

THE BANVILLE BUZZ

JULY 1ST, 2022

BANVILLE 2022 SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE HARVEST REPORT: DESPITE SUPPLY CHAIN AND COVID-19 CHALLENGES, HARVEST LOOKS PROMISING

By Sabra Lewis

Vineyard managers, winemakers, and winery logistics personnel are some of the most dedicated people in the wine business. The commitment to harvest at the expense of sleep and physical deprivation is always striking, and our producers at Banville are no exception.

In North America, The Southern Hemisphere is sometimes overlooked by European superstars, so we wanted to shine a spotlight on their hard work- which is just as bright. Andeluna (Mendoza, AR), te Pā (Marlborough, NZ), and Barr-Eden Estate (Eden Valley, AU) are making stellar wines in their respective categories. Each facing unique harvest challenges in the 2021/2022 growing season.



Andeluna benefits from relatively consistent growing seasons due to their exceptionally high elevation vineyards in the Gualtallary region of the Andes foothills. At this altitude, frost is rarely an issue, and they favor sunny and dry conditions. 2022 resulted in a touch more rain during the growing season than usual, but this was an incremental variation. Notwithstanding the relative climatic consistency from vintage to vintage, they are deliberate in their pursuit of ever stronger viticulture. They are in organic conversion and are now certified organic in Argentina. Also, they've implemented a sustainable action plan which includes waste and water recycling, solar energy, and composting.

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The more immediate story is how Andeluna was affected by the global supply chain. Argentina has a mere three glass suppliers for the entire country. Due to the energy supply, these suppliers shut down ovens and ultimately stopped making 375ML bottles to meet the growing demand for 750ML bottles. They also stopped offering various colors of glass to meet the demand. The ripple effect of not having glass bottles in time to make space for the coming harvest would set any winery on edge. One must get creative in accommodating the looming crop when all vessels are full, as ordering new tanks take about a year plus to arrive - that's assuming one has the ready cash flow to order more.



Andeluna also experienced a paper shortage which affected their packaging, and they had to ship their wine in alternative boxes. Overcoming these challenges is a testament to their tight-knit team that worked together to solve complicated issues amid harvest and winemaking. So far, they are optimistic about this vintage and look forward to bottling in 750ML only bottles as 375ML are generally too small anyway!

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TE PĀ HAD AN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT EXPERIENCE THAN ANDELUNA...

te Pā's chief winemaker, Sam Bennett, says, "Despite previous claims to the title, 2022 can definitely be categorized as the 'Covid Harvest'". New Zealand's near-zero COVID policy in the first year (plus) of the pandemic meant that wineries were primarily able to operate and execute their harvests. This year, people were in short supply. Outbreaks, quarantines, and shutdowns greatly affected the region's ability to bring grapes off the vine. There was a shortage of truck drivers, winery staff, grape pickers, etc., making production exceedingly challenging. The situation was so dire that Haysley, owner and founder of te Pā, was trucking grapes for his winery and helping his neighbors. The region rallied to help each other through the precarious harvest timeline.



Backing up to the growing season, te Pā, by and large, had a good year. They experienced a mostly warm and dry growing season except for February, with 300-500% more rainfall than average. The rain was due to a few tropical storm systems, including Cyclone Davi. March and April saved the season with warmer and drier weather. Sam said, "2022 marks a stylistic return to 2020 which was another cooler vintage, producing crisp, pure fruited, elegant and aromatic wines."

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BARR-EDEN'S HARVEST SEEMED TO BE MARKED MORE BY MOTHER NATURE...

Pierre-Henri Morel says, "2022 was a very interesting season, which started out as an ugly duckling but grew into a beautiful swan." He went on to say that much of Australia was impacted by the Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD), aka El Niño. This generally means storm activity, which was good for them in the winter, filling the ground and dams. Unfortunately, they had a catastrophic hail event on October 28th, which damaged clusters and bruised canes, lowering yields by 20-30%.

Luckily, they had a gentle summer with moderate temperatures, slow ripening, and an extended growing season. Pierre-Henri said they were "saved by magical weather post-Veraison," and they are thrilled with the early results of the 2022 vintage.

Whether the reality of the vintage was a shortage of glass, people, or yields, those challenges were largely overcome by a shared sense of teamwork to produce the finest wines possible. We look forward to tasting these wines from our strong Southern Hemisphere partners in years to come.



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