

BRITISH COLUMBIA WINE AUTHORITY

Unit #3, 7519 Prairie Valley Rd., Summerland BC, V0H 1Z4
Phone: 250-494-8896 Toll Free: 1-877-499-2872 Fax: 250-494-9737

LABELLING GUIDELINES **(Updated November 29, 2018)**

Guidelines for the Labelling of British Columbia BC VQA Wines

The following labelling guidelines have been compiled by the British Columbia Wine Authority based on the “*Wines of Marked Quality Regulation, Approved and Ordered July, 27, 2018*”, in order to provide wineries with appropriate guidance and further descriptions for the labelling of BC VQA wines. This guideline will only target certain sections of the *Regulation*, for complete information please refer to the “*Wines of Marked Quality Regulation*”. This guide is not intended to replace the *Regulation* and, if there is any conflict between the guidelines and the *Regulation*, the *Regulation* governs. Please contact to British Columbia Wine Authority directly if you have any labelling question which is not addressed in these guidelines.

Label Reviews

All wineries must submit a label to the British Columbia Wine Authority for review and pre-approval. There is no charge for this. These reviews will provide wineries with definitive guidance concerning compliance of proposed labels with the *Regulation*. All labels must receive an approval prior to the product receiving its final BC VQA designation. The BCWA strongly suggests that labels be sent in prior to final printing (as a proof) for preliminary approval. This will save you time and money. Please e-mail a PDF or other electronic format to lorrie.zander@bcvqa.ca, do not send faxes.

While these reviews may also take into account the labelling requirements of other Federal and Provincial laws (such as CFIA), the British Columbia Wine Authority’s opinion concerning the application of such other laws is not binding on other regulatory agencies that may administer such other laws. If required, wineries should also seek definitive labelling guidance from these other regulatory agencies.

Labelling Requirements of the *Regulations*

Mandatory Requirements - A winery that holds a Practice Standards Certificate and is a member in good standing with the British Columbia Wine Authority may submit a qualifying wine to the BC VQA taste test assessment panel. If the wine meets the standards for BC VQA, the winery may represent that wine as having achieved that standard by placing “BC VQA”, “British Columbia Vintners Quality Alliance” or “British Columbia VQA” on the label or capsule of the bottle.

Under section 55 of the “Wines of Marked Quality Regulation”, the following criteria must be met:

Geographical Indication

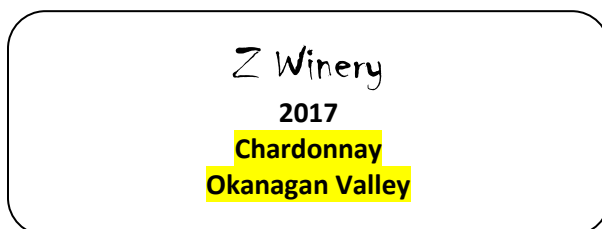
Sec.55(2)(a)The label of the wine presented as BC VQA wine must state the following:

- (a) The geographical indication that applies to the wine;

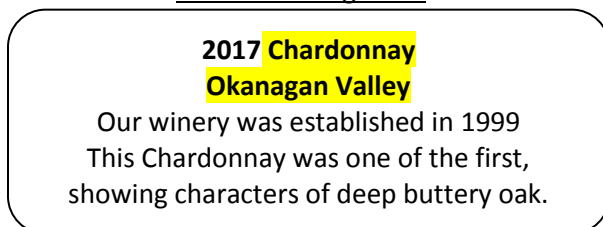
A GI is where 95% of the grapes are grown.

- One of the ten Provincially Registered GI’s, “British Columbia”, “Fraser Valley”, “Gulf Islands”, “Lillooet”, “Kootenays”, “Okanagan Valley”, “Shuswap”, “Similkameen Valley”, “Thompson Valley, and “Vancouver Island”,
- One of the two Provincially Registered Sub-GI’s “Golden Mile Bench” or “Okanagan Falls”, which must be used in conjunction with Okanagan Valley **Section 53(2)**
- **A GI must be placed immediately before or after the variety in one location** **Section 51(2)(a)**
You may use it as many time as you like after this in other placements, with or without the variety.

