



Vintage **REPORT 2022**

A YEAR BIG ON QUALITY

By all accounts, the quality of grapes in 2022 was exceptional across the board. Unfortunately, the 2022 crop was small, producing on average, just 50% of the yield of previous years. Vintage dated wines from 2022 will be highly sought-after for both their quality and scarcity. Wine outlook for the 2022 vintage is excellent.

Heading into 2022, wineries and growers in the Niagara Region were dealing with significant vine and root damage, the result of wet weather fall of 2021 followed by a sudden cold snap at the end of harvest last year. Many vineyards did not have the opportunity to fully dry out before winter came with a deep freeze. Reports indicate that damage was widespread with varieties like Pinot Gris, Pinot Noir, Merlot and Sauvignon Blanc most effected.

The new year got off to a very cold start, with extreme cold temperatures throughout January across the province. In southern Ontario, where most vineyards are located, it was the coldest January since 2015. Moving into February, the weather was variable with big swings in temperature, from unseasonably warm, to cooler than average, with heavy precipitation in the form of both snow and rain across winegrowing regions at the end of the month. Lake Erie North Shore fared better through the winter, experiencing warmer temperatures than Niagara.

March gave a preview of spring, with warm weather and some melting, only to have winter re-emerge for a second act. April continued the theme, with colder than usual temperatures.



Vintage **REPORT 2022**

June was relatively warm and dry, with a few storms bringing a lot of rain all at once, but the weather was otherwise agreeable for grape growing. July showed much the same, including an intense heat wave at the end of the month that surprised international guests who came to Ontario for the International Cool Climate Wine Symposium. Luckily, sufficient precipitation came through at the right time.

At the end of summer, most regions could agree that the season was progressing well. August saw several storms roll through, with significant precipitation accumulating in a short time, followed by more hot and dry conditions.

Lake Erie North Shore saw ideal conditions – an abundance of sunshine and just enough rain when needed. Grape quality was excellent and, unlike other appellations in Ontario, Lake Erie North Shore reports 100% of normal harvest tonnage. It was the driest summer in 10 years, which meant little to no humidity or disease pressure. Reports indicate that red vinifera varieties are of especially good quality and should result in exceptional wines from the 2022 vintage.

Conditions in Prince Edward County closely mirrored Niagara Peninsula. Although many of the vines were protected by both soil and geotextiles, a significant drop in yield was experienced. Spring was cool, which slowed bud-break, and summer was warm and relatively dry. Heavy rain at the end of the summer forced some growers to pick a bit early, but then September evened out, allowing remaining grapes to hang and ripen. Overall quality was very high, with Chardonnay from this vintage showing a great balance of acid, sugar and phenolic ripeness.



Vintage **REPORT 2022**

HARVEST

Conditions for harvest were quite favourable, with wineries reporting a broad window of opportunity to bring in grapes. September was dry and reasonably warm, compared to last year, and enthusiastic growers made quick work of the relatively light harvest. Crop size was the main story, but fruit quality was excellent and the grapes that were brought in had winemakers wishing for more!

ICEWINE

For 2022, Icewine grape registrations total 763 estimated tonnes, down substantially from the previous year. With the total wine grape crop in Ontario roughly half of that harvested in 2021, grapes are in high demand for table wines. This has contributed to the reduction in grapes netted for Icewine.

WINE OUTLOOK

Early reports indicate 2022 will be a banner year for quality wines across the Province. 2022 should be a vintage of exceptional quality – and limited quantity.