

2013 Harbes Vineyard Riesling

The 2013 Riesling is off-dry with 22 grams per liter of residual sugar and 11% alcohol. It is unoaked and sourced from the Finger Lakes, then produced on Long Island—hence the general New York state appellation. This has a lot going for it. Fresh, clean and bright, it should satisfy all urges for acidity and liveliness. The sugar balances the acidity beautifully, too. Overall, it finishes well and it has quite a bit of tension on the finish. This won't disappoint. I'm betting it ages pretty well, too, but we will have to see that for sure when we get there. There were 224 cases produced.

This winery, with relatively youthful vines, showed particularly well with the whites. They all had fine acidity and tension on the finish. They pretty much get those right. The reds were not quite as interesting, but hopefully that will change.

- Mark Squires (June, 2015)

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2012 Harbes Vineyard Barrel Fermented Chardonnay

The 2012 Barrel Fermented Chardonnay was aged for six months in French oak (20% new, the rest used). It comes in at 12.5% alcohol. This isn't at all bad—it's pretty nice, in fact—but for my money it was a step behind the winery's fresher whites. Perhaps not coincidentally, those came from a better vintage. In any event, it still maintains good focus and shows fine acidity cutting through the oak. The oak does give this a certain brooding nuance at times, but the flavor impact is controlled and the acidity still dominates here. Finishing with some of the grip and tension the others showed, it does become a bit more impressive with aeration. Sourced from 8-year-old vines, there were 201 cases produced.

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NV Harbes Vineyard Blanc de Blancs

The NV Blanc de Blancs is not a vintage release, but this latest release of this particular bottling can be identified, says the winery, by the unique label: a farmhouse in a field, the path cleared and bushes or trees on either side. It is an unoaked Brut, bone dry and coming in at 12% alcohol. All Chardonnay, it was sourced from 7-year-old vines. Piercing, steely and invigoratingly aggressive on first attack, this has a dry, mouthcoating feel to it with considerable grip and tension (but not much toast) on the finish. Quite dry, this NV Brut should fit the bill well on a warm day. Keep it chilled to the upper 40s and it has a certain "wake me up" feel to it. Drink it young and fresh, no matter how long it theoretically lasts.

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2012 Harbes Vineyard Merlot

The 2012 Merlot was aged for 16 months in a mixture of used and new oak (75/25) and a mixture of French (50%), Hungarian (30%) and American (20%). It comes in at 12.5% alcohol. This showed great on opening and flattened pretty fast and pretty steadily as it aired out over an hour or so. There is not a lot of concentration here, but it does have a fresh feel and a very tasty finish. It should drink well on the younger side. Sourced from 8-year-old vines, there were 404 cases produced.

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Shannon Harbes gave me this history, in response to questions: "The Harbes family has

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2013 Harbes Vineyard Steel Fermented Chardonnay

The 2013 Steel Fermented Chardonnay is unoaked and comes in at 12% alcohol. This is a nice bargain in a clean wine with a crisp finish and fine, fruity flavor. It's not big or deep, but it is fresh and invigorating, with grip on the finish and that lovely, tank-aged purity. In the shorter-term, this is a no-brainer best buy that can make you very happy this summer. It's not clear how long it will age, but why do you want to? It's made to be drunk fresh and that's what it does best, no matter how long it theoretically lasts. Sourced from 9-year-old vines, there were 314 cases produced.

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2013 Harbes Vineyard Dry Rose

The 2013 Dry Rosé is all Merlot coming in at 12% alcohol. This shows fine acidity and tension on the finish. The Merlot adds some body and flavor. It is a very nice pink performance and a wine that can substitute for a red on a hot, summer day. It is also holding beautifully for a 2013.

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Shannon Harbes gave me this history, in response to questions: "The Harbes family has been farming this land since the 1960s, and started the roadside farm stand about 35 years ago. Edward and Monica Harbes are the owners and have eight kids, several of who are actively

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2010 Harbes Vineyard Merlot "Hallock Lane -- Proprietor Reserve"

The 2010 Merlot "Hallock Lane-Proprietor Reserve" is all Merlot, aged for 17 months in French oak (90% new). This was sourced from 6-year-old vines. Elegant and velvety in texture, this finishes a bit sharp, showing some crispness to go with the fruit flavor and the otherwise elegant demeanor. Wonderfully graceful in the mid-palate, it does not project a lot of depth, but it doesn't really seem overly thin, either. It handles itself well, to a point. Admittedly, extended aeration saw it thinning fast. This young-vines offering is not all the way there yet, but there are some very good ideas here. There were 143 cases produced.

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2013 Harbes Vineyard Chardonnay Ice Wine

The 2013 Chardonnay Ice Wine was aged for three months in new French oak. It comes in with 170 grams per liter of residual sugar and 13% alcohol. Well, it's Ice Wine from a big vintage. You know what you're going to get. Lush and rich, its sweetness makes you drool. It simply tastes great. There isn't all that much intensity or focus and the acidity doesn't always cut through the sugar. The mid-palate has average concentration. In the grand scheme of things, it doesn't always make you sit up and take notice, but overall it drinks well. It's a true dessert wine—it requires rich food or better yet, drink it as an aperitif and on its own.

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2013 Harbes Vineyard Chardonnay-Riesling

The 2013 Chardonnay-Riesling is a mixed appellation wine with the Riesling sourced from the Finger Lakes and the Chardonnay only from the winery's estate vines on the North Fork. This comes in at 12.0% alcohol and with 11 grams per liter of residual sugar—more fruity than sweet, though. Fruity and lively, this is another nice white from this winery, which seemed to produce lots of nice ones in this set of submissions. With the initially bright and sunny demeanor, this somewhat eccentric blend also provides good fruit, a reasonable mid-palate and a juicy, delectable finish. It seems to project in its youth a perceptibly off-dry finish, slightly, but there is plenty of tension on that finish, too. This should age reasonably, but let's take that in stages.

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