

Marlborough Vintage Review 2007

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A warm spring led to an earlier than average bud burst in Marlborough and that promised a bumper crop of all major varieties throughout the region. That was until the coldest December in 50 years hit, which impacted on the fruit set of the major variety, Sauvignon Blanc and other late varieties that were also affected by the conditions. There were fears the late start to summer would be felt at the other end, when it came time to vintage – and while it took quite some time for the temperatures to rise to what most in Marlborough consider “normal” for summer, that time finally did arrive. Between February and April temperatures soared, the rain stayed away and the fruit caught up on lost time and vintage actually ended up being slightly earlier than normal proving how quickly conditions can move.

It is often said that a week is a long time in grape growing!

However the cool start to the season did impact on Sauvignon Blanc mostly, with yields being much lower than anticipated. There was a silver lining to that scenario though. The lower crops, the hot days and cool nights meant there was an abundance of intensity and lower alcohol levels in the ensuing wines. Winemakers described the Sauvignon Blanc fruit as some of the best in five years – “just a pity there wasn’t more of it,” being a common complaint.

Pinot Noir was a standout from this vintage, with the wine developing elegant berry fruit flavours, slightly more feminine than in previous years but accompanied by dark and intense colour. Excitement and belief in Pinot Noir really exploded in Marlborough after this vintage, something the region has been delivering on ever since.