

Wines of the Finger Lakes



Featured Selection

HERMANN J. WIEMER 2010 DRY RIESLING RESERVE

In 2007, iconic Seneca Lake winemaker Hermann J. Wiemer surprised the Finger Lakes wine community by announcing that he was retiring and selling his winery to his assistant winemaker, Fred Merwarth '00. Wiemer felt that Merwarth was committed to continuing his approach to viticulture and winemaking and would maintain the winery's commitment to quality *vinifera* wine.

It would seem that Wiemer's trust in Merwarth was more than warranted, as he has taken his mentor's name to even greater heights of public recognition and respect. *Wine Spectator*, for example, has rated sixteen Hermann J. Wiemer wines 90 or higher since Wiemer's retirement—and for the 2010 vintage Hermann J. Wiemer products dominate the magazine's list of the highest-rated Finger Lakes wines.

The Hermann J. Wiemer 2010 Dry Riesling Reserve may be Merwarth's greatest achievement. New York Cork Report, a website that offers the most comprehensive coverage of New York State wines online, named the Reserve its 2011 Finger Lakes



White Wine of the Year, and Merwarth himself believes that "it is possibly the best wine I've ever made."

He accomplished this even though, as Merwarth himself has said, "2010 was a tricky year for Riesling." In a growing season as consistently warm as 2010, there is the danger of insufficient grape acidity as harvest approaches. Merwarth, aware of this, picked many of the grapes from the vineyard adjacent to the winery on September 21 while they were still high in acidity. He used the juice from these grapes to balance the flavor of ones picked as late as October 31 from Wiemer's Josef and Magdalena vineyards.

The resulting wine is gorgeous, with a distinctive aroma featuring orangey notes and a hint of ginger. In the mouth, it has a supple texture and citrusy flavors that culminate in a long, mouthwatering finish. This beauty is available at retail outlets and may also be purchased for \$29 at the winery's website, www.wiemer.com.

— Dave Pohl

Dave Pohl, MA '79, is a wine buyer at *Northside Wine & Spirits* in Ithaca.

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