



2011 LOCUST LANE VIOGNIER

WINEMAKING DATA

Harvest Dates: 13th of October, 2011
Brix at Harvest: 20.3
Blend and grape source: 100% organically grown estate fruit from the Locust Lane Vineyard
Alcohol: 12.7% **pH:** 3.32
Residual Sugar: 2.29 g/L **T.A.** 6.72 g/L
Bottling Date: April 4th, 2012
Oak regime: 100% French Oak: all 5th fill and older (neutral)
Time in barrel: 4.5 months
Bottled by gravity

WINEMAKER'S NOTES

All Viognier bunches were exposed to sunlight at fruit set with leaf removal on both sides of the canopy to maximize ripening. Our Viognier comes from two parcels, a total of 0.68 acres and we harvested the equivalent of 29hL per hectare (2 tons/acre). After a gentle press cycle, the juice was cold settled for 4 days, then racked and transferred to neutral barrels by gravity. By fermenting in barrel, we preserve the delicate varietal aromatics while simultaneously improving the mouth feel of the wine.

TASTING

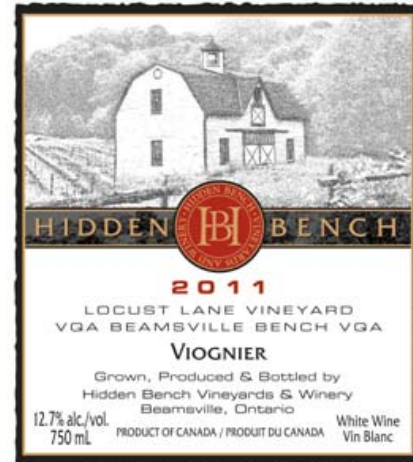
Brilliant yellow straw colour, the 2011 Viognier shows a bouquet of fragrant white flowers, stone fruit and intense white peach. The fresh peach and floral palate is dry and mineral, with a creamy mid-palate and subtle toast nuances. This is a true expression of the delicacy of the variety grown in a cool climate.

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.

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.