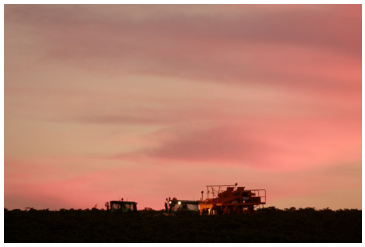
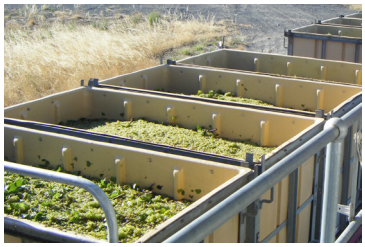
WAKEFIELD
CLARE VALLEY

VINTAGE REPORT 2013





HARVEST 2013

The growing season in the lead up to vintage 2013 saw below average autumn and winter rainfalls on the Wakefield Clare Valley estate vineyards. In fact, over the entire season from September 2012 to April 2013 the rainfall was the lowest on record at the Estate since 1973 at only 138mm. This is 40mm below the previously driest season of 2003/04 and 50% below average. In addition, during winter, the average daily minimum temperature at the Estate was 1.1°C warmer than average, although budburst did occur at the normal time in early September. The below average rainfall resulted in reduced vine vigour and consequentially, increased susceptibility of the vine to frost. As it was, the estate recorded five minor frost events during September, followed by a major event on the morning of Saturday 27th Oct. Unfortunately this affected a large area of low lying and mid slope vineyard, resulting in subsequent crop losses. Also during October, there was a hail storm which resulted in substantial damage to the hilltop vineyard blocks. High winds around this time also impacted on the vineyard, making the developing shoots and inflorescences vulnerable to damage, hence reducing the capacity of the vines. November saw rainfalls continue to be below average and this slowed shoot growth rates for the vines. Of course, all of these conditions impacted the average yields from the estate for vintage 2013.

December was dry and warm with no heatwaves due to regular cool changes. As expected, the first two weeks of January were very hot with average daily maximum temperatures over 31°C.These warm conditions advanced the start of veraison with most white blocks and some early red blocks being 50% through veraison by mid- January, and completed by the end of January for most blocks. The overnight minimum temperature for the last two weeks in January was 4°C cooler than the long term average, which favoured acid retention and delicate flavour development our white varieties. Harvest began at the Estate on 22nd Jan with the picking of Pinot Noir for sparkling base, and the first dry white fruit; Semillon followed soon after on 4th February. The first half of February was relatively cool which promoted ideal conditions for flavour and acid ripening and a slow start to vintage. Similarly to the previous year, the second half of February was quite warm, resulting in rapid sugar accumulation. Subsequently all of the whites and half of the reds were harvested by the end of February. During March the maximum temperatures were near average and there was no significant rainfall. As a result the rate or ripening slowed which enhanced the flavours and tannins of the later red blocks to ripen and produce high quality fruit. Ninety percent of the estate harvest was completed by 15th Mar, with the last variety; Carmenere picked on the 18th of April.

VINTAGE 2013

The total grape intake to the Wakefield winery during vintage 2013 was just over 7,000 tonne with 24% coming in from the estate and the remainder from grower partners. As this was one of the driest growing seasons in around 150 years, the resulting wines are very generous in flavour. Riesling typically fares well in dry conditions and after being harvested at slightly lower baumé levels this year, this vintage is no exception with the wines showing outstanding varietal lift, definition and aromatic intensity. In comparison to the previous vintage – which was simply exceptional, the difference is that whilst the 2012's have power and substance, the 2013's are more delicate with delightful floral aromatics and crisp, firm acid profiles. The Chardonnays, Pinot Gris and other white wines all show amazing varietal definition and a similar firm acid profile; making for very good wines overall.

The highlight of the year however were the red wines, with Shiraz, Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon all displaying rich, generous flavours. At the start of vintage 2013, all signs pointed to Shiraz being the standout wine and whilst yes, it's fantastic and there are some particularly superb parcels, it's the Cabernet Sauvignon wines that, after their winter malolactic fermentation period, have emerged looking like the standout; displaying layer upon layer of gorgeous varietal flavours, rich and generous. The dry and somewhat difficult conditions, resulting in lower yields from the season mean that the wines produced are quite full-bodied. This generosity of flavour and body, particularly in the Promised Land and 80 Acres red wine styles, means that the wines will be best enjoyed in their youth and may not make particularly good long-term cellaring candidates. Shiraz from the 2013 vintage seems to almost welcome you with open arms so our winemakers are excited about the prospect of shepherding these wines through oak maturation and into the glasses of the wine show judges so they can 'strut their stuff'. Overall, after the great years of 2009, 2010 & 2012, the 2013 vintage will deliver very rich, concentrated wines which will be true to the Wakefield style of early approachability and generous enjoyment.

Mitchell Taylor

WEATHER DATA FOR SEASON 2012 / 2013

	Leaf fall	Dormancy		Budburst		Shoot and Fruit Development			Veraison	Harvest		
	May-12	Jun-12	Jul-12	Aug-12	Sep-12	Oct-12	Nov-12	Dec-12	Jan-13	Feb-13	Mar-13	Apr-13
Monthly Rainfall (mm)	39.0	65.0	58.0	36.2	23.8	18.2	11.6	26.8	2.8	26.0	3.8	24.8
YTD Rainfall (mm)	39.0	104.0	162.0	198.2	222.0	240.2	251.8	278.6	281.4	307.4	311.2	336.0
Av. Daily Max (°C)	16.8	13.2	12.7	13.6	18.2	22.6	28.1	28.5	31.3	30.8	27.0	22.9
Max Temp (°C)	27.6	19.3	17.6	20.5	27.3	33.1	38.6	41.3	42.9	37.6	37.0	30.5
Lowest Maximum (°C)	8.8	8.5	10.3	9.8	10.9	11.4	18.3	17.6	18.8	19.3	17.8	14.0
Days over 35°C	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	5	9	7	3	0
Av Daily Min (°C)	5.1	4.9	4.2	4.8	5.1	6.1	10.5	12.1	12.5	14.0	13.6	9.8
Min Temp (°C)	-1.0	-2.2	-2.7	-0.7	-1.0	-1.7	1.1	6.1	6.1	7.3	5.9	3.1
Highest Minimum (°C)	11.1	9.8	8.5	11.1	11.6	14.5	23.8	23.3	20.5	20.5	22.8	17.6
								Mean January Temp	**21.9**			

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