



# VINTAGE REVIEW

Every growing season is different and mother nature can throw some curve balls at us. What happens in the vineyard is a huge determinant for wine quality. Below is a summary of the various vintage growing years using our Naramata Bench vineyard for weather statistics.

## 2003

Degree days: 1,769  
Frost-free days: 212

One of the **longest and hottest summers** on record. With the exception of a few smoky days from the Okanagan Mountain Park fire, our vineyard reaped the benefits of an endless summer of above average temperatures. A bonafide vintage year.

## 2004

Degree days: 1,576  
Frost-free days: 210

A **warm spring** led to accelerated development in the vineyard. **Cooler August** temperatures allowed the acids to catch up with the high sugars. After extended hang-time, the warm season finish pushed harvest numbers to our target sweet spot by mid-Oct.

## 2005

Degree days: 1,506  
Frost-free days: 232

Crop levels were down across the valley due to a **rainy spring** that affected fruit set. However, the growing season warmed up considerably for the rest of the summer leading to a harvest of lower quantity but concentrated flavours.

## 2006

Degree days: 1,550  
Frost-free days: 200

A **bumper crop** thanks to generous fruit set and cooperative weather conditions. While sometimes extra cropping can mean sacrificing quality, consistently warm weather in fact created an earlier harvest than average at optimal ripening.

## 2007

Degree days: 1,508  
Frost-free days: 199

An **early heat spell** in late spring led to moderately high temperatures throughout the season. September arrived with rain which initially caused a bit of **hand-wringing** for us, but ultimately allowed flavours to develop as the reds hung on the vine well into October.

## 2008

Degree days: 1,442  
Frost-free days: 187

**Winter damage** from a November 2007 cold snap damaged many of the red varieties, thus crop loads were way down. However, **small crops** are easier to ripen and provide greater intensity. A cool spring delayed bud break but incredibly warm September saved the season.

## 2009

Degree days: 1,627  
Frost-free days: 189

The **shortest growing season** we've ever experienced. Budbreak was delayed by an exceptionally cool spring and an **early frost** on Oct 12th compressing the season by 4 weeks. Fortunately, solid summer heat and a remarkably warm September actually created a faster ripening cycle which challenged winemakers to balance high Brix with falling acids.

## 2010

Degree days: 1,429  
Frost-free days: 213

**One of the coolest** we've experienced. A late wet spring resulted in a slow start. Warm summer temperatures got things going but ripening came to a grinding halt in September with low temperatures and uncharacteristic rainfall. Cautious **fruit thinning** helped adjust crop load and fortunately a heat wave in October put the harvest on track.

## 2011

Degree days: 1,384  
Frost-free days: 189

A **late season from beginning to end**. Bud break was 3 weeks behind normal and while we did get some decent heat units in August and September, the vineyards just never caught up. Thankfully, October brought some above average temperatures allowing us to keep fruit hanging until mid-November.

## 2012

Degree days: 1,545  
Frost-free days: 215

Considered one of the better vintages in the past 5 years, the growing season was **long and warm**. Despite a wet spring, 2012 delivered an almost flawless Okanagan summer, followed by extended fall warmth. While some vineyards had large yields this year, we managed our crop levels carefully to still stay within our target **focusing on quality, not quantity**.

## 2013

Degree days: 1,624  
Frost-free days: 213

Again a **warm growing season**, but with **more humidity** than normal, which can create challenges in the vineyard. Fortunately after some rains in September, the weather dried up through October which allowed us to pick on schedule at optimal ripeness levels.





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## 2014

Degree days: 1,702  
Frost-free days:

In a simple word, the 2014 growing year was **HOT**. Even with the typical June rains, the season was above average for temperatures and the early spring really created a **long growing season**. While we anticipated an early harvest, we did get a nice pause with **warm days and cool nights** typical of the Okanagan to help retain acidity in the wines.

## 2015

Degree days: 1,764  
Frost-free days:

Starting with a particularly warm spring, 2015 became **one of the hottest on record** in the Okanagan Valley. Hot doesn't necessarily guarantee a stellar vintage as vines can shut down once temperatures go beyond 35 degrees. Overall, harvest dates were **two to three weeks early** with fabulously ripe fruit.

## 2016

Degree days: 1,635  
Frost-free days:

With the **earliest bud break** on record in the Okanagan, the spring had significant heat units which caused the vineyards to surge in growth. A more **moderate summer** helped to gain back some balance in the vines. Ripening was early but gradual as fall rains slowed down the pace at harvest. An **early frost** on October 11th created havoc for some wineries but our vineyards were unscathed.

## 2017

Degree days: 1,598  
Frost-free days:

The 2017 brought **some wild weather**. One of the coldest winters we've experienced in years gave way to a cool, wet spring. Although there was **flooding** in the Okanagan, it was followed by 54 straight days with no rain. The **hot dry summer** allowed fruit development to catch up from its late start and created smaller more concentrated grapes. Fall weather cooled down quickly, but we were able to bring in our fruit prior to any risk of frost.

Source: GDD and FF - Summerland Research & Development Centre, Osoyoos reference



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