

**Black Hills Estate Winery****2005 Nota Bene
(Okanagan Valley)**

Since the first vintage in 1999, Nota Bene has established itself as one of British Columbia's *must-have* reds, the result of good viticulture and good winemaking. Winemaker Senka Tennant (who owns the winery with her husband and another couple) mentored in the first two vintages with Washington State's Rusty Figgins. Subsequently, she has been flying solo, refining Nota Bene with each subsequent vintage. This is, without a doubt, the best Nota Bene so far.

The wine is assembled with the same three Bordeaux varieties but the percentages depend on how the blend tastes each vintage. The 2000 Nota Bene was 52% Cabernet Sauvignon, 25% Cabernet Franc and 23% Merlot while the 2002 was 52% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot and 18% Cabernet Franc. The more recent vintages are still dominated by Cabernet Sauvignon, but just. The higher percentages of Merlot have contributed a plumper, more generous texture.

The 2005 vintage, dark in colour, begins with aromas of cedar and spice and red currants on top of a note of chocolate. There is just a grace note of bell pepper, enough to perk up the flavours of spiced sweet plums. The wine is full-bodied, with long ripe tannins. The wine has a bold elegance that makes it immediately appealing; it also has the structure for good cellaring. 91 points.

Reviewed June 13, 2007 by [John Schreiner](#).

THE WINE

Winery: [Black Hills Estate Winery](#)

Vintage: 2005

Wine: Nota Bene

Appellation: [Okanagan Valley](#)

Grapes: [Cabernet Sauvignon](#) (43%), [Merlot](#) (37%), [Cabernet Franc](#) (20%)

Price: \$36.00

THE REVIEWER**John Schreiner**

John Schreiner has been covering the wines of British Columbia for the past 30 years and has written 10 books on the wines of Canada and BC. He has judged at major competitions and is currently a panel member for the Lieutenant Governor's Awards of

Excellence in Wine. Both as a judge and as a wine critic, he approaches each wine not to find fault, but to find excellence. That he now finds the latter more often than the former testifies to the dramatic improvement shown by BC winemaking in the past decade.