

# Te MATA

ESTATE 1896

## VINTAGE REVIEW 2018



A wet autumn and a winter with average rainfall lead to good levels of soil moisture at the start of the growing season. Spring was warmer and drier than normal and there were no frosts.

Summer began with a string of hot days in early December culminating in several highs over thirty degrees. The rest of the month was warm, and nights were warm all month. Rainfall was two thirds of normal, prompting the first irrigations in our driest spots.

January was hot and unusually humid due to easterly and north-easterly winds. Many days remained above thirty degrees and nights were very warm. Vines thrive in good soil moisture and hot, humid conditions. Canopies filled out nicely giving plenty of leaves - necessary to ripen the normal sized crop that set in most varieties. Rainfall was one third of the average and irrigation began in most blocks mid-month, a little later than usual.

Heat summation for the season up to the end of January was the second highest we have experienced in the twenty-three years we've had data loggers in our vineyards. February temperatures were variable, but most days were warm to hot and nights remained warm. Veraison was early and fast and finished by the 23<sup>rd</sup> of February. The 35mm of rain that fell between the 7<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> of February was too early to cause problems.

March was warm with many days in the mid-twenties, and dry, apart from 65mm of rain from the remnants of Cyclone Gita on the 8<sup>th</sup>. The very warm summer led to good flavours in white varieties early at relatively lower brix (sugars). Chardonnay for our Estate Vineyards

wine was picked between the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> of March, and sauvignon blanc for the Estate Wine and Cape Crest was picked mid-month in good condition. Occasional drizzle added up to very little rain but kept us moving and we finished harvesting white grapes on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, apart from two chardonnay blocks on the Havelock Hills. Gamay was harvested in lovely conditions between the 20<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> of March. Harvesting of syrah, merlot and cabernet franc continued in stable warm and dry weather in the last week of March and until the 10<sup>th</sup> of April, when picking stopped for a southerly storm that dropped 35mm of rain. Strong cold winds dried out the vines quickly and the picking of our best syrah and cabernet sauvignon blocks continued in pleasant, warm and dry weather until we finished Vintage 2018 on the 20<sup>th</sup> of April.

Vintage 2018 was exceptionally warm, with many months dryer than average. It was the third hottest year in the last twenty-three. White grapes had good flavours and freshness that have carried through to the wines. The essential water stress conditions for red vines were established well before veraison. Vineyard soils dried out after the moderate rain events. Good brix levels and soft acids in the red grapes have given great flavours and very deep colours to the wines. Tannins are abundant, ripe and round.

As usual, all aspects of vineyard management needed to be performed on time and with great diligence in 2018 to make the most of this very good vintage.

**Rainfall mm**

Sept 16, Oct 58, Nov 19, Dec 36, Jan 23, Feb 49, Mar 90-107\*, Apr 77  
(46 to last day of picking in April) \* site dependent

**Heat summation**

1624 degree days (September to April)



Peter Cowley  
Technical Director  
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