



2016 ESTATE PINOT NOIR

WINEMAKING DATA

Brix at harvest: 20.7 – 22.9

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

Alcohol: 13.0% **pH:** 3.44

Residual Sugar: 0.32g/l **T.A.** 5.51 g/L

Bottling Date: Nov 22, 2017 & April 11, 2018.

100% De-stemmed

Vine age: Planted 1990 to 2010

Oak regime: 100% French Oak: 27% new, 10% 2nd fill, 7% 3rd fill and the rest (56%) neutral for 12 months; stainless steel for 3-7 months prior to bottling

Time in barrel: 12 months

Un-fined. Unfiltered. Certified Organic by Pro-Cert.

WINEMAKER'S NOTES

At fruit set, we exposed bunches to sunlight, with leaf removal on the East side of the canopy to maximize ripening, but leaving the West side covered to protect against sunburn. Yields in 2016 were improved from 2015, with 30hL/ha on average.

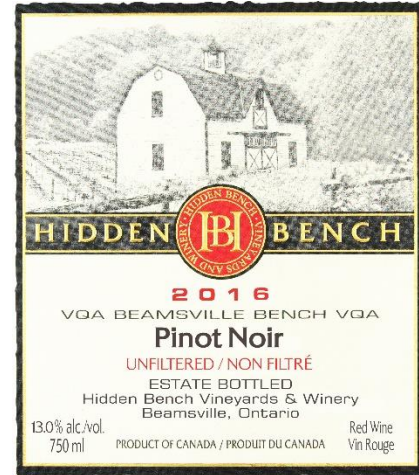
The grapes were handpicked, sorted and cold-soaked in small lots for 5 days, during which time a 10% "saignée" was made to produce Rosé wine and concentrate the skin to juice ratio in the must. Fermentation started naturally with indigenous yeasts and the caps were gently submerged twice daily during fermentation. At the end of fermentation, the free run wine was drained and settled in tank before barreling down by gravity. The skins were gently pressed in a traditional basket press. Natural malolactic fermentation was complete in the Spring of 2017.

TASTING

Pale ruby in colour, with an intense nose of fresh raspberry and loganberry. This Pinot Noir is approachable with generous notes of dark cherry, red plum and is balanced with fresh acidity. The well-integrated oak adds structure to the wine while the fine persistent tannins give length to the finish.

THE GROWING SEASON

Following a relatively mild winter, the season started off with an early but variable Spring with bud break starting around May 1st. By the end of May, conditions were much warmer and drier than normal and persisted well into the summer.



ESTATE SERIES

Soil moisture levels were much lower than the norm with most of the summer storms bypassing our Beamsville Bench vineyards. Younger vineyard plantings, with shallow root systems were most affected by the low soil moisture and the decision was made to remove the fruit and to hand irrigate these vines to give the vines a chance to avoid heat stress. Older, mature vines with deep established root systems showed no signs of stress and easily supported their balanced crop load.

The hot and dry weather, with a record breaking 33 days above 30°C, continued throughout the summer, with lots of bright sunshine and just enough rain to keep drought conditions from becoming too severe. Crop levels were good, with bunches increasing in size after the mid-August rains.

Harvest at Hidden Bench started on the 2nd of September with Pinot Noir and Chardonnay for sparkling base wines, followed by Rosé, Chardonnay and Pinot Noir around the middle to late September. Weather conditions were favourable throughout vintage with warm and dry conditions prevailing. Due to the dry conditions and meticulous vineyard and canopy management, disease pressure was minimal and it was a pleasure harvesting phenologically ripe and healthy fruit across all the varieties grown.

The exceptional weather of the 2016 vintage, permitted all wine varieties to show a lot of promise. Cool climate cultivars such as Riesling, Chardonnay and Pinot Noir show elegance and restraint, with typical Bench minerality, while the later ripening Bordeaux varieties show a richness with a ripe dark fruit character.