



## 2012 ESTATE RIESLING

### WINEMAKING DATA

**Harvest Dates:** 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> of September, 2012

**Brix at harvest:** 19.7-20.3

**Blend and grape source:** 100% organically grown estate Riesling from the Locust Lane, Felseck and Rosomel vineyards

**Alcohol:** 11.5%      **pH:** 2.88

**Residual Sugar:** 13.21g/L   **T.A.** 7.5g/L

**Bottling Date:** April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2013

**Filtered**

### WINEMAKER'S NOTES

The Estate Riesling vineyards were meticulously maintained to capture their varietal character. Bunches were exposed to sunlight at fruit set with leaf removal on the East side of the canopy to maximize fruit ripening while some leaves on the West side were left to protect against sunburn. Green harvest – the elimination of under-ripe bunches – was performed at the first sign of maturity and only non-touching, evenly spaced bunches exposed to sunlight remained to promote ripening, concentrate flavours and to best express our Beamsville Bench *terroir*.

The grapes were handpicked, sorted and gently whole bunch pressed. Only the best quality juice was kept from the press, the equivalent of 24hL per hectare (1.6 tons/acre). The juice was cold settled for 3 days, then racked off its lees (the heavy sediment) and warmed to 18 degrees Celsius to begin fermentation. Cool fermentation lasted 2 months which gives the wine wonderful complexity.

### TASTING

Enticing floral nose with delicate lime and mandarin orange. The concentrated palate shows Meyer lemon, quince with pure and bright acidity balancing a juicy, fresh finish. This vibrant wine shows beautiful concentrated flavours and a clean wet-stone, mineral finish.

### THE GROWING SEASON

The 2012 growing season can be characterized as an almost perfect example of what the potential impact both positive and negative can be of global warming on the viticulture of our region.

We experienced a very warm and mild winter which permitted our vineyards not to experience any winter cold damage as the coldest temperature we experienced was -16°C which is well above the threshold for any bud damage. This warm winter led to an early bud break in late April which caused us some acute anxiety on the weekend of May 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> as we experienced temperatures well below freezing.



### ESTATE SERIES

We were able to mitigate damage to the buds of our vines (particularly Chardonnay) by using a helicopter to keep the cold air moving to avoid frost damage, an expensive insurance policy but in our view well worth the risk.

The above average temperatures (+3°C) continued throughout the Spring and Summer and although we had adequate precipitation early in the year, the very warm temperatures of July and August were also accompanied by little or no rainfall. This lack of precipitation and lower than normal humidity resulted in less disease pressure so our vineyard team was able to reduce the number of organic copper and sulphur sprays to avoid mildew in the vineyards, a bonus for a certified organic producer like HB. Although the lack of precipitation was beneficial from a disease management point of view it caused some drought stress to our younger vineyard blocks and resulted at the end of the season in a 20% reduced crop weight due to lower grape bunch weights.

As we do every season, we adapted our canopy management strategy to suit the particularities of the vintage and in addition to very specific vertical shoot positioning, we left more than usual leaf coverage in the fruit zone to prevent sunburn on the grape clusters and to preserve delicate aromas of both red and white varieties.

Harvest started and ended about 10 days earlier than normal and the overall quality and health of the grapes across all varieties was exceptional with near perfect phenolic and sugar ripeness. This resulted in wines with exceptional concentration and richness coupled with good structure and fruit focus. We look forward to following the evolution of this superior vintage over the next few years.