

Elephant Hill
HAWKE'S BAY NEW ZEALAND

2019 Vintage



“Short, sharp and very busy!”

We started on the 6th March with picks of our young Chardonnay blocks at our Bridge Pa vineyard. These low yielding new clones of Chardonnay are producing increasingly high quality grapes that end up in our top tiers of Chardonnay. Unfortunately, the wet weather over just a few days in late November caught one of our blocks right in the middle of flowering. The resulting set was so poor we decided to leave the vines to recover for the season rather than pick them. By the beginning of the following week we were picking our special block of ‘Sea’ Sauvignon Blanc. Perfectly formed bunches, with exceptional quality from our small block of low vigour, seaward facing vines.

By the 18th March we had moved straight into our Tempranillo Rose blocks and our very popular, low yielding ‘Earth’ Tempranillo. Both blocks came in on target and we expect great things from our 2019 Tempranillo wines!

At Elephant Hill we are concentrating more and more on techniques to bring forward ripening and increase quality. Consequently we find that our picking season becomes earlier and more compressed, moving from white varieties straight into reds. As a result, 2019 has been an outstanding year for our Merlot vines, producing strong, ripe flavours across both our inland vineyards. Keep an eye out for our Merlot dominant blends in forthcoming years!

By week three of vintage we were picking our low vigour ‘Icon’ Syrah blocks at our Gimblett vineyard – yielding at less than 1kg per vine these grapes are destined for our top tier Airavata wine. Also at this time we picked our ‘Sea’ Viognier at Te Awanga. Yet again we have picked Viognier of exceptional quality from our coastal vineyard which has all the hallmarks of another great wine, to follow up on our Trophy winning 2018 Sea Viognier at the Royal Easter Show.

Finally, our late ripening Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc grapes were picked in the last week of Vintage. It’s always nerve wracking hanging out Cabernet varieties until they are fully ripe, but yet again we have produced small quantities of ripe, high quality grapes. All indications are that you should keep an eye out in the future for our 2019 ‘Stone’ tier wines and our ‘Icon’ blend Hieronymus.