

Rieslingfreak

Reverence of Riesling

No.33 Riesling 2025

Clare Valley, South Australia



Technical Notes

The 2025 Riesling vintage in South Australia was notable for 2024 being the driest year on record in South Australia, as well as being the third-warmest year since records began in 1838. With little rain to speak of it was clear that the 2025 vintage would demand judicious irrigation and careful management of supplemental water to achieve quality crops. In late September 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 favour 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.

Grapes were machine harvested at night and the fruit was in the winery by morning – the preferred method for Riesling. Instead of pressing, John uses a spin and drain method to extract the free run juice thus ensuring the berries are handled very gently to maintain the pristine purity of the juice. The juice is then settled for 5 days with solids falling to the bottom of the tank. The clear juice was racked and fermented at around 55 degrees for 10-12 days until reaching the desired sugar level at which point the wine was chilled and sulphured to stop the ferment. The Riesling was then heat and cold stabilized to remove all haze and crystals before being filtered and bottled in June.

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. The 2025 Rieslingfreak No.33 is crafted from fruit sourced from our two growers in the Clare Valley - Richard & Anne Hughes (John's Parents) and Robert and Lyn Jaeschke from Polish Hill River. While wines from Clare Valley can typically be leaner and more austere, John has endeavoured to make this wine more supple in the mid palate and more immediately enjoyable – both with and without food.

UPC CODE: 8 58441 00685 9

Wine Analysis

Alcohol: 10.7%

Acidity: 8.6g/L

Residual Sugar: 0.9 g/l

pH: 2.80

✓ **VEGAN FRIENDLY**

✓ **SUSTAINABLE**

✗ **ORGANIC**

✗ **BIODYNAMIC**

Climate and Vineyard Conditions

The Polish Hill River vineyard is planted on grey-brown loam, over sandy limestone and shale rock at 460m above sea level. The average rainfall is 625mm. The White Hutt vineyard is situated on the flats, in the middle of a valley, and has its own very unique micro-climate. This vineyard is planted on heavy loam and red Terra Rossa soil, with limestone subsoil. It is situated 500m above sea level, with an average rainfall of 550mm. After a decidedly typical winter that yielded average rainfall and temperatures across the region, the arrival of Spring brought record breaking rainfall paired with record breaking lows in temperature, with the maximum daily temperature being more than 3°C below the long-term average.

Reviews/Awards

"Intense aromas of lime cordial, lemon oil, crushed rocks, white pepper, chamomile and white flowers. The palate is full of drive and tension, with sharp acidity and underlying power, giving notes of green apples, grapefruit zest and wet slate. Long, minerally and focused."

95 Points - James Suckling

"This user-friendly 2025 Riesling No. 33 is open for business with weighty lime and peach skin aromas. It is flavorful and fleshy, with well-balanced acidity delivering a refreshing conclusion."

90 Points - Vinous