Examples as follows (but not limited to) are all considered to be acceptable:



OR Back Facing Label



OR Only variety on front, but meets Regulations on back

Z Winery
Chardonnay
2017

2017 Chardonnay
Okanagan Valley
Our winery was established in 1999
This Chardonnay was one of the first,
showing characters of deep buttery oak.

Front or Back with Sub-GI

Z Winery
Chardonnay
Okanagan Valley
Golden Mile Bench

2017 Chardonnay
Okanagan Valley Golden Mile Bench
Our winery was established in 1999
This Chardonnay was one of the first,
showing characters of deep buttery oak.

NOTE - if the grapes are from several different locations within British Columbia, the geographical indication will be **British Columbia** and it must be placed the same as other area specific GI's

AND it must be Spelled out in full – BRITISH COLUMBIA.

Z Winery
2017
Chardonnay
British Columbia

The Protected Label OR Quality Mark - **BC VQA** - may appear with the GI, **but the GI must still be printed out in full.**

EXAMPLE of correct use: British Columbia, BC VQA OR BC VQA British Columbia

The following would be **WRONG -- British Columbia VQA -- This shows the GI, but NOT a correct Quality Mark -- The appellation(QUALITY MARK) is incomplete as just VQA. The Quality Mark must be BC VQA**

The Protected Term (OR Quality Mark) BC VQA:

Sec.55 (2)(b) The label of the wine presented as BC VQA wine must state:

(b) one of the protected labels "BC VQA", "British Columbia VQA" or "British Columbia Vintners Quality Alliance"

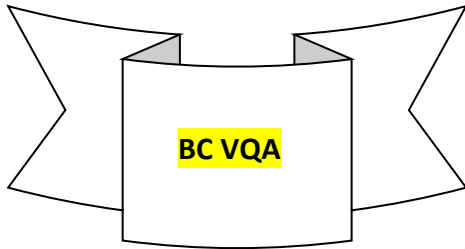
May be displayed anywhere. Either by itself, which includes capsule, shoulder and/or neck, in any size, colour or font. It may also appear either on the front or back or with the address block, or in all locations. In any of the aforementioned it may also be displayed with the geographical indicator. Examples as follows (but not limited to) are all considered to be acceptable:

Top of the Capsule



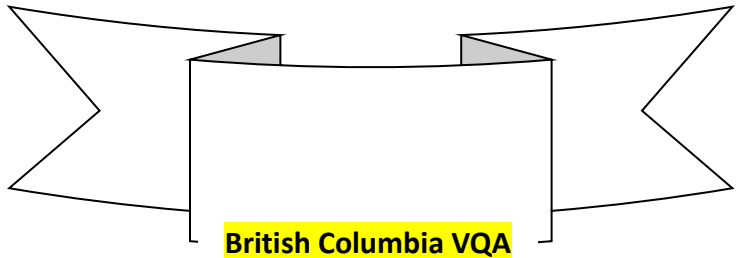
This is similar to stickers that the Authority sells, and can be placed on the top capsule or anywhere on the bottle.

Shoulder or Neck of Bottle:



-Doesn't need to be a banner.

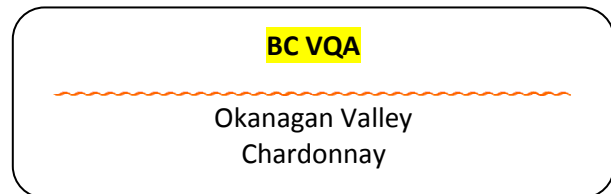
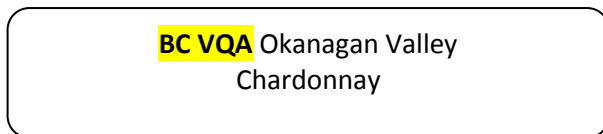
-Make it your own design

