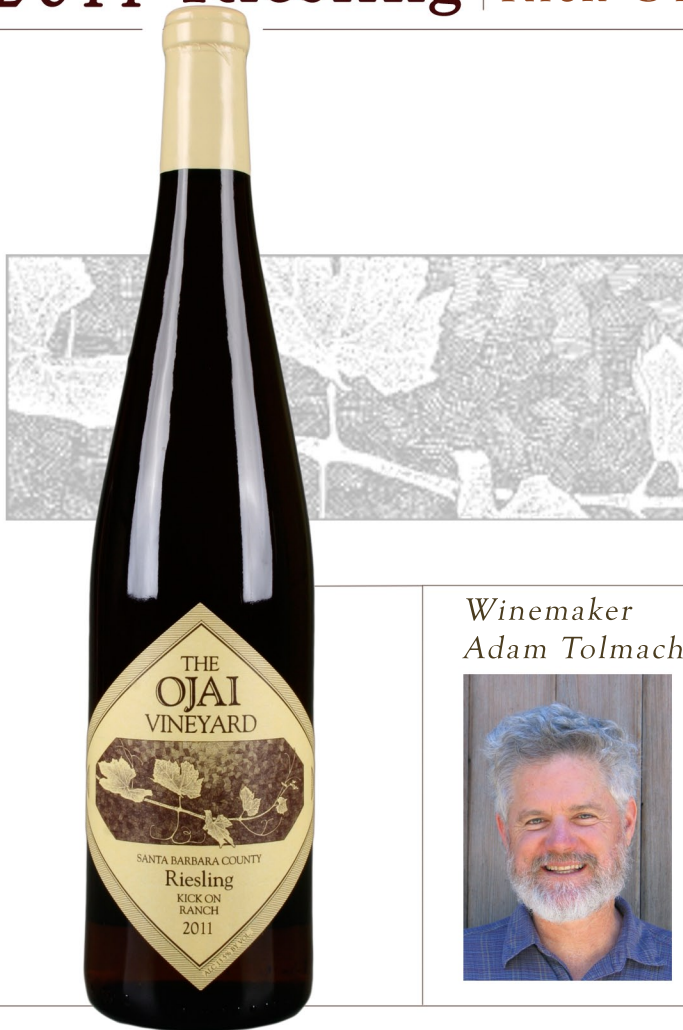


2011 Riesling | Kick On Vineyard, Santa Barbara County



Winemaker
Adam Tolmach



Blend: 100% Riesling
Vineyard: Kick on Ranch
AVA: Santa Barbara County
Alcohol: 13.5%
Vinification: Neutral French Oak
Barrel Aging: 6 Months
Total Production: 205 Cases



Winemakers Notes

Most people don't realize that Riesling can be either sweet or dry. In Germany the whole classification system for Riesling was until recently based on the sweetness level of the wine, the sweeter the nobler. But in the last decade there has been a movement there to produce quality dry wines and a new classification of great growths or GG's that are carefully chosen vineyard sites that represent the best of German viticulture. Another example of dry Riesling is Austria, which after the wine scandals of the 1970's embarked on a revolution of closing the co-ops that were producing plunk, and changing to a system of grower/ producers who quickly proved that stellar wines could be made, with dry Riesling being the center piece of that effort.

I discovered these dry style Rieslings in the early 1990's when I moved back to Ojai. I was desperate to find a wine I could enjoy on those hot summer evenings and dry Riesling was just the ticket. This got me interested in making Riesling, and it was a happy coincidence that I found a cool climate vineyard on the western edge of the Los Alamos Valley in Santa Barbara County, only a few miles from where Jim Clendenen and I started Au Bon Climat in 1982.

I started making a Kick On Ranch Riesling in 2007 and have been delighted with each vintage. What has been surprising is how different each one has been! The quantity of wind and fog, combined with terribly poor sandy soils makes this site marginal, and each year the vines struggle to ripen their fruit. Although it sounds bad, growing vines in spots where they struggle to ripen their crop is actually a good thing. These marginal sites seem to produce grapes with great intensity of character and superb balance.

Vinification

The grapes were transported to the winery and whole cluster pressed to a stainless steel tank. The juice settled for 12 hours and then put into older French oak barrels for fermentation in a cellar with an ambient temperature of 55 F. When the wine finished fermenting—after about two weeks—we racked the new wine off the yeast to other barrels for further aging. This 2010 Riesling was more precocious than previous vintages, so we bottled it after six months. Now, after a year in the bottle, this cool climate Riesling displays aromas of lemon peel and exotic fruits, and possesses a juicy, refreshing, pear like flavor.

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