



# TRUFFLE HILL WINES

PEMBERTON, WESTERN AUSTRALIA

## Vintage Preview 2010

*With the harvest for the 2010 Truffle Hill vintage upon us Mark Aitken, Truffle Hill Wines winemaker, takes a moment to preview the vintage for us.*

“I can’t remember a better ripening season in the almost ten years I have worked as a winemaker in the Manjimup/Pemberton wine region. The season started with very late budburst due to a typical cold, wet Manjimup winter (perfect for truffles by the way). The soils were fully charged with moisture but any fears of a miserable 2006 type vintage disappeared as the heat arrived in November.

The vines exploded out of the blocks faster than Usain Bolt! The vines caught up and past the previous season such that as I sit here writing this on the 22<sup>nd</sup> February we are at least a week ahead of the previous season after being two weeks behind at budburst, amazing.

Below is a table showing the average temperatures in Manjimup this growing season and be warned if you are a global warming skeptic, look away now.

Table 1 - Average min and max temperatures in Manjimup Nov 2009 –22<sup>nd</sup> Feb 2010 compared to 1936 – 2008 averages

	Nov Min	Nov Max	Dec Min	Dec Max	Jan Min	Jan Max	Feb Min	Feb Max
2009-2010 Average Temperatures	10.7	23.6	11.2	26.3	12.8	28.4	14.2	27.8
1936-2008 Average Temperatures	10.1	21.8	11.6	24.7	13.0	27.1	13.3	27.0

Source: [www.eldersweather.com.au](http://www.eldersweather.com.au)

In terms of rainfall, winter and early spring were great, plenty of rain and full dams, as a farmer you couldn’t ask for more. Details of the rainfall during the season are detailed in the table below.

Table 2 - Rainfall in Manjimup Nov 2009 –22<sup>nd</sup> Feb 2010 compared to 1916 – 2008 averages

	November	December	January	February
2009-2010 Rainfall(mm)	64.2	4.6	2.8	1.6
1916-2008 Average Rainfall (mm)	46.5	25.5	19.1	19.2

Source: [www.eldersweather.com.au](http://www.eldersweather.com.au)

If I was praying to the god of viticulture to give me the ultimate growing conditions, my prayers have been answered. Optimum vine growing temperatures are in the range of 23 – 28 degrees C and we have had plenty of daylight hours in that range.

No rainfall means no clouds and no overcast with heaps of bright light reaching the leaf and fruiting zone. Bright sunny, blue skies almost every day with associated light winds due to the mild temperatures has created Smart and Dry utopia in Manjimup and Pemberton this year

The only thing that can stop this from being the vintage of the decade (century?) is a weather U turn for the worse between now and around the first or second week of April.

But I add a disclaimer. Vine, soil and climate interaction is a complex thing and is something for which we still have an incomplete understanding, and therein lies the mystery and intrigue of wine. At the end of the day we will never know how good a vintage really is until we have the wine in the bottle, and more often than not several years after that.

And that, my friends, is what keeps me humble.”

Mark Aitken  
Winemaker