

TWO HANDS WINES: VINTAGE 2019 REPORT

MICHAEL TWELFTREE - PROPRIETOR

The end of a vintage is a bittersweet time for me. Inside you feel like a prize-fighter who has just made it to the final round, yet the emotional toll of vintage can never be underestimated. It's a really weird time as you are constantly juggling varieties and blocks across six regions, while at the same time considering your fermenters progress, the pressing regime, barrelling down, and living minute by minute considering the weather. You want the best for every parcel, so you are pretty much working 5 to 7 days forward in your decision making for the whole 6 to 8 weeks.

On the outside, you're 10 feet tall and you're thrilled with what you and your team have been able to achieve in such a small and tight time frame.

After 20 years I can tell from the vine the potential of a block but it's a huge achievement when you see the quality from the vineyard coming through into the finished wines.

2019 threw everything at us. We had a very dry winter and spring, we then had an early frost which cost a lot of potential yield (in the Barossa) and then had isolated hail events in McLaren Vale and the Clare Valley. January was smoking hot with the hottest day ever recorded in South Australia (47°C). In late February a weather front weakened in the Great Australian Bight and this put two warm heat events together and we ended up with 8 warm days that kicked the harvest along. At the start of that week a number of blocks were still green and unripe and by the end of that week a number of blocks were sitting in the perfect picking window. In 2019 yields were way down and the berry size remained much smaller than the normal, so we had to be very careful with our ferments as it would have been very easy to over extract our wines.

In the end we made it, now the wines are all resting in barrel completing their secondary bacterial malolactic fermentations. Over the coming months we will start to realise the quality of the vintage and the puzzle will once again come together again.

TRAVIS COOMBE - VITICULTURIST

Like much of the country, we had a very dry winter in 2018 which resulted in winter watering our estate vineyards, to ensure that the soil had moisture over the dormancy period – it's an unusual occurrence but had to be done.

Bud-burst saw some heavy frosts which resulted in damage to some of our vines, resulting in a slower start to the vine's growing season. We applied straw under the vines to assist in moisture retention and ensure that the soil stayed cool during the hot Barossa summer.

October and November was windy and we had a small hail incident which affected the vine's flowering, and although we had hail, we received little rain so we used our entire water allocation for the season. The team applied liquid nutrients to the vines 6 times to assist the vines in a somewhat stressful growing season.

We experienced extreme heat at the end of the growing season, and thus, we needed to add sunscreen spray to the vines. Kaolin Clay essentially reflects the light and heat, which drops the temperature of canopy to ensure that the skins aren't sunburnt and to ensure our Basel leaves are kept in optimal condition until the end of the growing season.

Because of the heat, harvest started fast and furiously on the 21st February – all of our estate vineyards were harvested by hand, in just 12 days and the entire vintage lasted just 6 weeks!

Despite the challenges during the season, we're delighted with the quality of the fruit we received in V19 – our 20th vintage. We can't wait to view the wines after their malolactic fermentation and of course, we've got fingers and toes crossed for a wet winter!

