

# *A summary of* VINTAGE CONDITIONS 1980 – 2017

*Gold* denotes a very good vintage and *Red* a very poor vintage.

- 1980: The growing season was generally dry and the summer hot. The whites were mostly rather plain and broad, but the reds were very good.
- 1981: This was an exceedingly dry year with a hot summer. Yields were very low in vineyards that did not have water and even in some that did. The whites were coarse and matured early. Many reds were massive and too tannic to be balanced, or simply lacked flavour.
- 1982: The Hunter had a short respite from the four-year drought with a quite cool vintage period, apart from one very hot spell in mid-February. The whites were very good but the reds were average quality and lacked weight.
- 1983: The summer was generally hot and dry and there was extreme heat mid-vintage. The reds were excellent, with deep colours and higher tannins. The whites were full flavoured and the best of the reds still drink well. One of JYT's most memorable vintages on record due to a union strike, which saw the family and Patrick Auld complete the vintage without any staff, who were busy picketing the wineries entry gate. Driving the tractors and picking at night followed by crushing and winemaking during the day.
- 1984: There was heavy rain early in vintage and follow-up showers never allowed the vines and soil to dry out. The reds were badly rain-affected and light in flavour.
- 1985: A hot, dry summer produced firm long lasting reds. Some Semillons were rather tough and lean and seemed to lack fruit.
- 1986: This was a very good year in the Hunter for both whites and reds. The reds had very good depth and structure and have aged and continue to nicely.  
*HECTOR LIMITED RELEASE SHIRAZ (inaugural vintage)*
- 1987: A wet vintage, but some good, medium-weight reds and whites were made. A relatively cool year and, in spite of rain near the start of vintage, both reds and whites were excellent. The reds are of medium weight, with very elegant flavours.  
*HECTOR LIMITED RELEASE SHIRAZ*
- 1988: A wet summer and vintage which generally produced ordinary wines.



- 1989 : There was some rain at vintage, but quite good reds and okay whites.  
**HECTOR LIMITED RELEASE SHIRAZ**
- 1990 : A wet vintage, but some good, medium-weight reds and whites were made.  
This was a very dry year throughout the whole growing season and yields were about half the average. The reds were rich and strong and have aged well. The whites were big, broad wines.
- 1991 : **HECTOR LIMITED RELEASE SHIRAZ**
- 1992 : The 1991 drought continued into this growing season resulting in poor vine growth. This was followed up by vintage rain creating havoc with the harvest. Reds were mostly poor.
- 1993 : Good start with excellent budburst although showers brought disease pressure. Vintage was later than average and further wet weather caused some fruit to be picked early to beat the rot.
- 1994 : A cool growing season followed by extreme heat and bushfires in January and then rain during February. Despite this the reds turned out better than expected, but whites were mainly uneven.  
**HECTOR LIMITED RELEASE SHIRAZ**
- 1995 : A very dry winter with much-needed rain in November and December. A trouble free vintage with no disease pressure and just below average yields.  
**HECTOR LIMITED RELEASE SHIRAZ**
- 1996 : Dry winter and spring was followed by rain with a damp start to vintage preceded by hot days and quick ripening. Below-average crop, but overall a good year.  
**HECTOR LIMITED RELEASE SHIRAZ**
- 1997 : A great start to the growing season, only to be spoilt by a massive thunderstorm causing wide spread hail damage and repeated vintage rain resulting in wide spread rot and unripe fruit. However, Verdelho beat the rain and most of these wines were good.
- 1998 : Well-timed rains in August were ruined by hot periods and bushfires in early December. The arrival of heavy rain in January caused problems but most fruit was picked generally free of disease.
- 1999 : January was hot, but rain towards the end of the month threatened the whites with rot. Picking started in February and the difficult weather persuaded most winemakers to pick early rather than take the risk. The shiraz had very good colour and flavours.  
**HECTOR LIMITED RELEASE SHIRAZ**
- 2000 : Thunderstorms caused localised hail damage, but overall Summer was cool and vintage started slightly early. Semillon was excellent, but timing was all-important for shiraz, with those who picked early making good but unexceptional wines, while those who waited too long were caught by March rain and those who picked just before the rain made exceptional wines to rival the 1991 reds.  
**HECTOR LIMITED RELEASE SHIRAZ**

