Adelaide Hills mean that the fruit did not suffer from extreme temperatures. Below average temperatures in March conducive to a long slow ripening resulted in excellent flavour development and balanced acidity.

Clare Valley

2013

The 2013 growing season started off as one of the driest on record. This dry weather conditions continued through spring and summer. Because of this, canopies were open and smaller than usual. Unlike other regions, Clare received 50mm of rain in the first week of December, which helped with yields and to counter the high temperatures of early January. The overall dry conditions of the growing season resulted in no disease pressure in the vineyard. Some vineyards however, experienced crop losses due to frost and hail. Due to the dry and mild conditions, harvest started unusually early in the first week of February. Vintage saw ideal weather conditions which resulted in excellent fruit quality.

2014

The 2014 growing season started with good soil moisture following above-average winter rains. In September, mild temperatures, below average rainfall resulted in even budburst. This weather continued until mid-November when a cooler period started, which extended flowering and affected fruit set. December was dry and warm and promoted good growth and berry development. At the turn of the new year extreme heat dominated the region until mid-February. Consequently, veraison was accelerated and vintage started in the first half of February. Overall yields were slightly below average, and fruit quality was excellent, especially from later ripening vineyards. 2014 wines continue in the excellent tracks of the 2012 and 2013 vintages.

2015

The 2015 growing season was another in general trouble-free vintage delivering for the fourth year in a row excellent fruit. Above-average winter rainfall provide perfect starting condition for the rest of the season. A dry and mild spring followed by a mild and early summer provided perfect conditions for vine development and flowering. Significant rain in the second week of January helped with keeping the berry sizes up and maintaining healthy canopy. February was very hot, bringing the start of vintage forward once again to the start of February and accelerated the ripening of all the vineyards. In the end, yields were on average, and quality was very high with fruit showing good flavour, structure and natural acidity.

2016

The 2016 growing season started on the back of an above average rainfall in autumn which helped the vines recover well. Winter started off colder with slightly below average rainfall until August when the weather changed to milder conditions and above average rainfall. September was very mild and dry, bringing budburst forward and accelerating vine growth rapidly. Flowering was complete by the start of November,



MINISTRY
OF CLOUDS

which is 3 weeks earlier than normal. Perfectly timed rain after flowering and no spring frost were setting up the vineyards for another early and short vintage. With minimal rain from November until the end of January disease pressure was very low. The last week of January and first week of February saw once more perfectly timed rainfall to relieve any potential stress from the vines. The rest of February saw very mild condition together with a couple more rain events that slowed the ripening down and allowed vineyards to be picked at their optimal maturity. Overall yields were up, and quality was outstanding.

2017

The 2017 growing season started with a wet and cold winter. Spring continued in a similar way with above average rainfall and below average temperatures which induced low soil temperatures and waterlogged soils. Some vineyards also experienced frost, especially in lower lying regions. All these conditions delayed budburst and shoot growth by up to month. The weather ended up being more favourable during flowering, with good fruit set across all vineyards. Even tough conditions were more favourable in summer, the end of December saw another number of significant rain events. By the end of 2016 rainfall gauges were full, showing close to 1000mm for the year, the highest on record since 2000. Vintage 2017 kicked off in the first half of March, one month later than previous vintage. In the end yields were above average and Riesling quality was standing out again.

2018

The 2018 growing season started with low soil moisture levels following a dry end of winter. The dry weather continued through spring and summer, with only one major rain event in early December. By the end of the year, total rainfall was half of last year's. The growing season only saw 150mm of rain from budburst until harvest. A couple of extreme heat events caused some sunburn in vineyards with small canopies. Overall, temperatures were above average, with warmer than average night temperatures. However, there were no extended heatwaves and disease pressure was very low this season. Due to the warm and dry weather vintage started again early this year, in the first week of February. Yields ended up being good for Riesling, with overall quality standing out once again.

2019

The 2019 growing season started of with lower-than-average winter precipitation. This trend persisted in spring, resulting in smaller canopies and berries in many vineyards. 2019 was a year of extreme weather events. In Spring, the lowest seasonal temperatures were recorded and multiple frost events through September and October caused losses through many areas of the Clare Valley. Localised hail events also reduced yields through the region. Summer on the other hand, saw the highest temperatures on record. Despite all these weather events, yields were only down by

15% on expectations. Riesling showed once more its great resilience and perfect fit for the Clare Valley region whilst retaining great acidity.