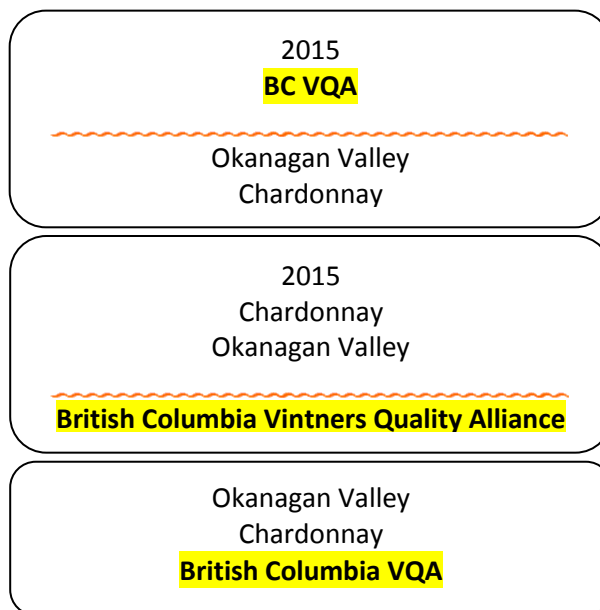


-Or just use the letters or words "BC VQA"

**BC VQA does NOT need to be with the GI. This is not mandatory. Remember BC VQA may be anywhere on your label, or bottle.

If you choose to put BC VQA with the GI it may look like, but not limited to:





OR the below Graphic Standard may be used anywhere on the capsule or label.



Grape Variety or Proprietary Name

Sec.55(2)(c)(i)(ii) The label of the wine presented as BC VQA wine must state:

Varietal(s)

55(2)(c)(i) the name of the grape variety used in the wine

Variety is:

- Single variety, such as “Chardonnay”, “Merlot” Section 51(3)(a)
- Dual variety, such as “Riesling Gewurztraminer” Section 51(3)(b)
- Triple variety, such as “Merlot, Malbec, Petit Verdot” Section 51(3)(c)
- “Cabernet Merlot” Section 51 (4)(b)

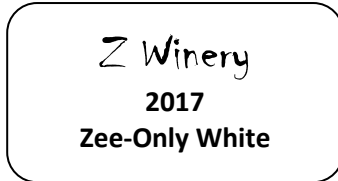
OR a Proprietary Name

55(2)(c)(ii) a distinct name that is associated with the practice standards certificate holder who processed the wine, commonly referred to as a proprietary name.

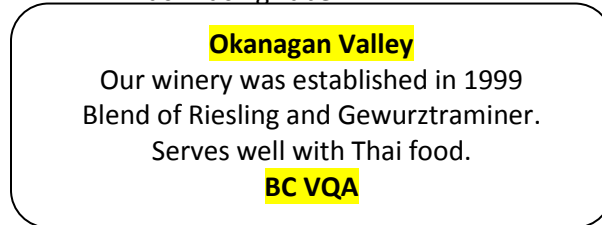
A Proprietary Name REPLACES the varietal and is a name that is characteristic to the winery that produced the wine, such as “Zee-Only White” or “Black Rock 1”.

When using a **Proprietary Name** the GI may be displayed anywhere on the label. It does NOT need to come immediately before or after.

Front Facing Label:



Back Facing Label:



Misleading Information

Sec.53(3) The label must not describe a geographical area in connection with the processing or marketing of the wine, except to include a geographical indication or proper place name.

This includes non-registered Provincial geographical indications, such as Naramata Bench. (misleading that it is a registered GI, when currently it is not)

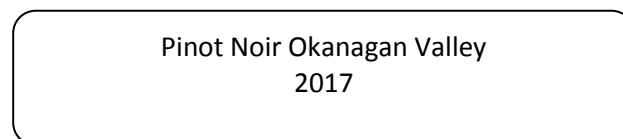
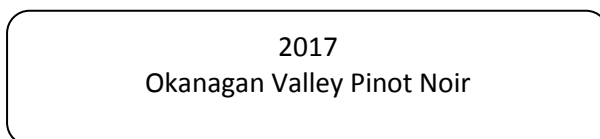
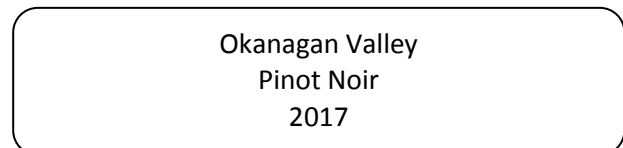
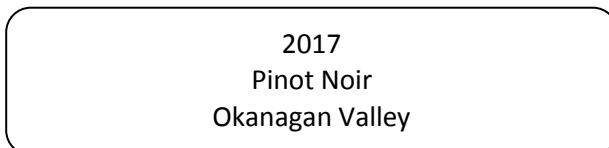
Grape Variety

Sec.51(2) the label may state the name of a grape variety used in a wine only if all of the following conditions are met:

(a) the name must appear immediately before or after the geographical indication that applies to the wine, at least once on at least one label.

