

# Australian Vintage Wrap 2016

By Daniel Honan



The sun sets on Ridgemill Estate, The Granite Belt.

The year 2016 was a difficult vintage for Australian winegrowers. Soaring temperatures were felt in most of the regions where wine grapes are grown, paving the way for some of the earliest starts to vintage ever recorded. There were prolonged drought conditions in some places, while in others, persistent rainfall tested the mettle of even the most experienced winegrowers and some of the oldest vines. Some, of course, fared better than others, but 2016 will most likely be remembered as the vintage that separated the must from the marc.





## MARGARET RIVER - WA

Way out west, on the coastal fringe of Margaret River, low rainfall and high temperatures again had a significant impact on the growing season leading up to vintage. All indications were that the harvest would be the earliest ever, with flowering and veraison both finishing significantly earlier than historical records show. "All that changed in December with the arrival of much higher rainfall than normal and slightly warmer than usual temperatures," says Will Berliner, winegrower at Cloudburst Wine in Margaret River.

"The chardonnay was picked the earliest it's ever been picked, and the cabernet experienced the most amount of rain it ever had before. Yet both varieties have come through beautifully, and I expect they will eventually transform into excellent wines from this region."

(Excerpt from original article)