



# Vintage Report



..... 2023 .....



## The Hat-trick Vintage

Through many a youthful, hot summer, I watched Warney or McGrath on a 'Hat-trick'...the tension in the air palpable before the third ball.

This year, I feel as though I got my own Hat-trick with our third 'La Nina' vintage in a row. However, it wasn't tension in the air this time. It was humidity. And it would define the growing season; how vineyards should have been managed and even picking dates. Read our previous vintage report to get an idea of how amazing it is to have landed another wonderfully mild vintage.

We welcomed deep, heavy spring rainfalls that slowly filled our dams to levels not seen since 2016. Although a blessing, this would mean a year with mildew and other disease to sort the best sites and growers from the crowd. January and February were very dry and mild with minor rain events. This, with the clement days in March and April, extended ripening for the vineyards in good condition. Worth noting, we did not have many days in the 30s during vintage and this is why the alcohol levels in the red varieties are on average 1% lower. The natural acidities in 2023 are of note and provide vibrancy in both the colours and the palate.

The Whites and Rosé are wonderful wines; on par with 21/22. Grenache yields were low due to downy mildew attacks and alcohol levels are low thanks to mild temperatures and late season disease pressure on picking, but the quality is exceptional in the top vineyards. Shiraz yields were high and of course, this meant quality varied across vineyards. The milder temperatures produced highly aromatic Shiraz with a lot of whole-bunch ferments and alcohols averaging 13.8% across all sites. The Bordeaux varieties I work with (Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Malbec, Cabernet Franc & Petit Verdot) are the best I have seen. And other varieties we are working with that are looking stunning are Tempranillo, Montepulciano, Petite Sirah, White Grenache, Viognier & Savagnin.

At this early stage, the reds remind me of a blend of the aromatics in 2017 with the palate-weight of 2018. There's plenty of pretty, floral spice aromatics and the weight of fruit and tannin means they will be earlier drinking wines than the 2022s. What's left but to enjoy the current range of 2021s. Plump, juicy and utterly delicious at the moment. Drink well!

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