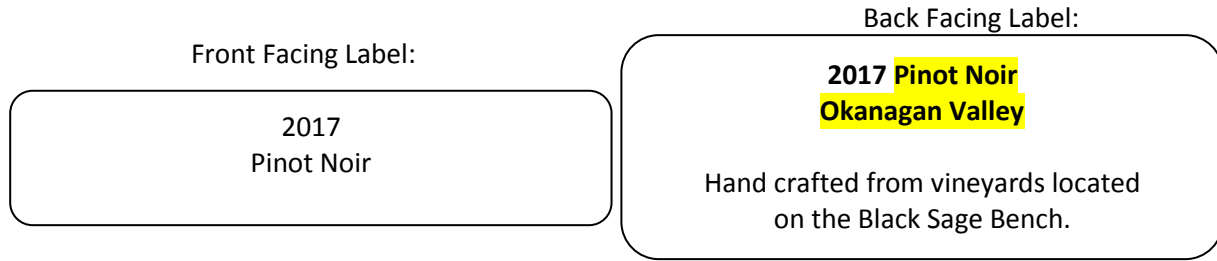
Immediately means right together - No graphics, words, lines, dots or anything must come between the variety and the GI.

The following (but not limited to) are all considered to be acceptable:



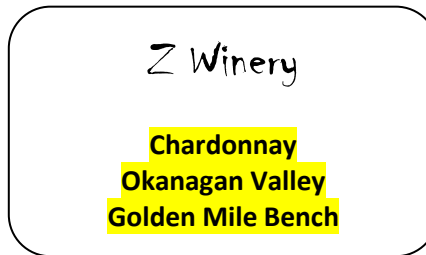
You may display this either front of back, but it **must be in ONE place**.

****you may use it in multiple locations if you wish, including on the shoulder.**



Sec.53(2) If the label states a geographical indication that is a subdivision of another geographical indication, the label must also state the geographical indication in which the subdivision is located.

These must be used together.



Multiple Grape Varieties

Sec.51(2(b)) If the BC VQA wine has more than one grape variety listed on the label, the varietal names must be listed on the label in descending order of quantity, using identical font, size and colour.

Sec.51(3) Varieties used in the blend must be named in descending order of quantity, as follows:

(a) Single Varietal – the wine consists primarily of one grape variety and at least 85% of the total wine by volume is derived from that variety.

(b) Dual Varietal – if the wine consists primarily of two grape varieties and at least 90% of total wine by volume is derived from those varieties and at least 15% of that percentage is derived from the second of those varieties.

(c) Triple Varietal - if the wine consists primarily of three grape varieties and at least 95% of total wine by volume is derived from those varieties and at least 15% of that percentage is derived from the second of those varieties and at least 10% is derived from the third of those varieties.

Vintage Date

Sec.55(2)(d) & (4) The vintage year must be declared on the label of BC VQA wines, except for Sparkling wine, Fortified wine, Liqueur wine and wine bearing a private label.

Use of the Term "Estate Bottled"

Sec.52(2)The label of a BC wine of distinction may describe the wine as "Estate Bottled" only if all of the following conditions are met:

(a)the wine must be processed entirely from grapes grown on land owned or controlled by the practice standards certificate holder who bottles the wine; **

(b)the land referred to in paragraph (a) must be located within a geographical area other than that represented by the geographical indication "British Columbia", and the corresponding geographical indication must be displayed on the label;

(c)at least 85% of the grapes used to process the wine must be grown during the same vintage year;

(d)the practice standards certificate holder who crushed or pressed the grapes used to make the wine must also process and bottle the wine;

(e)the wine must not leave the premises of the practice standards certificate holder referred to in paragraph (d) before bottling;

(f)the premises referred to in paragraph (e) must be located within the same geographical area as where the grapes are grown.

**A Practice Standards Certificate Holder is a member in good standing with the BCWA who has crushed/pressed, processed and bottled the wine in the same GI where the grapes were grown, no grapes were brought in and no grapes were sent out.

