



2011 ESTATE RIESLING

WINEMAKING DATA

Harvest Dates: 28th of September to 8th of October, 2011

Brix at harvest: 19.9

Blend and grape source: 100% organically grown estate Riesling from the Locust Lane, Felseck and Rosomel vineyards

Alcohol: 11.5% **pH:** 2.80

Residual Sugar: 7.39 g/L **T.A.** 9.94g/L

Bottling Date: April 3rd, 2012

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WINEMAKER'S NOTES

The Estate Riesling vineyards were meticulously maintained to capture their varietal character. Bunches were exposed to sunlight at fruit set with leaf removal on the East side of the canopy to maximize fruit ripening while some leaves on the West side were left to protect against sunburn. Green harvest – the elimination of under-ripe bunches – was performed at the first sign of maturity and only non-touching, evenly spaced bunches exposed to sunlight remained to promote ripening, concentrate flavours and to best express our Beamsville Bench *terroir*.

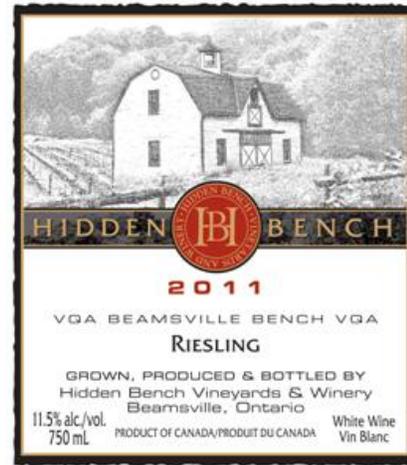
The grapes were handpicked, sorted and gently whole bunch pressed. Only the best quality juice was kept from the press, the equivalent of 37hL per hectare (2.46 tons/acre). The juice was cold settled for 5 days, then racked off its lees (the heavy sediment) and warmed to 18 degrees Celsius to begin fermentation. Cool fermentation lasted 3 months which gives the wine wonderful complexity.

TASTING

The 2011 Estate Riesling shows an enticing floral nose with delicate lemon and honeyed aromas. Pure and brilliant acidity balances a juicy, fresh palate. This vibrant wine shows beautiful concentrated flavours and a persistent wet-stone, mineral finish.

THE GROWING SEASON

2011 could be characterized as a year of contrasts! The start to the growing season was slow with cool and wet conditions (75mm above average rainfall in April and May) experienced in early Spring until mid June. This was followed by an extended period of warm and dry weather from mid June until the end of September with above average temperatures and below average precipitation.



ESTATE SERIES

The harvest period was challenging as a number of unpredictable weather systems gave us significant above average precipitation from September 26th through October 5th. Fortunately we had already picked a significant portion of our younger vines and were able to let the older vine fruit hang until after this rainy period due to the lack of breakdown.

Overall the growing season ended up being fairly normal for our cool-climate viticulture area with 1557 Degree days, a harvest period that ran from September 19th to November 7th, and a lower than forecast yield averaging under 2 tonnes /acre or approximately 30 HI /hectare of physiological and sugar ripe fruit.

The saving grace of the vintage for Hidden Bench was the meticulous vineyard, canopy and yield management of our vineyard team coupled with timely (read lucky!!!) picking decisions.

Every decision was thoroughly debated and considered by the Hidden Bench vineyard and winemaking team. Despite numerous challenges, we were able to bring in our handpicked fruit at optimum ripeness and our extensive “triage” or sorting of the harvested fruit has yielded some excellent wines. The 2011 wines show wonderful potential and should be viewed as typical examples of *terroir* driven, cool climate wines with elegance, higher acids and lower alcohols, in other words, age-worthy, balanced and easy to pair with your favourite foods.