

TWO HANDS WINES: VINTAGE 2022 REPORT

After a number of excellent harvests, I always knew 2022 would be an interesting season. As the La Nina weather pattern worked its way to produce another extremely wet year for the Eastern seaboard, our rain pattern here in South Australia intensified. We were greeted by a very wet 2021 winter, that helped replenish the soils profile across all wine-producing regions we work with.

The June, July, and August rainfall were all above the longer term average, and had us well on the way to an excellent season. As the vines entered their vegetative stage we were hit by two significant weather events, in close proximity to each other. Firstly on the 11th of October 2021, there was a frost across the Northern Barossa. Secondly on the 28th of October, a catastrophic 10-minute hail event hit our Holy Grail vineyard which resulted in a 95% fruit loss of our estate fruit for the 2022 vintage.

With our Holy Grail vineyard decimated, our viticulture team had to complete summer pruning to the buds around the head of the vine. This was done to give the vines a freshen up and damaged canes could be pruned to look ahead to the 2023 harvest.

Luckily the hail event was isolated to the central Barossa Valley and a number of our grower's vineyards from the North of the Barossa Valley were amazingly completely untouched.

Cold and wet weather in mid-November coincided with Spring flowering in much of the Barossa Valley region. This impacted the fruit-set and decreased the final potential yield per vineyard.

December and January provided a burst of summer heat without any extremes. In all, it was a very mild summer with no days recorded above 40°C, no extended heatwaves that last all week, and only 11 days where the temperature exceeded 35°C.

The vines were ripening nicely until we were greeted with another hail and rain event on the 28th of February 2022. The vines were in a much better place in their growing season to be protected from the hail. This was down to the smaller size of the hailstones, and a more established leafy canopy. The canopy lessened the immediate impact on the fruit. The scattered rain throughout this storm was welcomed to help the vines reach full and optimum maturity.

McLaren Vale performed slightly better than the Barossa Valley in 2022, this was down to the fact that it was spared the hail Barossa experienced. Clare Valley was a real stand-out in 2022, as the slow ripening seems to have played perfectly into Clare's elegance, softness, and charm.

The vintage started a little later than normal, and the vineyards produced a smaller but intense crop. This resulted in wines that show great aromatics, a balance of acidity, and a bright core of flavour, with Shiraz again being the standout variety of the season.



by Michael Twelftree, Proprietor