Sec. 52(3) For the purposes of subsection (2) (a), land is controlled by a practice standards certificate holder if the holder has the legal right to conduct, and does conduct, all activities associated with growing grapes on the land under the terms of a lease, rental or similar agreement.

Sec. 52(4) For BC VQA wines

The label of a BC VQA wine may describe the wine as "Estate Bottled" only if all of the following conditions are met:

(a)all of the conditions of subsection (2);

(b)the lease, rental or similar agreement referred to in subsection (3) must be for a term of at least 10 years;

(c)the description must be used only in the fourth and subsequent years of the term referred to in paragraph (b);

(d)any alcohol added to a wine categorized as Fortified wine must have been distilled

(i)within the geographical area where the wine was processed and that geographical area must be one other than that represented by the geographical indication "British Columbia", and

(ii)by the same practice standards certificate holder who processed and bottled the wine.

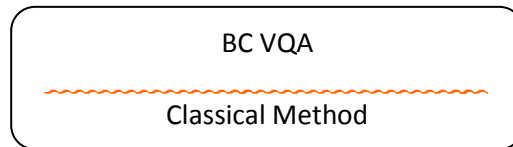
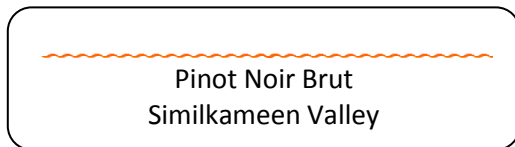
Sparkling Wine

Sec's. 33, 34, 35, 36, & 47, A Sparkling wine may be identified with the terms "Traditional Method", "Classical Method", "Méthode Traditionale", "Méthode Classique", "Méthode Cuvée Close" and "Aromatic Sparkling" only if it is produced in accordance with these sections.

Sec.55(4) The vintage year does not need to be declared for **Sparkling Wines**.....

Sec.55(3)(b) The method for **vinification must be used on the label** for BC VQA Sparkling wine and BC VQA Sparkling Icewine.

Examples for a Sparkling Wine (but not limited to):



Frizzante Style Wine

Under the Regulation a Frizzante style wine is considered a "style" of table wine and must meet all the requirements of a regular table style wine.

The method of carbonation may be **CO2 infused at final bottling** and is generally under 300kPa.

A Frizzante style wine may NOT say "sparkling wine" anywhere on it's label. But may use Frizzante, or bubbly or other such creative terms.

Fortified Wine

Sec.29 Fortified wine may be made only from fresh grapes that have been harvested on the vine, to which alcohol has been added for the purpose of fortification.

Sec. 25(f)(ii) Alcohol added meaning, ethyl alcohol, pure alcohol, such as grain, brandy, nut or fruit spirit. Alcoholic strength by volume of the finished wine must be more than 14.9% and not more than 22.9% (see Schedule 2, Table 2)

NO ethyl alcohol, pure alcohol, such as grain, brandy, nut or fruit spirit

Sec.55(4) The vintage year does not need to be declared for **Fortified Wine**

Liqueur Wine

Sec. 30(a) Liqueur wine may be made only from fresh grapes that have been harvested on the vine, **Sec. 30(b) & Sec.25(f)(iii)** must have an alcoholic strength by volume exceeding 14.9% and less than 20%

Sec. 30(c) must not contain added alcohol

Sec.53 The label for Liqueur wine may contain the descriptor “Natural”.

The term “Natural” may be presented anywhere on the label if the liqueur is produced in accordance with the above sections and is presented as BC VQA

See Schedule 2, Table 2 for all alcoholic strengths.

Late Harvest Wine, Select Late Harvest and Special Select Late Harvest Wine

Sec.43 Late Harvest wine, Select Late Harvest wine and Special Select Late Harvest wine may be made only from fresh, ripe grapes, which have been desiccated on the vine under natural conditions that favour concentration of the sugar in the grapes.

The terms Late Harvest, Select Late Harvest and Special Select Late Harvest are Provincially registered under the Regulation for use only on a BC VQA certified wine.

Sec.42(2) The label for a Late Harvest wine may contain the descriptor “Botrytis Affected” or “Botrytized”,

If the conditions for Botrytis, also known as Noble Rot, have been achieved, and if the wine is produced in accordance with Section 41 & 43 and is presented as BC VQA the wine may bear the term “Botrytis Affected” anywhere on the label.

