

**Isabel Estate Vineyard
Marlborough
Vintage Report 2007
Growing Season September '06 – March '07**

Springtime was magic in Marlborough this year! Even with last year's growing season offering record temperatures, this past Spring was surprisingly warmer. It was short lived however, as Mother Nature has a terrible sense of humour; she turned the tables on us with a December of record lows. For the vines, this meant an early start to a flowering season, which then became a long drawn out process.

Frosts were a serious treat this year – and they were felt as late as mid November. Several vineyards in Marlborough were affected and some were even lost altogether. We felt very fortunate to avoid damage! Mike, once again, was thankful for our vineyards location (proximity to hillsides, direction of planting within the valley etc), which continues to protect us from severe temperature fluxes.

For many vineyards, the 'awkward' flowering stage of Nov/Dec meant poor fruit set – bunches with great variability of berry size. However due to the warm '05 December, bunch numbers were significantly higher and allowed us to thin any imperfect bunches while retaining reasonable crop levels. Production will be slightly down this year but we are proud that quality was never compromised.

With January and February being on par with average temperatures, berry growth and verasion remained on track – if not slightly ahead. Acid was retained by cool nights and regular 'breezes' whilst allowing typical characteristics to develop at a slow, even rate. A fabulous March followed with beautiful, long summer days, allowing all varietals to ripen to perfection.

Harvest dates for the 2007 vintage were back to normal after the unusually early '06 harvest. It continued at a nice steady pace due to perfect weather and 2 hours after the last grapes arrived from the vines, we welcomed the first real rain of months. Timing couldn't have been better.

	Mean Temps		LTA Mean	GDD 06/07	LTA GDD (87-'04)
	06/07	05/06			
September	12.6°	11.9°	10.6°	82.2	49
October	13.1°	12.7°	12.7°	102.9	102.4
November	15.6°	15.1°	14.6°	171.0	131.8
December	14.6°	18.6°	16.7°	144.0	207.3
January	17.8°	18.2°	17.9°	241.4	242.7
February	17.6°	17.7°	17.8°	212.9	217.2
March	17.8°	15.0°	16.2°	242.9	182.7

LTA = Long Term Average
GDD = Growing degree days