



2015 ESTATE PINOT NOIR

WINEMAKING DATA

Brix at harvest: 22.5 – 23.5

Blend and grape source: 100% organically certified estate Pinot Noir from Locust Lane, Felseck and Rosomel Vineyards

Alcohol: 13.0% **pH:** 3.53

Residual Sugar: 0.26g/l **T.A.** 5.97 g/L

Bottling Date: March 23rd, 2017

100% De-stemmed

Vine age: Planted 1990 to 2010

Oak regime: 100% French Oak: 31% New, 4% 2nd fill, 27% 3rd fill and the rest neutral for 12 months; stainless steel for 6 months prior to bottling

Time in barrel: 12 months

Un-fined. Unfiltered. Certified Organic by Pro-Cert.

WINEMAKER'S NOTES

The fruit for our Estate Pinot Noir comes from select parcels in all three our estate vineyards.

At fruit set bunches were exposed to sunlight, with leaf removal on the East side of the canopy to maximize ripening, leaving the West side covered to protect against sunburn. Yields in 2015 were extremely low due to winter injury to the primary buds and on average the Estate Pinot Noir produced only 15hL per hectare.

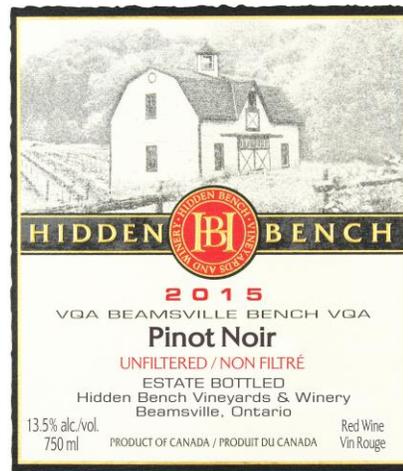
The grapes were handpicked, sorted and cold-soaked in small lots for 5 days. Fermentation started naturally with indigenous yeasts and the caps were gently hand-plunged up to four times daily. At the end of fermentation, the free run wine was drained by gravity directly into barrels and the skins were gently pressed in a traditional basket press. Natural malolactic fermentation was complete in the Spring of 2016.

TASTING

Our 2015 Estate Pinot Noir shows notes of ripe Morello cherry and raspberry on the nose, while the palate is rich with dark cherry and plum. Fruit aromas are nicely balanced with earthy, savoury notes, a hint of licorice spice and characteristic Bench minerality. The fine structured tannins are smooth and the finish long and lingering. Serve slightly chilled at 14-15°C.

THE GROWING SEASON

The growing season in the lead up to harvest 2015 saw yet another winter characterized by record breaking, brutally



ESTATE SERIES

cold temperatures with plenty of snow and ice. Persisting lower than average temperatures (to be precise, 8°C normal for February), lead to potentially devastating bud damage on our vines with many days spent worrying about their survival.

Spring weather was relatively normal and the first evidence of bud break appeared on the 8th of May. High rainfall in June was followed by a very dry month of July. Mother Nature finally allowed normalcy to return and the summer brought warm and sunny conditions.

The beautiful warm weather lingered well into September, giving the vines a chance to slowly ripen fruit and gain phenological maturity. These favourable conditions lasted until the end of October, which allowed for good sugar accumulation and optimal flavours in all varieties.

Vintage at Hidden Bench commenced on the 17th of September with Chardonnay and the last of the Bordeaux reds was picked on the 27th of October.

Quality of the 2015 vintage is exceptional due to the favourable ripening conditions in both the aromatic whites and wines in barrel show tremendous potential. Varietals adapted to the Bench did particularly well, such as Pinot Noir, Chardonnay and Riesling, while the Bordeaux reds benefitted from the long warm Fall conditions.

Despite being dealt two severe winters in a row, our particular and unique location on the Beamsville Bench, as well as scientific, meticulous and thoughtful viticultural practices, ensure that our vines are on the road to recovery.