WINERY PROFILE

*I*n 2023, Hester Creek's Golden Mile Bench estate vineyard observed 55 years of Vitis Vinifera plantings. The slogan, "Our Roots Run Deep," takes on both literal and metaphorical meanings regarding the vines, people and sense of place that make our winery the destination it is today. As with any milestone anniversary, this has been a time of reflection, celebration and evolution for our company and brand.

Planted in 1968, the original vines of our property speak to the knowledge and experience of Joe Busnardo, who had the gift of foresight that the Okanagan Valley would become the next great region of new-world winemaking. It is from these old-vine plantings that we now have some of our most sought-after wines, but the evolution of how these wines are made and how they speak to the terroir is what has given Hester Creek the honour of being named British Columbia Winery of the Year for 2023 by Great Northwest Wine Magazine.

The story of our sense of place began with Joe Busnardo, but continues to this day with our Winemaker, Mark Hopley, who pulls his inspiration for winemaking from the land, and crafts his wines so that they retain the story of what this historic property has to offer. In every wine he makes, Hopley looks to the legacy of Busnardo and the choices he made in establishing this vineyard site. However, he is also creating his own path in evolving the future of Hester Creek wines.

"I always come back to a sense of place. We benefit from early light on this side of the valley, with the sun setting behind Mt. Kobau in the late afternoon. That enables us to hang the fruit a little longer and maintain vibrant acidity, so you hold onto the structure of the wine."
- Mark Hopley, Winemaker

"In my mind, the fruit on this property is truly amazing and we want to celebrate that."
- Mark Hopley, Winemaker

As a destination winery, our portfolio of wines continues to grow. We have recently signed a long term lease on a 35 acre vineyard called, Osoyoos Lake Bench Vineyard. This vineyard site is on the east side of the lake with a south-west exposure, meaning warmer afternoon temperatures, allowing us to grow varietals such as Grenache, Mourvèdre and Sangiovese. The addition of these varietals gives us the opportunity to create new wines for our extensive portfolio. As such, the Grenache and Mourvèdre will be blended with our Syrah for a 2024 release of our first-ever GSM and the Sangiovese will go towards a Super Tuscan to be released in 2025.

"[Owner] Curt Garland's continued support to making the best wines possible, through capital investment in our cellar, allows our team to constantly improve the wines and push boundaries."
- Roger Gillespie, Director of Operations

In addition to the release of new wines, Hester Creek has undergone a rebranding of colour and style to highlight where we see ourselves as a brand now. Across our portfolio, a cleaner, yet bolder style will be noticed.

WINERY PROFILE

"The consistent usage of gold complements our Tuscan theme and shows our commitment to award-winning wines with a rich impression of quality."
- Jacqueline Davidson, Brand Manager

The motif of our Italian history, award-winning wines and sense of place runs through our branding with the use of black, gold and earthy tones, as well as providing a cleaner template for our communications with guests and media across traditional and social channels. This brand look can also be seen on the packaging of our wines with the logo of the dolphin and swimmer, Hester, appearing on the capsule in a clean, minimalistic style with the main label now reflecting each tier of the portfolio.

At the Wine Shop, new features and events are being added to our lineup of live music and outstanding wines, including autumn and winter events that bring the community together and showcase our wines as well as the food from Terrafina.

"Our goal is to provide our guests with a complete estate wine experience, to stay, dine and be entertained in true Okanagan fashion."
- Roger Gillespie, Director of Operations