

WINEMAKER'S NOTES

Talon Ridge Single Vineyard comes from a specific parcel of Talon Ridge located in the south block on a little hill in the Vinemount Ridge sub-appellation. This wine appears very dark and deep in colour with bright purple-red undertones and persistent legs. At first the nose is quite intense, pleasant and rich. It shows flavours of dark berries, dried fruits, black pepper and mint. After swirling, the nose reveals more aromas of vanilla, plum and black cherries with notes of undergrowth and red fruits. The attack of this wine is lively and smooth; the palate is rich and concentrated but quite approachable. Tannins are ripe and still a bit dry but nicely balanced with a thick and soft texture in the mid palate. The body is dense and nicely balanced by a seam of acidity typical for this vintage. Aromas of ripe black fruit mingle with scents of sweet peppers and nicely integrated oak. Notes of wild flowers and humus are also revealed towards the end of the palate. The finish is smooth and fresh with soft tannins and a medium-long persistence of wild berries and underbrush. Overall, this wine shows great quality of fruit and body. Although it is quite approachable right now, it has great potential for longevity due to its rich tannins and fresh acidity.

VINE MANAGEMENT

All of our vineyards are farmed sustainably and are managed in such a way as to preserve the natural balance of the vines in their own terroir. We are using traditional practices in the vineyard in order to maintain the quality of the fruit and its aromatic identity. Every vineyard is treated individually according to its terroir specifications, (climate, soil, disease pressure, etc.). Each vine is cared by hand from the pruning to the harvest. After pruning in single Guyot system, we tie our canes to the fruit wire. Following bud break, we position each shoot by hand removing lateral and shoulder spurs to for better ventilation and better concentration on every single cluster. Toward the véraison, we pluck the leaves on the eastern side to promote a healthy ripening and preventing disease development. In 2009 we plucked the leaves from both the eastern and western sides due to the cold weather ensuring even ripeness for our grapes. At mid-véraison we green harvest if we feel our crop is too large or if disease pressure is spreading throughout the vineyard. Our spray program is based only on mined minerals: copper and sulphur; meaning we are not using any pesticides or insecticides in the vineyard. These products are only 'contact products,' remaining on the surface of the leaves and the grapes; we have to spray regularly to maintain good protection. After véraison, we net the entire vineyard to protect our grapes from bird damage until the harvest. In terms of soil management, our goal is to improve the macro and micro structure of our soil and to allow a good microbiological life in the soil. We cultivate every other row and leave a selected cover crop in the remaining rows, creating competition within the root system and allowing the top soil to remain crumbly. Finally, we are also utilizing biodynamic practices to optimize the natural resistance of our vines. To achieve this, we are spraying a selection of herbal preparations. We try to respect the lunar calendar when working our soils or applying sprays.

GROWING SEASON & HARVEST

2009 was a cool year in Niagara and our two Burgundian grape varieties: Pinot Noir and Chardonnay, liked this weather, achieving a later than normal ripening, yet perfectly clean and balanced. The growing degree days in 2009 were the lowest of the past 6 years. April saw a lot of rain; May was drier and the temperatures were seasonal. We saw a typical start to bud break in early May. The April rains allowed our chicken manure to penetrate into the ground, allowing the vines a strong kick off for the growing season. Fortunately the vineyard suffered only minor winter damage and the vigour was even across all our vineyards. June and July were cooler than normal and our Chardonnay vines started their bloom around the end of June under rainy conditions; the Pinot Noir vines started their bloom a week later; we didn't see bunch closure until the end of July. The cool temperatures prevented many of the typical disease pressures from developing. August was closer to seasonal temperatures, with the usual remnants of storm season from the south. Disease pressure remained low, and was not an issue by the time we harvested the grapes. We reached véraison at the end of August. At that time, clusters were small to medium sized and continued to ripen through September under perfect Pinot Noir and Chardonnay conditions. The weather was sunny and dry during the day with average temperatures around 22°C and cool at night. Our grapes had a long ripening period of about a month and were ready for harvest around the beginning of October. Acidity in both Pinot Noir

and Chardonnay were high, sugar level were around 22° Brix. The Pinot Noir skins were thick and allowed for very good phenolic and aromatic ripeness. Our Chardonnays had beautiful flavour with brown seeds and detached pulp. Harvest occurred under sunny and dry, but cool conditions at the end of an Indian summer. Sorting was minimal, only about 3%. All of our fruit looked great and promising for a fabulous vintage. Our grapes for our Talon Ridge Vineyard Pinot Noir 2009 were harvested on October 9th 2009 (a root day on the biodynamic calendar).

VINIFICATION & WINEMAKING

Due to the characteristics of the season, the fruit we harvested was sanitary clean and perfectly ripe, meaning we sorted barely 5% of the crop. The Pinot Noirs underwent five days of cold soak without any issues; after only two days the colour extraction was developing and the high acidity was stabilizing. We chose to do a saignée of 5% (bleeding) on most vats to optimize the colour, stability and concentration. Following the saignée, the indigenous alcoholic fermentations started smoothly. Some wines showed minor reductive characteristics and we were able to preserve the aromatic bouquet using pump-overs as well as rack-and-return. As usual, we pushed our maceration and extraction to approximately 32 days on average and since the grapes were so healthy, we were able to extend the maceration until we reached our desired balance of tannins and flavour. Again, because of the quality and the integrated pH and tannins, when we pressed out our new wines, we integrated almost 90% of the press juice into the free run juice. We allowed the wines to settle for two days, and then transferred them to barrel where they naturally underwent their indigenous malolactic fermentation in barrel.

AGEING

Following a healthy alcoholic fermentation, our objective was to achieve our wild malolactic fermentation naturally in the barrels. The malolactic fermentations started by the end of December, stopped for a few months during the winter, restarted in March and eventually finished by the end of May. This long period in barrel really allowed our wines to stabilize their colour and develop their balance between tannins, acidity and aromas. Our barrel selection was classic; all of our Pinot Noir went into 35% new oak and the remaining barrel percentage was a mix of used oak (from one to four year old barrels). All of our barrels are French oak (from a variety of forests and from a selection of seven different coopers) with medium toast. Our choice of forests and coopers is done accordingly to the identity of the wine; our goal is to maintain the natural flavour of vineyard without overpowering the bouquet with the oak. We don't want to be marked by any one cooper's style. Due to the strength of this vintage, we chose to push our barrel ageing to 18 months on the lees; optimizing the integration of the oak and developing a better complexity of the bouquet. The longer barrel ageing was beneficial for the wines because it helped to balance the strong acidity through a natural cold stabilisation in barrels over two winters, allowing the lees to better integrate and so, creating more roundness on the mid palate. The wines were racked out of barrel in May 2011, and left to homogenize in tank prior to bottling. We didn't need to fine the Pinot Noirs; they underwent an additional racking in tank and a light filtration prior to bottling. Our Talon Ridge Vineyard was bottled on June 22nd 2011.

VITICULTURE

Trellising System:	Vertical Shoot Positioning / Single Guyot
Planting Density:	5,555 plants per ha. (2249 per acre)
VQA Sub-Appellation:	Vinemount Ridge
Yields:	3.57 Tonnes/hectare (1.45 T/Ac; 21.6 hl/ha)
Alcohol:	12.5 % /vol
PH:	3.56
Residual Sugar:	< 2g/L
Total Acid:	6.3 g/L (expressed in Tartaric Acid)
Racking:	Twice: once after 12 months of barrel ageing to soften the tannins and once from barrel to vat prior to bottling.
Fining:	None
Retail Price:	\$40
UPC#	063657022306
Total production:	953 cases (6 of 6)