



## 2011 FELSECK VINEYARD PINOT NOIR

### WINEMAKING DATA

**Harvest Dates:** 26<sup>th</sup> of September – 11<sup>th</sup> of October, 2011

**Brix at harvest:** 22.4 – 23.9

**Blend and grape source:** 100% organically grown estate Pinot Noir from the Felseck Vineyard

**Alcohol:** 13.5%

**pH:** 3.41

**Residual Sugar:** 0.23g/L

**T.A.** 5.82 g/L

**Bottling Date:** April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2013

**100% De-stemmed**

**Unfined and Unfiltered**

**Vine age:** Planted in 2003

**Oak regime:** 100% French Oak: 32% new, 22% 2<sup>nd</sup> fill and older for the 1<sup>st</sup> 11 months; stainless steel barrels and neutral oak for a further 5 months; Stainless steel 2 months prior to bottling

**Time in barrel:** 16 months

### WINEMAKER'S NOTES

The vines for this wine were meticulously maintained to maximize fruit ripening. Bunches were exposed to direct sunlight through leaf removal to promote maturation and flavour development. 'Green harvest' was performed at the first sign of *véraison*. Yields were naturally low; only 38.2hL per hectare (or 2.35 ton per acre). Low yields encourage ripening, flavor concentration and expression of our Beamsville Bench *terroir*.

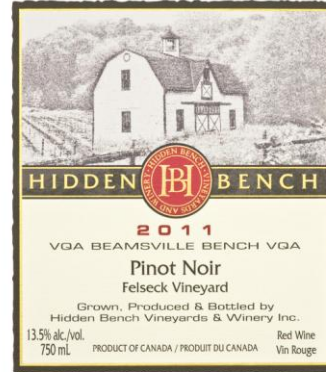
The grapes were handpicked, sorted, de-stemmed and transferred to 5-ton oak fermenters and then chilled for 8 days – this cold-soak encourages fruit flavours and colour enhancement. The wine was fermented with indigenous yeasts and the skins were hand-plunged three to four times a day during fermentation to balance extraction with finesse in the finished wine. Gravity was used to directly fill barrels at the end of fermentation and the skins were gently pressed in a traditional basket press. Malolactic fermentation occurred naturally in barrel and was complete in January 2012.

### TASTING

The Felseck Vineyard Pinot Noir offers up superb aromas of ripe raspberry and red cherry with underlying toasted notes that reflect the superb 2011 vintage. The complex and layered palate shows typical Felseck ferrous minerality and firm, structured tannins give the wine excellent cellaring potential.

### 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.



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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. The harvest period was challenging as a number of unpredictable weather systems gave us significant above average precipitation from September 26<sup>th</sup> through October 5<sup>th</sup>. 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 19<sup>th</sup> to November 7<sup>th</sup>, and a lower than forecast yield averaging under 2 tonnes /acre or approximately 30 Hl /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.