

W A I P A P A B A Y

2019 Harvest Report

The Growing Season

Spring of 2018 in the South Island of New Zealand was gray and wet, much more so than usual for the region. Breaks in the rain were replaced only by overcast skies, promising more rain on the horizon. This coupled with cooler average temperatures at flowering resulted in very moderate yields across almost all varieties, despite initial expectations for an above average crop (judging from the number of grape buds on the vines over winter).

Disease pressure was also a threat resulting from the poor weather conditions. Our vineyard team was extremely vigilant, however, and succeeded in keeping the grapes clean and healthy. Following flowering and a dreary December, the weather turned in our favor, with an exceptionally dry summer and warmer temperatures than the historical average. These warm sunny days were accompanied by cool nights, resulting in even ripening and elevated acidity levels.

Thanks to lighter crops and elevated temperatures continuing in late summer and early fall, fruit began ripening quickly so that harvest came nearly two weeks earlier than average: complete in Marlborough by the end of March and by the second week of April in Canterbury. Both regions enjoyed brilliant weather during this time, allowing each block to be harvested at the optimum moment instead of in reaction to looming bad weather.

Despite having fewer grapes than usual, the fruit we brought into the winery were beautifully ripe, with bright, concentrated flavors and fresh acidity – reminiscent of the 2015 vintage, a very good one for the region. As it is our goal at Waipapa Bay to create wines that are reflective of their site as well as the grape variety, here is a summary of what harvest looked like for each variety, which each 2019 vintage bottling will seek to reveal:

Sauvignon Blanc

The fruit that came into the winery was pristine thanks to our vineyard team's work in the spring to keep the vines clean and free of disease. The flavors are intense and bright with grapefruit aromas evolving into soft flavors of passion fruit on the palate.

Rosé

The result of the 2019 harvest is a step up from the 2018 vintage. The Pinot Noir grapes were beautifully ripe, and now after fermentation exudes aromas of raspberries, strawberries and cherries that tantalize the nose and palate. We continue to craft the wine in a dry style with a light, crisp finish.

Chardonnay

With fermentation now complete, the wine will be in oak for a brief period before bottling. The lightly oaked style allows the citrus notes of lime and lemon, reflective of the cool climate, to shine through.

Pinot Gris

On reception at the winery, the fruit looked exceptional – with concentrated flavors resulting from careful fruit thinning of the vines to remove under-ripe bunches just prior to harvest. The newly made wine is full of aromas and flavors reminiscent of pears, nectarines and peaches.

WAIPAPA BAY

