



2017 Harvest Report M. CHAPOUTIER AUSTRALIA, Pyrenees and Heathcote wine regions, Victoria

'Mother Nature rewards patience...'

2017, what a year. After thirteen years of drought which ended with the 2011 vintage and for the first time since then, we have had a long, cool growing season which could not have been scripted better.

A cold and wet winter allowed the vines to replenish themselves and provided enough water to survive the growing season without irrigation – almost unheard of in Australia in the past twenty years. Early spring (September) brought further rains and higher than average temperatures. The vines drank and grew! The fruit set was outstanding and we looked forward to good and even ripening. October and November were cooler than average, the coldest since 2003, which allowed the grapes to ripen slowly, developing extraordinary complexity and fruit character. Summer was warm but with cooler than average nights, which again gave the vines an opportunity to rest and build acidity and structure.

Early autumn (March) was warm and the grapes reached full maturity 4-6 weeks later than 2015, almost to the average harvest date of 20+ years ago.

The upshot of this is a vintage that was allowed to develop slowly and is one of fruit ripeness balanced by excellent acidity and structure. The white wines are sure to be full and rich with great minerality and freshness, while the red wines will have that important and much sought after balance between ripe fruit, tannin, acidity and alcohol.

The first grapes picked were the Grenache grapes for our 2017 Mathilda Rose at 12° baume, which were harvested on the 8th March. Nearly 5 weeks later than last year. The resultant wine is pale and dry with a touch of light pink rose colour, sweet candied fruit nose and a savoury finish.

On the 25th March we started picking our Lady's Lane Vineyard Shiraz in Heathcote. A full 4 weeks later than last year. This extra time on the vine has developed a richness and complexity that we will enjoy for many years to come.

Back in the Pyrenees, on the 30th March, our Shay's Flat Vineyard vines were ready to go and again, the quality of the fruit was outstanding and our careful nurturing in the vineyard was bearing fruit, literally.

The 2017 harvest finished on the 17th May with our Landsborough Grenache and Malakoff Vineyard (Malakoff, Saddleback & L-Block wines).

All our reds were allowed to ferment naturally, utilising indigenous yeasts in concrete tanks and the first pressings taste amazing.

Cheers to the 2017 vintage. It will be one to remember.