

2006

10 /10

A brilliant follow up vintage bringing wines of generosity and terrific balance. Good winter and spring rains were followed by initially mild weather. A very hot January caused some concern but cooler temperatures arrived throughout February. Rain caused some berry splitting, but this was not experienced by all vineyards. March was warm allowing even ripening. A stand out year for Shiraz. The wines are beautifully poised with lovely fruit definition and concentration.

2005

8 /10

A remarkably good vintage with near perfect growing conditions. A warm spring followed by a mild summer with intermittent and beneficial rainfall resulted in healthy canopies. A frost on November 3 damaged some vineyards and a hail storm in February caused some minor difficulties. Harvest started a little early and yields were slightly above average. Shiraz was allowed to hang a touch to achieve better tannin and flavour development.

2004

6 /10

A difficult year. Vintage arrived early but cool weather over the picking period extended harvest. Near drought conditions prevailed with half the long term average rainfall. A warm November and December accelerated the growing season but cooler weather arrived in January. 16 days of relentless energy sapping heat averaging 37.9 wilted vines and winemaker's expectations. Some moderate wines were made.

2003

6 /10

A year of extremes. A heavy downpour occurred in February after a very dry, hot period. This caused widespread berry splitting and spelled disaster for some growers. Some vineyards - with strict management regimes - fared better. Many Shirazes have not reached optimum phenolic ripeness

2002

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Good winter rainfalls replenished soil moistures but a wet, windy spring resulted in poor fruit set. This was followed by a unusually cool summer. Warm, dry conditions over autumn allowed the fruit to ripen extremely well. A good rather than great Shiraz vintage with excellent fruit concentration and flavours.

2001

9 /10

A big year. Spring rains during winter and early spring preceded a very hot, dry summer. Expect Shirazes with plenty of concentration, flavour and alcohol.

2000

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A low-yielding vintage. Hail damage during October in the Leasingham Auburn area created some difficulties. Cool, windy conditions were followed by a dry early summer. A heat wave in February pushed along maturation, but rains towards vintage made the fruit quality variable. A site-specific vintage.

1999

8 /10

A very good year for Shiraz. A dry summer punctuated by much-needed rainfall produced wines with excellent varietal definition and flavour. While the Clare Valley did not suffer the problematic March rains, quality of vineyard site was an important factor; and those with an intimate knowledge of their vineyards produced the best wines.

1998

10 /10

One of the driest winters in 20 years followed by spring rains that brought soil moistures and dams back to normal levels. A warm, even growing season followed by a mild vintage made it an outstanding vintage for Clare Shiraz. The 1998 Armagh is astonishing.

1997

7 /10

Essentially dry conditions prevailed except for a brief spell of rain during early February. A burst of hot weather during late February caused vines to stall for a few weeks. This resulted

in delayed ripening during cooler conditions. An elegant Shiraz vintage.