2020

The 2020 growing season will be remembered for its dry and warm condition. Winter saw below average rainfall, which did not deliver enough precipitation to provide sufficient soil moisture. Spring also had below average rainfall. Where possible irrigation was required to compensate for the lack of precipitation and above average maximum temperatures. A warm weather event at the end of November, during fruit set, did not help with the yields. The warm and mainly dry conditions continued until the New Year. January and mainly February had the welcomed relief of milder temperatures, ideal for the ripening of the grapes. Overall, Riesling performed again strongly compared to other varieties in these drier conditions. Yields were only down by about 25% while the fruit displayed plenty of fruit and sub-regional characters.

2021

The 2021 growing season can be described as a classic Clare Valley vintage, with cool and dry conditions throughout the growing season. Before the season kicked off, Autumn and winter saw good precipitation which helped with soil moisture levels. Early spring rains contributed to even budburst, canopy growth and avoided any possible spring frost. From November onwards dry condition took over, with rainfall well below average for the rest of the growing season. This benefited flowering, fruit set and kept the disease pressure low during the entire growing season. The lack of precipitation whilst vines were recovering from the drought in previous vintages, led to yields being below average. Nevertheless, Riesling was showing good natural acidity and regional characteristics.

2022

The 2022 vintage will be remembered for its high quality and yields. The growing season started well thanks to good winter rainfall followed by above average spring rainfall. This provided good moisture levels even though the rest of the season was drier than average. Cool spring temperatures together with the multiple rain events delayed budburst. These cooler temperatures continued through summer all the way until harvest. Due to this, vintage was the latest in the last decade. This had as an advantage that Riesling had the time to develop all its varietal characteristics and maintained good natural acidity. Overall, yields were up by 15% and the grapes showed exceptional potential.

2023

The 2023 growing season will be remembered for its challenges due to high precipitation. It will also be remembered for high yields and high-quality fruit thanks to

good weather conditions in 2023. The growing season started on the back of a winter with above average rainfall. September and October saw below average temperatures, which together with the many rain events in early spring, delayed budburst. Spring temperatures continued to be below average, which delayed flowering into December. These difficult conditions created challenges in the vineyard, which were thankfully eased by drier conditions in the new year. The cool conditions continued in summer, together with high crop loads, this delayed vintage until early March. In the end, the fruit was pristine, showing great flavour and natural acidity.

2024

The 2024 growing season started with below-average winter and early spring rainfall. This led to early budburst and flowering. The drier condition also favoured the development of frost events in late October, which impacted the yields of several vineyards. The second half of Spring and the month of December saw multiple rain events which topped up the soil moisture levels. With dry conditions in the new year, almost perfect ripening conditions were experienced, with low disease pressure. Overall yields were down, mainly in the areas affected by frost. Riesling showed once more strong varietal characteristics, with freshness, vibrancy and intense flavour.

2025

The 2025 growing season started with well below average rainfall in winter and early spring, resulting in low soil moisture levels at the start of the season. Budburst started earlier than usual followed by favourable weather during fruitset, which contributed to an even ripening of the grapes. The dry weather conditions were challenging to keep moisture levels up but were also beneficial at keeping the disease pressure down. All these favourable condition for fast ripening resulted in the earliest vintage on record. The warm weather leading into harvest favoured quality over quantity with concentration and varietal definition. Riesling displayed lifted aromatics, bright natural acidity and fine structure, promising wines of elegance and longevity.

2026

The 2026 growing season started with cool temperatures and good rainfall in spring, this promoted good canopy development. Leading into harvest some vineyards were affected by frost which impacted yields of the affected vineyards. January brought favourable conditions for veraison with overall dry and warm weather. Rainfall in February created some challenges with timely picking of the essence to keep good quality. Overall, the vintage is another one of quality over quantity with wines reflecting careful vineyard and winery management. Riesling is showing vibrant aromatics, strong natural acidity and fine structure.