

# VINTAGE 2018

HAWKE'S BAY



**Tasting Note:** A warm and relatively dry, early summer lead to a very hot January and February with memories and comparisons harking back to the extremely warm 2009 and 2014 vintages.

**Rainfall:** One significant rain event in early March (100 +mm), then some moderate to low level rains, drier into April.

**Grower Degree Days:** 16% over the long-term average

**Reflections:** No particularly adverse weather during the season. One significant rainfall event in March with some associated humidity making mid-season varieties feel under pressure. Rain events are far from unusual in the Hawke's Bay and armed with excellent weather forecasting, most growers and winemakers know how to plan and react accordingly.

The early March rain event regrettably became the calling card of the vintage due to some flooding in the Esk Valley.

However, the next 3 weeks weather proved to be the largest challenge of the vintage; rainfall was moderate to low, however, the humidity over this period was high.

With such a warm, early season, early ripening sites and varieties came under a massive amount of pressure. As is often the case in these early seasons, the aim is to be able to hold off from harvesting the later ripening varieties, allowing them to hang out on the vines through early April when both the temperatures and humidity significantly drop.

This was the case in 2018, and were were able to leave the late varieties on the vine as long as we liked.

Much of the region's early Chardonnay was picked in mint condition before the rain - you'll find concentrated and beautifully aromatic Chardonnays. Then, the settled weather from early April resulted in some exceptional red wines - powerful, deep coloured Cabernets and Syrah.

