



2012 LA BRUNANTE

WINEMAKING DATA

Harvest Date: 7th of October to 7th of November, 2012

Brix at Harvest: 23.7

Blend and grape source: 100% organically grown estate fruit from the Rosomel, Locust Lane and Felseck Vineyards
80% Merlot, 12% Cabernet Franc, 4% Cabernet Sauvignon, 4% Malbec,

Alcohol: 13.5% **pH:** 3.60

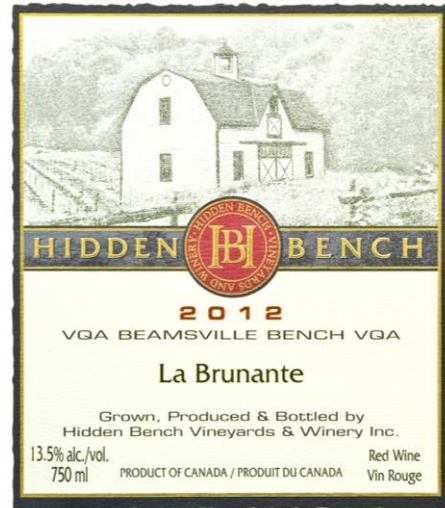
Residual Sugar: 0.26g/L **T.A.** 6.12 g/L

Bottling Date: August 29th, 2014

Oak regime: 100% French Oak: 90% New, racked after 6 months. 26% new for a further 14 months

Time in barrel: 20 months

Unfined and Unfiltered



TERROIR SERIES

WINEMAKER'S NOTES

La Brunante is the flagship Bordeaux style blend from Hidden Bench made only in the best years, where optimum maturity and flavour development are achieved in the vineyard. This small-lot wine was harvested from our highest performing Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, Malbec and Cabernet Franc parcels across our three Estate vineyards. Yields from this blocks were extremely low (less than 1.5 metric tonne per acre on average) which contributes to the concentration and power of the wine. All blocks used in this assemblage were fermented separately in small batches, hand-plunged to gently extract ripe tannins, and then gravity transferred to barrel. Malolactic fermentation occurred spontaneously in barrel via natural bacteria. The wine was blended at the first racking of the six barrels in May 2013, and then returned to barrel for a further 14 months.

TASTING

Deep dark red in colour, the 2012 La Brunante offers up an aromatic and perfumed nose of blackcurrant, very ripe plum and pencil shavings. The palate is intensely concentrated and layered with current, mulberry and plum, with a smooth and silky texture and persistent 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 5th & 6th as we experienced temperatures well below freezing. 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 temperature (+ 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 this 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.