



2012 FELSECK VINEYARD PINOT NOIR

WINEMAKING DATA

Harvest Dates: 17th of September, 2012

Brix at harvest: 23.1

Blend and grape source: 100% organically grown and certified estate Pinot Noir from the Felseck Vineyard

Alcohol: 13.5% **pH:** 3.45

Residual Sugar: 0.21g/L **T.A.** 5.86 g/L

Bottling Date: March 11th, 2014

100% De-stemmed

Unfined and Unfiltered

Vine age: Planted in 2003

Oak regime: 100% French Oak: 28% new, 18% 2nd fill and older for the 1st 9 months; 25% new, 25% 2nd fill, rest neutral oak for a further 7 months; Stainless steel 2 months prior to bottling

Time in barrel: 16 months

WINEMAKER'S NOTES

The vines for this wine were meticulously maintained to maximize fruit ripening. Bunches were exposed to direct sunlight through leaf removal to promote maturation and flavour development. 'Green harvest' was performed at the first sign of *véraison*. Yields were naturally low; only 27hL per hectare (or 1.5 ton per acre). Low yields encourage ripening, flavor concentration and expression of our Beamsville Bench *terroir*.

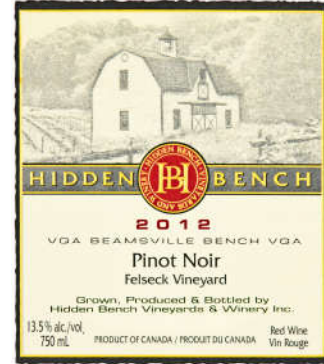
The grapes were handpicked, sorted, de-stemmed and transferred to 5-ton oak fermenters and then chilled for 7 days – this cold-soak encourages fruit flavours and colour enhancement. The wine was fermented with indigenous yeasts and the skins were hand-plunged three to four times a day during fermentation to balance extraction with finesse in the finished wine. Gravity was used to directly fill barrels at the end of fermentation and the skins were gently pressed in a traditional basket press. Malolactic fermentation occurred naturally in barrel and was complete in February 2013.

TASTING

The Felseck Vineyard Pinot Noir shows powerful aromas of black current, plum, toasted spice and earthy notes that reflect the ripe 2012 vintage. The generous and youthful pallet shows typical Felseck ferrous minerality and pronounced, structured tannins gives the wine excellent cellaring potential. Decant now or cellar for 5 or more years.

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.



TERROIR SERIES

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 -16C 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 and 6th as we experienced temperature 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 temperatures (+3C) 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 sulfur 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.