



2011 LOCUST LANE VINEYARD PINOT NOIR

WINEMAKING DATA

Harvest Dates: 22nd of September, 2011

Brix at harvest: 22.7-23.1

Blend and grape source: 100% organically grown estate Pinot Noir from the Locust Lane Vineyard

Alcohol: 13.5% **pH:** 3.42

Residual Sugar: 0.36g/L **T.A.** 6.01 g/L

Bottling Date: 4 April 2012

100% De-stemmed

Unfined and Unfiltered

Vine age: Planted in 2004, high density

Oak regime: 100% French Oak: 24% New, 16% 2nd fill and older for the 1st 10 months; stainless steel barrels and neutral oak for a further 5 months; Stainless steel for 2 months

Time in barrel: 15 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*. As a result of the warm and dry growing season, yields were low; only 33.4hL per hectare (or 2.06 tons per acre). Low yields encourage ripening, flavor concentration and expression of our Beamsville Bench *terroir*.

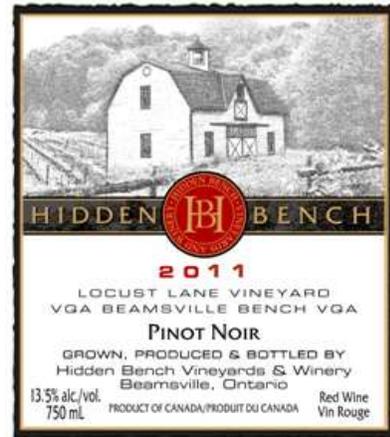
The grapes were handpicked, sorted, de-stemmed and transferred to 5-ton oak fermenters and then chilled for 7 days – this cold-soak encourages fruit flavours and colour enhancement. The wine was fermented with indigenous yeasts and the skins were hand-plunged three to four times a day during fermentation 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 2011 Locust Lane Pinot Noir shows a bright and perfumed nose of black cherry and plum that leads to a sweet core with rich, dark chocolate and blackberries on the palate. Smooth, velvety tannins and a tight, youthful structure lend this wine excellent aging 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



TERROIR SERIES

\$45.00

(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.

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 we 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 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 favorite foods.