



2009 LOCUST LANE VINEYARD PINOT NOIR

WINEMAKING DATA

Harvest Dates: 10th of October, 2009

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

Brix at Harvest: 22.7

Alcohol: 13.0% **pH:** 3.65

Residual Sugar: 0.43 g/L **T.A.** 6.70 g/L

Bottling Date: March 23rd, 2011

Oak regime: 100% French Oak: 22% New, 11% 2nd fill and older for the 1st 11 months; 35% Stainless steel barrel, 13% 2nd fill and older for a further 3 months; Stainless steel for 2 months

Time in barrel: 14 months

Bottled: Un-fined, Unfiltered, Bottled by gravity

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 cooler vintage we changed our vineyard management practices and left only 4 clusters per vine in this high density block. Yields were extremely low; only 17.5hL per hectare (or 1 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 10 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 2010.

TASTING

On the nose, intense ripe plum and black cherry leads to a concentrated palate of dark chocolate, roasted coffee and ripe dark fruits. Fine silky tannins and a firm structure give the wine great cellaring potential.

THE GROWING SEASON

The 2009 vintage can be characterized by the saving grace of the warmth of late August and the month of September. This



six week period turned a challenging growing season into a classic. Overall seasonal temperatures were lower than historical averages while precipitation levels were higher. This required meticulous attention to detail in the vineyard with extreme yield management to ensure our fruit achieved the highest possible maturity. April, May and June were cool months with more rain than the same period over the last 5 years – 325 millimeters in a 90-day period! New vineyard plantings benefited from this moisture, while our existing blocks required more attention than normal to limit vigor.

In July it was evident that extreme yield management was required to ensure the best quality fruit. Green harvesting, the removal of under-ripe grape bunches from each vine, was completed three weeks earlier than normal to enhance fruit maturity. Using precision viticulture, we meticulously maintained vine growth to expose fruit to the sun, encourage air circulation, which in turn opened up the canopy. Leaves were removed when they shaded grape bunches; vine shoots were positioned vertically to provide maximum exposure to the sun.

There was a positive change in mid-August and throughout September. This period of dry, warm weather truly enhanced the vintage. Flavours developed beautifully in the vineyard. The benefits of our extreme yield management were evident in mid-September and harvesting started the first week of October.

The harvest months of October and November were cooler than average thereby prolonging the vintage and allowed our fruit to ripen completely on its own terms. Cool climate viticulture contributes to the story of our *terroir* and vintage to vintage variation, adds to the notion of 'truth' in our wine.