

TERROIR

LOCATION	Cowichan Valley, Vancouver Island, BC
ELEVATION	46 - 76 MASL
KÖPPEN CLIMATE CLASS	Csb - Warm-Summer - Mediterranean (~4 km from the Sea)
ASPECT	0% to 20% South and South West facing
SOILS	Fairbridge, Hillbank and Qualicum
PRECIPITATION	~1,500 mm average annually
GDD (GROWING DEGREE DAYS)	Between 1000 and 1200 in last 15 years
VARIETALS	Bacchus, Black Muscat, Chardonnay, Gamay Noir, Muller Thurgau, Ortega, Pearl of Csaba, Pinot Gris, Pinot Meunier, Pinot Noir, Siegerrebe
ACREAGE	8.5 acre producing vineyard, 6.5 acres planted in 2017, 20 acres planted in 2020 and 2021, new Koksilah Vineyard of an additional 35 acres to be planted in 2023 and 2024.

Geographical Indication (GI)

Blue Grouse is within the Vancouver Island GI and at the heart of the recently accredited Cowichan Valley Sub-GI.

Overview

Putting the “cool” in Cool Climate, the Cowichan Valley, with warm dry summers and mild wet winters is Canada’s only maritime influenced Mediterranean grape growing region. The Valley records sufficient GDD (growing degree days) during the Spring and Summer to provide good conditions for many vitis vinifera grape varieties, particularly those that bud late and ripen early. The Valley is in the rain shadow of the Insular Mountain Range that forms the backbone of Vancouver Island. The vineyards are surrounded by forests, have a Southern exposure, are influenced by a glacial fluvial deposit running it’s length, and are nurtured by clean air and clean well water. This exceptional site is farmed organically, with a minimum of fertilization and irrigation.

Soils

The Blue Grouse vineyard sites feature three distinct soil types: Fairbridge (silt loam to silty clay loam with elements of marine deposits); Hillbank (found on the north-east perimeter of the property with little impact on grape growing, is similar to Fairbridge, but with better drainage characteristics); and Qualicum (very gravelly sand, very gravelly loamy sand and very gravelly sandy loam all with excellent drainage).

Vineyard Design

All vineyards have been mapped using EC (electrical conductivity) methods. Soil anomalies were further detailed with a series of pits to confirm soil types, irrigation layout and then planted to grape type, clone and root stock according to the results of this analysis. Most of this work was conducted under the tutelage of “Mr. Terroir” the noted vineyard soil specialist Dr. Pedro Parra and more recently with support from Vintality Ltd. of BC. The Blue Grouse team is now focused on the grape varieties most suited to its soil types.