

Rieslingfreak

Reverence of Riesling



No.55 Clare Valley Riesling 2025

Eden Valley, South Australia

Technical Notes

The 2025 Riesling vintage in South Australia appeared doomed from the start. It was the third warmest year on record and the driest since recordkeeping began almost 200 years ago. Despite the heat and brutal frost, the intensity of flavor and acidity in the 2025 Rieslings is remarkable.

Grapes were machine-harvested at night, arriving at the winery by morning—Riesling's preferred method of harvest. Instead of pressing, John employs a spin-and-drain method to extract the free-run juice, ensuring the berries are handled gently to preserve the pristine purity of the juice. The juice was settled for five days, allowing solids to fall to the bottom of the tank. Clear juice was then racked and fermented at around 55°F for 10–12 days, until reaching the desired sugar level, at which point the wine was chilled and sulphured to halt fermentation. The Riesling was then heat- and cold-stabilized to remove haze and crystals before being filtered and bottled in June.

No.55 is harvested early in the season to produce a wine with higher natural acidity, balancing the residual sugar inherent to the style. Because grape acidity is weather-dependent, acid levels vary by vintage; residual sugar is adjusted accordingly to maintain balance in the finished wine. Produced in a fruit-driven style with a hint of sweetness and a crisp, clean finish, No.55 is made for immediate appeal and easy approachability—crafted for ultimate enjoyment upon release.

About this Wine

Rieslingfreak is indeed 'a freak', and not simply because of its rarity as an Australian winemaker focused on a single variety. What raises Rieslingfreak beyond special to 'freak' status is an unconcealed passion for Riesling matched with an innate sensitivity to the versatility of the variety and the influence of a diverse vineyard landscape. This magical combination translates into a showcase of captivating wines of exquisite purity and elegance. And albeit an unintended consequence of John and Belinda Hughes' personal reverence for Riesling, the emerging reality is Rieslingfreak has become integral to the Riesling conversation in Australia.

No.55 is a collaboration from our growers in the Clare Valley, combining distinct subregional characters to create an off dry, fruit-driven style of Riesling with generosity on the palate. Sourced from vineyards that traverse the length of the Clare Valley, No.55 is grown on a variety of soils and aspects, capturing the essence of the Clare Valley in a single Riesling.

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Wine Analysis

Alcohol: 9.1%

Acidity: 10.0 g/L

Residual Sugar: 22.8 g/l

pH: 2.68

✓ **VEGAN FRIENDLY**

✓ **SUSTAINABLE**

✗ **ORGANIC**

✗ **BIODYNAMIC**

Climate and Vineyard Conditions

The lead up to the 2025 was notable due to 2024 being the driest year on record as well as the third warmest year since recordkeeping began in 1838. What began as an exercise in carefully planned irrigation turned into doubt as a catastrophic frost annihilated the early spring growth across much of the Clare and Eden Valleys. While initially devastating, the timing of this frost event played into our favor as we watched the vines bounce back with secondary budburst. The second crop was significantly smaller than the primary, but with limited water supply and no rain in sight, this allowed our growers to curate dense, healthy canopies with remarkable quality fruit from minimal water input. For a year that is marked by hot and dry conditions, the intensity of flavor and electric acidity in the 2025 Rieslings is both remarkable and incredibly exciting.

Awards / Reviews

"Whiffs of lanolin and beeswax give way to mouthwatering, sleek and crisp flavors of lime, pomelo and ruby grapefruit, with plenty of punch from the crisp acidity, plus a sensation of crunchy sea salt and a whiff of celery leaf."

89 Points - Wine Spectator

