

CHEHALEM

2009 RESERVE DRY RIESLING

The Wine

Our dry Riesling is produced in very limited quantities from selected lots from our Corral Creek and Stoller Vineyards. Our intent is to reflect ripe fruit that is highly focused with pinpoint acidity. This is a serious Riesling, not a quaffer, a big wine with brilliant, rich fruit, bright acid, and a weighty palate. The acidity provides ageability and great structure, making it perfect with food and cleansing on the palate. It continues the viscous, intense, Alsatian-styled wines that our Pinot Gris Reserve starts; it is harvested late (almost always in November) with full ripeness and a touch of botrytis, giving the most intense dry Riesling we can make.

The Vineyards

Corral Creek was begun in 1983 by John and Diane Howieson, founders of Veritas Winery from whom the vineyard was purchased in 1995. A 28-acre vineyard predominantly planted to Pinot Noir, with grafts of Dijon Chardonnay, Pinot Gris, and, recently, Riesling, to augment the prime 1.1-acre block of 25-year-old Riesling sited on a low bench above Corral Creek. Soils are Laurelwood, a blown sedimentary Loess soil series that, although low in elevation, is well drained.

Stoller Vineyards currently has a 1.5-acre block of Riesling, grafted from Pinot Blanc in 2001 in one of the highest elevation blocks. A south-sloping, 175-acre vineyard on a 373-acre parcel, Stoller Vineyards commands a dominating view of the southern end of the Red Hills of Dundee and is planted on Jory soil. Newly grafted Riesling onto 2.7 acres of 108 Chardonnay at Ridgecrest and at a higher elevation of Corral Creek began to bear in 2004.

The Vintage

The 2009 vintage may be one of the best, with nice balance in all ways for both reds and whites—very good quality and yields as well as good ripeness and acids. The closest vintage in memory might be 2002. It was the type of vintage to satisfy winemakers AND accountants, with yields in the 2.5–3 tons/acre average this year, compared to 2–2.5 in normal years, and with high quality demanding only patience awaiting flavor development. Fruitfulness caused some problems early on, with large berries and full clusters pushing off berries in the cluster, allowing early-harvested blocks to develop botrytis and require sorting. Later blocks were pristine and, assuming patience (and if nothing else, we're patient!) to await flavor development rather than picking on simple analytical numbers like TA and brix, will be as good as any wines we've made.

STATS

Harvest Data:	Harvested 10/28/09 @ 20.5–21.3 brix, 3.08–3.15 pH, and 7.7–8.3 g/L TA, from 2.0–4.0 tons per acre cropload.
Fermentation:	Tank fermented with SIHA7 yeast in small stainless vessels
Cooperage/Aging:	None
Bottling:	Cold stabilized, filtered, and bottled 7/9/2010
Bottling Analyses:	12.7% alcohol, 3.14 pH, 6.8 g/L acid, 0.45% residual sugar
Cases Produced:	669 cases
Suggested Retail:	\$21
Release Date:	October 2010

Winemaker's Comments

Platinum, yellow-green hues, with lovely white stone fruits, hard Christmas candy, lemon zest, orange marmalade or sugared peel, spice, cherry preserves, and minerality on the nose. White peach, citrus, allspice, and mineral flavors continue on the palate, but with a huge, sweet, fruit-cocktail impression countered by great acidity. The wine speaks impressively of weight, balance, firmness, and richness.