

1997 BAROSSA VINTAGE REPORT

SUMMARY

Good early season growth and spring rains, followed by a warmer than average January and a very hot February, resulted in stressed vines but a low incidence of disease. The vintage produced very good quality Barossa Valley and Eden Valley reds – powerful Shiraz and very good Cabernet. It was also a very good year for Eden Valley Riesling, producing wines with balanced alcohol levels and full flavours.

In 1997 there were 6,899 hectares of vineyards in Barossa and 53,944 tonnes of wine grapes were crushed in that vintage.

HIGHLIGHTS

Plantings of vines continued to increase and the demand for viticultural land, particularly land with a proclaimed water supply (dam or bore) forced prices above \$25,000/ha. Wineries started to become concerned about lack of processing capacity and investment turned from vineyards to building crushing, fermentation and storage facilities.

Orlando celebrated its 150th Anniversary by re-purchasing and restoring Johann Gramp’s original cellars and replanting the original vineyard with bush-vine Riesling.

On February 11 a meeting of 98 Barossa Valley grapegrowers approved the Geographic Indications of the Barossa Zone

and the Barossa Valley and Eden Valley regions. On the following day a meeting of Eden Valley Winegrowers also approved the regional identification. The GI was then presented to the Australian Wine and Brandy Corporation’s Geographic Indications Committee and approval was granted later that year.

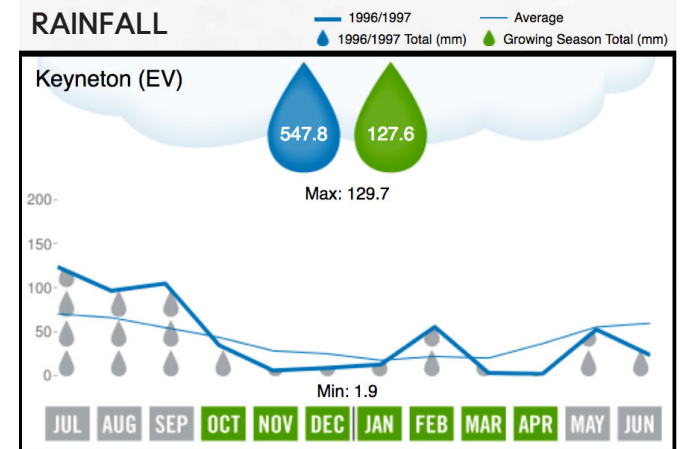
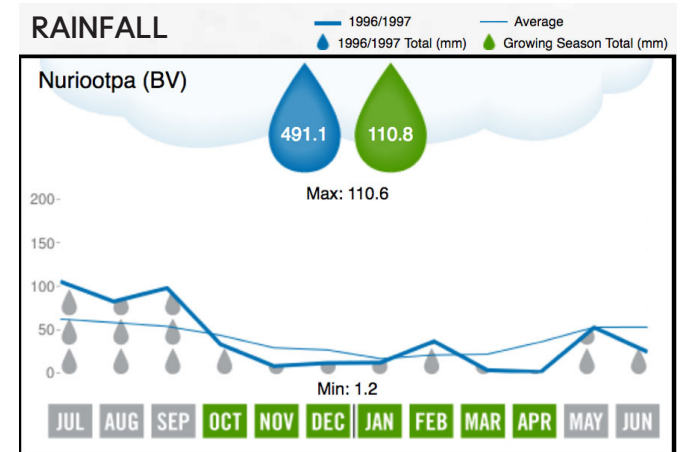
The 1997 Barossa Wine Show Auction set a benchmark price for an Imperial of Barossa Shiraz, when St Hallett’s Bob McLean paid \$8000 for a blend of Penfolds Grange, Saltram No.1, Henschke Mt Edelstone, Peter Lehmann Stonewell, Yalumba The Octavius, St Hallett Old Block and Grant Burge Meshach. The wine was re-offered to UK cricket legend Ian Botham’s annual Leukemia Foundation auction.

Irvine Wines’ Grand Merlot won the inaugural Swiss Academie du Vin and “Wein Wisser” magazine world Merlot tasting for The Best Merlot in the World, defeating international competition such as Chateau Petrus.

HONOURBOARD

Vigneron of the Year – Prue Henschke

Sources: SA Wine Grape Crush Survey, Vinehealth Australia and *Barossa Vintages: a wine history from 1842*, Peter Fuller



TEMPERATURE