Icewine Wine

The intent to make Icewine and all pressings of Icewine must be registered with the BCWA through the on-line services site.

AND when picking Icewine all call-in procedures must be strictly adhered to.

Sec. 40 & 58 The term Icewine is Provincially registered under the Regulation for use only on a BC VQA certified wine.

AND the term Icewine is also Federally Registered and **must be all one word with a capital “Icewine”**, any variations must not be used.

Sec. 41(1)(a) The only grapes that may be used to make Icewine are

(i) are Vitis vinifera varieties or Vidal Blanc,

(ii) are grown in a geographical area represented by a geographical indication other than "British Columbia", and pressed within the same geographical area,

(iii) have frozen naturally on the vine while the air temperature is -8°C or lower, and be pressed in a continuous process while the grapes are still frozen, and

(iv) are transported by the most direct route from picking to pressing;

Grapes must be harvested and, pressed in one process, within in the same GI where the grapes were grown. Example: Picked in Oliver and Pressed in Penticton, this is harvested and pressed, all within the GI “Okanagan Valley”, as long as the grapes remain **NATURALLY frozen**.

A GI on the label for an Icewine cannot be just British Columbia, it must be more specific to the area they were grown, such as: “Okanagan Valley,” “Similkameen Valley,” “Fraser Valley,” “Gulf Islands,” “Vancouver Island,” or “Okanagan Valley Golden Mile Bench”.

Sec. 41(1)(b) The Brix level of any grape juice or grape must used to process the wine

(i) is at least 32° Brix after each pressing when measured after transfer to the fermentation vessel, and

(ii) achieves an average of at least 35° Brix respecting combined pressings in the fermentation vessel;

(c) the residual sugar in the wine at bottling is at least 100 g/L;

(d) any residual sugar and alcohol in the wine comes only from the natural sugar in the grapes;

(e) the wine does not include sweet reserve and is not chaptalized;

(f) the total volatile acidity for the wine is no more than 2.1 g/L.

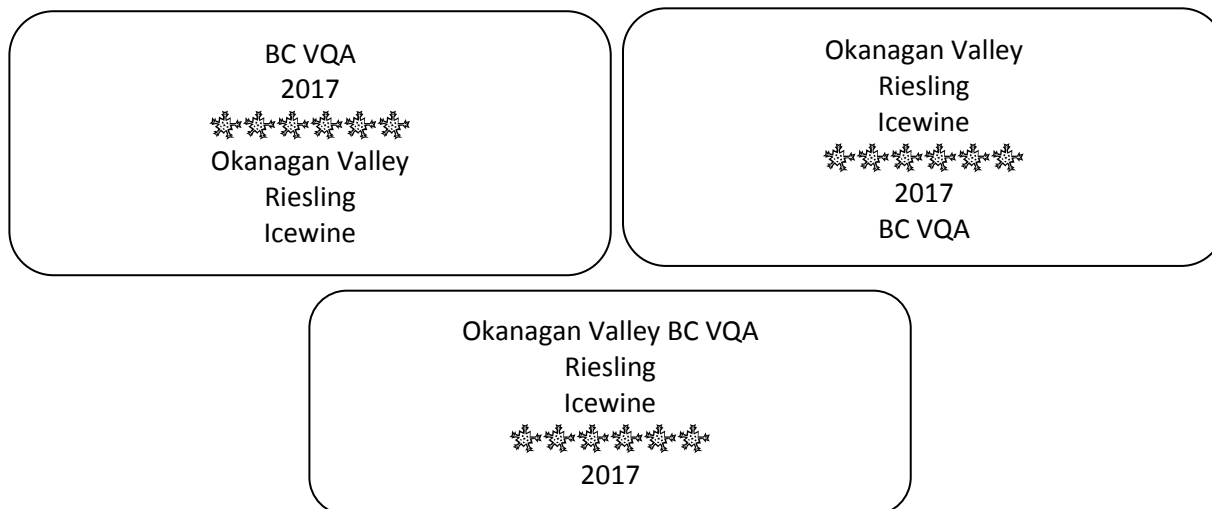
Sec.55(3) The label for Icewine must name only the grape variety or varieties of the wine.

