

Rieslingfreak

Reverence of Riesling



No.12 Flaxman Valley Riesling 2025

Eden Valley, South Australia

Technical Notes

The 2025 Rieslingfreak No.12 was harvested from three small family-owned vineyards in Flaxman Valley in High Eden, a premium sub-region of Eden Valley. Summer temperatures were well above the long-term average leading to early harvests across South Australia. Rieslingfreak commenced picking on the 10th of February, with all the fruit received into the winery by the end of the month. Grapes were machine harvested at night and fruit was in the winery by morning – the preferred method for Riesling. Instead of pressing his Riesling, John uses a spin and drain method, where they spin the press every 10 minutes, to extract the free run juice – this ensures that the berries are treated very softly, whilst maintaining the purity of the juice. The juice then settled for about 5 days. Once the juice was clear, and solids were settled at the bottom of the tank, the wine was racked and the juice was ready for fermentation. The wine was then fermented at around 55 degrees for 10-12 days, until it reached his desired sugar level, at which point the wine was chilled and sulfured, to stop the ferment.

The Riesling was then heat and cold stabilized, to remove all haze and crystals, before being filtered and bottled. Time lapse from harvest to bottling is roughly 2 months. Wine was released soon thereafter, in June. The vineyards are situated approximately 500m above sea level, with an average yearly rainfall of 650mm. The soils vary from shallow grey sandy loam over shale rock, to loam soil over light medium clay, with high quartz rock and gravel content.

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About this Wine

Rieslingfreak was established in 2009. John Hughes grew up on a family vineyard in the Clare Valley, South Australia, and has been driven by the versatility of the Riesling grape. His passion for Riesling was noted in his university days, where he always had a bottle or two of Riesling to share, and soon became known as the “Riesling Freak”. Rieslingfreak No.12 is harvested from individually selected vines from the Mason and Zander family vineyards in Flaxman Valley in High Eden, a premium sub-region of Eden Valley. Renown for growing world-class Riesling of unrivalled elegance, this wine captures the very essence of the High Eden subregion in all its splendour. First released in 2021 to celebrate John’s achievement as being heralded as Barossa’s Winemaker of the Year, this wine is exceptionally delicate and refined, with a highly perfumed bouquet and elegantly structured palate. This Riesling drinks well now, but will reward with 10+ years of aging.

Wine Analysis

Alcohol: 11.6%

Acidity: 9.7g/L

Residual Sugar: 0.71 g/l

pH: 2.75

✓ **VEGAN FRIENDLY**

✓ **SUSTAINABLE**

✗ **ORGANIC**

✗ **BIODYNAMIC**

2025 Vintage 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.

Scores/Reviews

“Hints of makrut lime, bath talc, crushed quartz, a splash of Bickford's lime cordial, ozone and clover blossom. There's a crackling mineral energy to this wine, with a high-tensile minerality. It's sleek and bone dry, with some serious sapidity and crystalline verve on show. Mouth-watering drinking; I love it!”

-James Halliday, **95 Points**

95 Points – Vinous

90 Points – Wine Enthusiast

