



## VINTAGE REPORT 2020

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Niagara Peninsula - Lake Erie North Shore - Prince Edward County

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### Conditions

2020 was a remarkable year for weather and wine in Ontario. All winegrowing regions were treated to excellent weather conditions, with just a few small exceptions, throughout the growing season. Wine Outlook for the 2020 vintage is very exciting with many producers reporting a very high-quality grape crop.

The year started off warmer than average and dry except for a couple of large snow falls in late January. Temperatures remained warmer than average throughout much of February as well with just one major snow fall in the third week of that month to note.

The warm trend continued for most of March leading Ontarians to believe that an early spring might be on its way. However, April had other plans and cold weather prevailed throughout most of the month. The temperatures

were below average cold and windy throughout most of Southern and Southwestern Ontario. Early reports indicated that bud break and the growing season may be slightly delayed in Prince Edward County due in part to the extended cold weather in April and a shortage of available labour required to uncover the vines that were killed up over winter.

Once spring arrived for good the growing season got underway across all regions. Wine growing regions enjoyed glorious weather with sunshine and low humidity throughout the month of May but with a few thunderstorms which brought high rains and winds at the end of the month.

By the time June arrived, summer in wine country was in full swing. The weather across Southern and Southeastern Ontario was

warmer than average and mostly dry.

July was warm and temperatures were above average for most of the month across the province. Small amounts of precipitation offset the heat and contributed to humidity mid-month. July was defined by three major heat events that effectively caused hotter than average weather from start to finish. Significant heat also brought other types of significant weather and the month was punctuated by heavy but short rainfalls and short bouts of intense winds across the province.

In August temperatures continued to be warmer than average. The month also saw its fair share of thunderstorm and extreme weather events but most were short, intense and isolated. Weather continued to be very favourable for grape growing.

### Harvest



Sunny and dry conditions continued throughout September and October providing ideal weather for the full and complete maturation of grapes and their harvest. Some winery growers reported a slightly earlier than average harvest – end of August, for sparkling

varieties. Harvest for table wines followed close on the heels of sparkling and progressed steadily through the month of October.

Dry conditions at harvest resulted in grapes harvested in good condition with good fruit concentration.

While the overall grape crop is down compared to recent vintages, grape quality across all varieties is expected to be exceptional and wine expectations for the 2020 vintage are very high.

## Icewine

Pre-registrations for grapes set aside for Icewine total 1,068 tonnes, down

significantly from last year's 5,789 tonnes and setting a record low for pre-

registrations since VQA Ontario began regulating the Icewine harvest.