An Icewine must use a variety on the label.

If a proprietary name is use then the variety must still be presented somewhere on the label. See Schedule 5, Table on for a listing of varieties.

Neither the term Icewine nor the vintage may fall between the varietal and the GI.

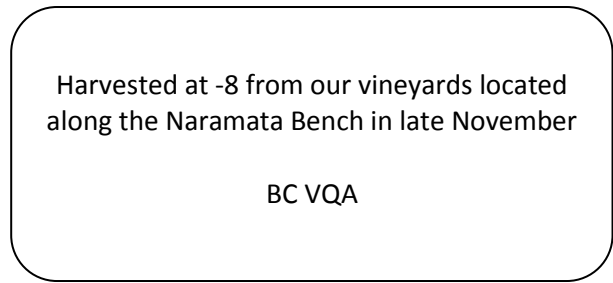
Any of the following (but not limited to) are all considered to be acceptable for labelling Icewine:



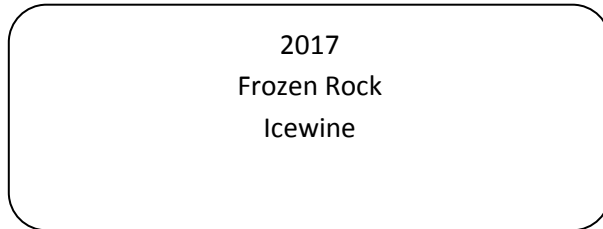
Front Facing Label:



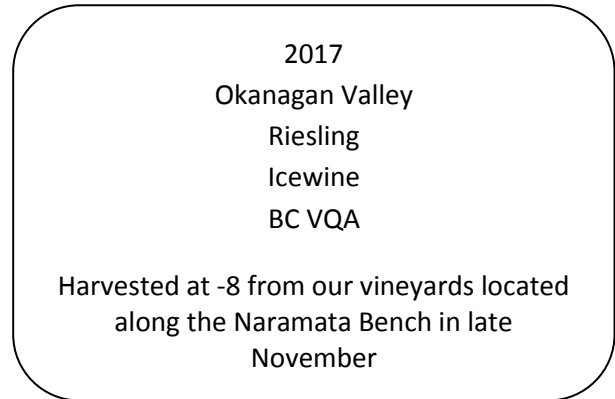
Back Facing Label:



Front Facing Label:



Back Facing Label:



Use of the Term “Meritage”

Sec. 40, 45 & 58

The term Meritage is Provincially registered under the Regulation for use only on a BC VQA certified wine.

Sec.45 Wine may be described as "Meritage" only if the wine is composed of a blend of two or more of the following grape varieties and one of those varieties does not make up more than 90% of the wine:

- (a) for a red wine, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Malbec, Petit Verdot, St. Macaire, Gros Verdot and Carmenere;
- (b) for a white wine, Sauvignon Blanc, Sémillon and Sauvignon Vert.

The GI does NOT need to be immediately before or after the term Meritage. Meritage is considered a “special term” and not an individual variety.

Cabernet Merlot:

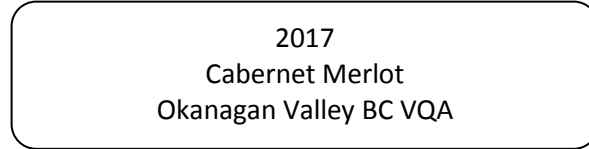
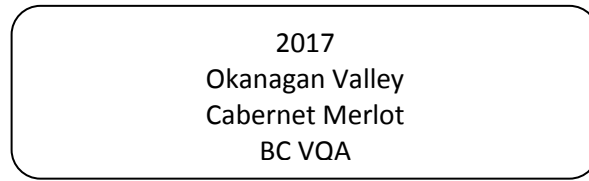
Sec. 51(4)(b0) The label for a wine containing a blend of Merlot and one or both of Cabernet Franc and Cabernet Sauvignon

- (a) may use the descriptor "Cabernet Merlot" on the principal display panel, and
- (b) must list elsewhere on the label each grape variety used in the wine.