- 2 0 0 1 : Vintage commenced mid-January, with high temperatures of up to 47 °C followed by rain creating difficult conditions. Sunburn and rain meant many vineyards were picked before their prime.
- 2 0 0 2 : Mid to late January start to vintage again with average to above average yields for whites, but reduced shiraz tonnages. No major weather occurrences but generally a lacklustre vintage.
- 2 0 0 3 : An early and hot start to vintage as the worst recorded drought since 1902 continued. While yields remained low, the threat of disease was non-existent and wines of intense character were produced.  
JULIA LIMITED RELEASE SEMILLON (*inaugural release*)  
E.M. LIMITED RELEASE CHARDONNAY (*inaugural release*)  
HECTOR LIMITED RELEASE SHIRAZ
- 2 0 0 4 : Useful rain during the growing season, supplemented by irrigation saw a great start to budburst. An extremely hot late January and February ended in drenching rain, however clean whites and the reds were intense and rich.  
JULIA LIMITED RELEASE SEMILLON  
HECTOR LIMITED RELEASE SHIRAZ
- 2 0 0 5 : Another dry Winter with low soil moisture followed by a mild start to Summer, produced typically medium-bodied shiraz with ripe flavours and good tannins. Considered an excellent vintage.  
JULIA LIMITED RELEASE SEMILLON  
E.M. LIMITED RELEASE CHARDONNAY  
PRIVATE BIN POKOLBIN DRY RED SHIRAZ (*first release since 1974*)  
HECTOR LIMITED RELEASE SHIRAZ
- 2 0 0 6 : The heat marched on with one of the hottest Summers on records. An early start to vintage with continued excessive heat reduced crops and created intense but sometimes unbalanced reds.  
JULIA LIMITED RELEASE SEMILLON  
E.M. LIMITED RELEASE CHARDONNAY  
PRIVATE BIN POKOLBIN DRY RED SHIRAZ  
HECTOR LIMITED RELEASE SHIRAZ
- 2 0 0 7 : The height of the drought with little rain and continuing hot conditions, resulted in very intense red wines and fine Semillons. Although yields remained very low. the most experienced hunter vigneron were still able to produce wines of intensity without excessively high alcohols.  
JULIA LIMITED RELEASE SEMILLON  
E.M. LIMITED RELEASE CHARDONNAY  
PRIVATE BIN POKOLBIN DRY RED SHIRAZ  
HECTOR LIMITED RELEASE SHIRAZ
- 2 0 0 8 : As the drought broke with the stranding of the Pasha Bulka on Newcastle Beach during the 2007 June long weekend storm, moisture returned to the soil for a good start to the growing season. Unfortunately, the rain returned with significant falls during vintage and Tulloch did not pick any Shiraz from the Hunter Valley in 2008.  
E.M. LIMITED RELEASE CHARDONNAY

