



2011 ESTATE PINOT NOIR

WINEMAKING DATA

Harvest Dates: 22nd of September to 11th of October, 2011

Brix at harvest: 21.8 – 24.1

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

Alcohol: 13.5% **pH:** 3.48

Residual Sugar: 0.26g/L **T.A.** 5.74 g/L

Bottling Date: 5 April 2013

100% De-stemmed

Vine age: Planted 1990 to 2006

Oak regime: 100% French Oak: 31% New, 18% 2nd fill and older for the 1st 9 months; stainless steel barrels and neutral oak for a further 6 months; Stainless steel for 2 months

Time in barrel: 15 months

WINEMAKER'S NOTES

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

At fruit set, we exposed all bunches to sunlight, with leaf removal on both sides of the canopy to maximize ripening. Green harvest was performed at the first sign of *véraison*.

Yields in 2011 were naturally low due to smaller than expected cluster weights and on average the Estate Pinot Noir produced 27hL per hectare (1.5 tons/acre).

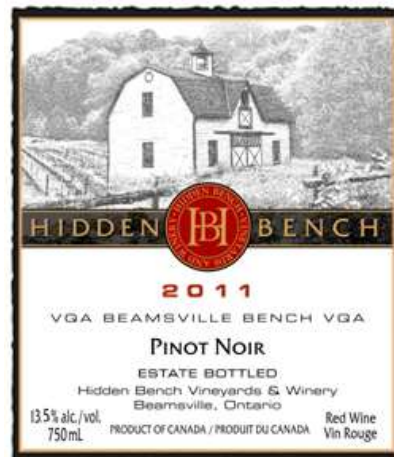
The grapes were handpicked, sorted and cold-soaked in small lots for 5 to 8 days. Fermentation started naturally with indigenous yeasts and the caps were gently hand-plunged between three and four times daily during fermentation. At the end of fermentation the free run wine was drained by gravity directly into barrels and the skins were gently pressed in a traditional basket press. Malolactic fermentation occurred naturally in barrel.

TASTING

Ruby red in colour, an expressive nose of red cherry, ripe field strawberry and delicate dried herbs leads to a savory palate with supple tannins and elegant structure. The finish is long, clean and mineral. Drink now until 2025

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.



ESTATE SERIES

\$29.75

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 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 favourite foods.