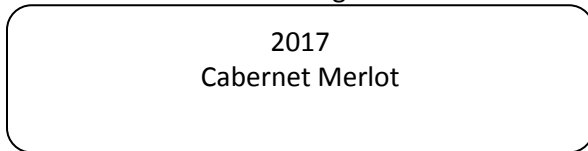
The correct descriptor is “**Cabernet Merlot**” NOT Merlot Cabernet.

The descriptor CABERNET MERLOT must be on the principal display panel as defined under the Federal Regulation as that which is intended to be displayed to the consumer under normal circumstances.

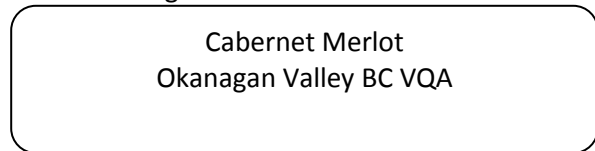
Cabernet Merlot is considered a varietal and GI must be presented immediately before or after



Front Facing Label:



Back Facing Label:



Graphics for “BC VQA”

The wording “BC VQA” or its derivatives is the only authorized wording for BC wines that qualify under the “Wines of Marked Quality Regulation (Regulation)”.

Or the below logos may be used. These logos and any of their derivatives are the intellectual property of the BCWA. These logos are being provided only as information and any use of the mark in any format without the BCWA’s subsequent written authorization to do so is unauthorized. Please request the graphic standards.





Prohibited Use of VQA

“VQA” or any of its derivatives such as the black/gold Medallion are the intellectual property of the Canadian Vintner’s Association and are prohibited all BC certified wines. Any continued use of these terms “VQA” and the “medallion” or derivatives thereof are restricted and prohibited and may expose the user to damages/claim(s) from VQA Canada and perhaps other judicial remedies.

Labelling Requirements of Other Laws

The Wines of Marked Quality Regulation states under Sec.18(g) Meet the requirements of the “Food and Drugs Act (Canada)” and the regulations made under it.

A BC VQA wine must comply with all other labelling Regulations. Such as those set out Federally.

The following are additional labelling requirements for BC VQA wines which are found in other Federal and Provincial Laws. These laws are not administered by the British Columbia Wine Authority, but their requirements must be met in order for BC VQA wine to be sold within British Columbia. For complete information please refer to the “Food and Drugs Act (Canada)”, “Government of Canada ,Guide to the Consumer Packaging and Labelling Act and Regulations” and the “Canadian Food Inspection Agency, 2003 Guide to Food Labelling and Advertising, Chapter 10 - Guide to the Labelling of Alcoholic Beverages”. **OR contact CFIA directly at: 604-292-5721**

Alcohol Content - The alcohol content of the wine must be displayed in both official languages **on the principal display panel*** and may be written using abbreviations “X% alc./vol.” Note that periods follow both abbreviations. This version is fully bilingual. If the declaration is written out in full as “X% alcohol by volume”, it must also be shown in French, “X% d’alcool par volume”. The minimum type size is 1.6 mm in height based upon the lower case “o”.

***Principal Display Panel** is defined as that panel which normally faces the consumer.

Volume - Volume **must be displayed on the principal display panel*** and must be expressed in metric units, millilitres when quantities are less than one litre and in litres when quantities exceed one litre. The units

may be written out in full or abbreviated to mL, ml, or L (no punctuation). The minimum type size is 1.6 mm in height based upon the lower case “o”.

Product of Canada - “Product of Canada” must appear somewhere on the label. This declaration must also be made in French, “Produit du Canada”. Or it may also be Product of / Produit du British Columbia Canada

UPC Bar Code - This may appear on the principal display or the back panel. The UPC bar code must appear on the label or bottle.

Domicile of the Winery - The domicile of the winery must appear somewhere on the principal display or the back panel.

- The domicile is the registered **LEGAL name** of the manufacturing winery.

Address Sufficient for Postal Purposes - An address sufficient for postal purposes must be displayed. -

- This is the physical location of the manufacturing winery and must be a minimum of **City and Province and Postal Code**

- A website may be used, but it must be used with the postal address, not a substitute for it. AND the LEGAL name of the winery must still be displayed elsewhere on the label.

- Winery License number or Excise Tax numbers alone are NOT permitted. These may be used in addition to the Legal name and address.

- The minimum type size is 1.6 mm in height based upon the lower case “o”.