

RED TAIL RIDGE

Finger Lakes, New York



Products

A Perfect Position on Seneca Lake Red Tail Ridge sits on the western side of Seneca Lake in New York's Finger Lakes, near Penn Yan, where deep lake influence, shale-based soils, clay deposits, and a gentle east-facing slope create a serious setting for cool-climate vinifera. Nancy Irelan and Michael Schnelle came to the region with a clear purpose: to find a site capable of producing precise, expressive wines with real identity. After years of research, they purchased the estate in 2004 and began planting Pinot Noir in 2005, followed by Riesling, Chardonnay, Dornfelder, and other cool-climate varieties. Driven by Two Exceptional Minds The story is as much about people as place. Nancy Irelan, co-owner and winemaker, brings deep technical expertise, including her earlier role as Gallo's VP of Viticulture and Enology R&D. Michael Schnelle, co-owner and viticulturist, pairs practical vineyard management with an engineer's discipline and long-term view. Together, they have built Red Tail Ridge around precision: careful site selection, thoughtful planting decisions, close attention in the vineyard, and a cellar philosophy that favors purity over manipulation. Sustainability, Precision, and Finger Lakes Character Sustainability is central to the estate. Red Tail Ridge's winery was constructed in 2009 and earned LEED Gold certification in 2011, with geothermal heating and cooling and other energy-conscious design choices. In the vineyard, permanent cover crops help preserve soil health and manage water retention, native wildflowers support pollinators, and the farming program is designed around long-term environmental responsibility. Winemaking is restrained and transparent: stainless steel, neutral oak, open-air vessels, indigenous yeasts when possible, and reds bottled unfiltered and unfiltered. The result is a focused Finger Lakes portfolio—Riesling, Pinot Noir, sparkling wines, and adventurous varieties such as Teroldego and Blaufränkisch—that speaks clearly of vintage, place, and intent.

Owner : Nancy Irelan and Michael Schnelle

www.redtailridgewinery.com