- 2009:** A good growing season followed by a warm and dry spring set the scene for a trouble free vintage. Hot Summer time conditions and some rain resulted in a solid red vintage, with some reds considered outstanding.  
JULIA LIMITED RELEASE SEMILLON  
E.M. LIMITED RELEASE CHARDONNAY  
PRIVATE BIN POKOLBIN DRY RED SHIRAZ  
HECTOR LIMITED RELEASE SHIRAZ
- 2010:** Warm weather and hot winds lead to uneven flowering and reduced cropping as vintage got off to an unusually early start. Semillons were excellent, while rain events ultimately determined the style of Shiraz, ranging from elegant for those picked prior and full bodied for those picked after.  
JULIA LIMITED RELEASE SEMILLON  
E.M. LIMITED RELEASE CHARDONNAY  
PRIVATE BIN POKOLBIN DRY RED SHIRAZ  
HECTOR LIMITED RELEASE SHIRAZ
- 2011:** A very challenging start to the growing season as rain made life difficult and the threat of disease loomed as the season progressed. However, towards the end of December the rain finally stopped and 2011 proved to be one of the most hassle free vintages ever remembered in the Hunter, with no weather events and near perfect vintage conditions producing excellent whites and reds.  
JULIA LIMITED RELEASE SEMILLON  
E.M. LIMITED RELEASE CHARDONNAY  
PRIVATE BIN POKOLBIN DRY RED SHIRAZ  
HECTOR LIMITED RELEASE SHIRAZ
- 2012:** From what appeared to begin as a traditional Hunter season with most picking taking place late January, the situation deteriorated quickly for the reds with intermittent rain meaning many were left hanging. This was the second time the reds had been wiped out in 5 years, with Tulloch once again not picking any red fruit from the Hunter in 2012.  
E.M. LIMITED RELEASE CHARDONNAY
- 2013:** Very dry conditions during the growing season resulted in lower yields, but good quality wines. Record temperatures during early January gave way to a downpour on Australia Day, by which time some excellent Semillons and Chardonnay were already in the winery. Warm weather returned and excellent Shiraz was made from this vintage.  
JULIA LIMITED RELEASE SEMILLON  
E.M. LIMITED RELEASE CHARDONNAY  
PRIVATE BIN POKOLBIN DRY RED SHIRAZ  
HECTOR LIMITED RELEASE SHIRAZ

2014:

Hailed as one of the best vintages of the century, growing and harvest conditions were ideal with no disease or weather threat. Both whites and reds have the capacity to become the best of the decade, with many saying the 2014 vintage rivals the excellent 1965.

JULIA LIMITED RELEASE SEMILLON

E.M. LIMITED RELEASE CHARDONNAY

G SERIES G4 CHARDONNAY (*inaugural release*)

PRIVATE BIN POKOLBIN DRY RED SHIRAZ

HECTOR LIMITED RELEASE SHIRAZ

G SERIES G3 SHIRAZ (*inaugural release*)

2015:

180 mm of rain in late 2014 was followed by a further 220mm in January 2015 at the critical time for harvest. In the case of whites it presented some problems however we managed to harvest most in good conditions. Only the earlier maturing shiraz blocks were harvested in line with our policy of only taking good sound quality fruit.

PRIVATE BIN POKOLBIN DRY RED SHIRAZ

2016:

There was good rainfall through most of the year and all looked good up until January when 289mm of rain arrived during the ripening period, causing issues particularly for the later maturing reds. It is best to sum up as not a great red vintage with little shiraz harvested, but the small portion that was, is sound. Whites were good, but yield was down again.

JULIA LIMITED RELEASE SEMILLON

EM LIMITED RELEASE CHARDONNAY

2017:

I am sure that 2017 vintage will go down as one of the great ones with very good whites and excellent reds and will measure up to the 2014 vintage which is very highly regarded.

JULIA LIMITED RELEASE SEMILLON

G SERIES G3 SEMILLON (*inaugural release*)

E.M. LIMITED RELEASE CHARDONNAY

G SERIES G4 CHARDONNAY

PRIVATE BIN POKOLBIN DRY RED SHIRAZ

HECTOR LIMITED RELEASE SHIRAZ

G SERIES G3 SHIRAZ

2018:

Vintage 2018 arrived early as expected after an early budburst in Spring. We received below average rainfall and above average temperatures, resulting in a very early vintage which commenced on the 4th of January, with virtually no disease pressure or urgency to pick. Semillon, Chardonnay and Shiraz will be very good to excellent from this vintage, although yields were down.

JULIA LIMITED RELEASE SEMILLON

E.M. LIMITED RELEASE CHARDONNAY

G SERIES G4 CHARDONNAY

PRIVATE BIN POKOLBIN DRY RED SHIRAZ

HECTOR LIMITED RELEASE SHIRAZ

G SERIES G3 SHIRAZ