HANS HERZOG

HANS
FAMILY ESTATE

Botrytis Riesling

Established in 1994. Herzog, an artisan family winery is acclaimed throughout the world for growing handcrafted wines exclusively from their exceptional 'Grand Cru' organic vineyard. Its unique diverse terroir allows Hans to indulge his passion for many exciting grape varieties. His 'hands on' approach, immense vineyard work and almost uneconomically low yields set the bar for his outstanding range of stunning wines rich in varietal character. His winemaking is non-interventional and purely natural, nothing is added or extracted, letting the exceptional wines speak for themselves.

VINTAGE 2017

In 2017, a beautiful summer followed by a long and relatively dry autumn allowed us to pick our Riesling for a Dessert wine over three passes in late May. Beginning with the first affected grapes, we continued with two subsequent picks as noble rot developed, carefully avoiding grapes affected by grey rot. This selective approach in multiple passes is paramount to ensure that only grapes at the optimal point of botrytis infection are chosen. A portion of the grapes we picked naturally shrivelled on the vine (Trockenbeerenauslese - raisons), enhancing the complexity of the final blend. The tiny yield of 150g of grapes per vine, akin to liquid gold, and considerable labour involved, may not be economically viable. Nonetheless, it stands as a testament to the dedication and perseverance required to craft these extraordinary sweet wines.

Crafting sweet wines is an art that requires navigating the delicate balance between nature's unpredictability and the pursuit of perfection and is not without its challenges. Over the years, we've attempted to create these wines in various vintages, but only a select few, like the exceptional 2017 vintage, have surpassed expectations, yielding wines of unparalleled quality and complexity. While various methods exist for crafting sweet wines, the purest and most exceptional ones are created naturally in the vineyard - a process fraught with risk and intensive labour. It's a gamble, as we must leave perfectly ripe grapes exposed, hoping for the ideal conditions of a long, dry autumn, where grapes ripen to perfection under the warm sun, while gentle morning mist from the neighbouring Wairau River adds a touch of humidity without the threat of heavy rainfall that could spoil the fruit with grey rot. Yet, the late autumn brings increased rainfall, potentially transforming noble rot into the undesirable grey rot.

HANS' COMMENT

The whole bunches were gently pressed before being transferred directly into a single French Puncheon for fermentation. With abundant residual sugar, fermentation unfolds slowly over a leisurely three months. Afterward, I allowed the wine to mature gracefully in the puncheon for an additional six months, coaxing out its full beauty and essence.

TASTING NOTES

A sweet wine crafted for seduction, offering a rich and luscious experience. Immerse yourself in the intoxicating aromas of honey, nectarine, and peach, intertwined with uplifting orange peel notes that add a refreshing zest to the bouquet. This wine exudes power, yet with an effortless grace, showcasing a perfect balance between unctuous richness and vibrant acidity. It's a testament to elegance, with nothing brash or showy, just pure finesse in every sip. The finish is endlessly long, leaving a lasting impression of intensity and refinement. (March 2024)

TECHNICAL DATA

Variety	100% Riesling
Rootstock	3309
vine age	13 years
Soil	Shallow (<45 cm) well drained alluvial deposits. Planted towards the river where the soil is mixed with clay, able to retain more moisture.
Plant density	6,000
Yield	150 g per vine
Alcohol	approx. 11.5%
Residual Sugar	approx. 180g/L
Ageing Potential	15+ years

FOOD MATCHING SUGGESTIONS

Duck liver terrine, blue cheeses, fruity desserts or simply indulge on its own.

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