



## 2011 FELSECK VINEYARD CHARDONNAY

### WINEMAKING DATA

**Harvest Date:** 29<sup>th</sup> of September – 4<sup>th</sup> of October, 2011  
**Brix at harvest:** 21.1  
**Blend and grape source:** 100% organically grown estate Chardonnay from the Felseck Vineyard  
**Alcohol:** 13.5%      **pH:** 3.25  
**Residual Sugar:** 1.42g/L      **T.A.** 5.51g/L  
**Bottling Date:** April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2013  
**Oak regime:** 100% French Oak: 14% new and the rest neutral for the 1<sup>st</sup> 11 months; stainless steel barrels and neutral oak for a further 5 months  
**Time in barrel:** 16 months  
**Filtered**



SILVER MEDAL NATIONAL WINE AWARDS OF CANADA

### WINEMAKER'S NOTES

The vines for this wine were meticulously maintained to showcase our Beamsville Bench *terroir*. All grape bunches were exposed to sunlight at fruit set by completely removing leaves on the East side and partially on the West side of the canopy to maximize ripening. Green harvesting – the removal of under-ripe bunches – was performed at the first sign of colour change in berries from green to gold. This is known as *véraison*. A meager 27.6hL per hectare was harvested (1.7 tons per acre) in 2011 from the Felseck Vineyard (planted in 1992).

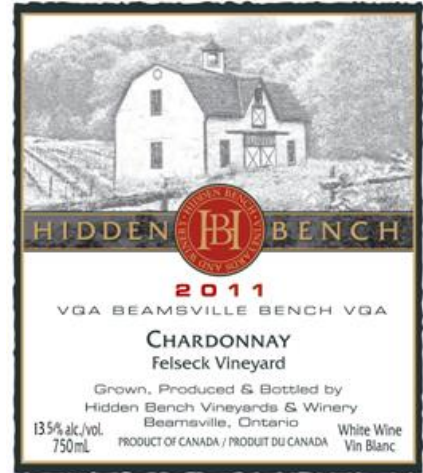
All fruit was handpicked, sorted and whole bunch pressed to yield the most pure juice. After cold settling for 24 hours, the juice was racked, warmed and transferred to barrel. The wine was fermented with indigenous yeasts reaching a peak of 22 degrees Celsius. Malolactic fermentation occurred naturally and all barrels were stirred weekly during fermentation only.

### TASTING

The alluring and expressive nose of the 2011 Felseck Vineyard Chardonnay entices you with its forwardness and aromas of baked pear and toastiness. On the palate, the combination of the typical Felseck Vineyard minerality, citrus and Honey Crisp apple notes gives rise to a complex multi-layered wine while the acidity provides the structural framework of balance that will assure the freshness and longevity of this gracious yet concentrated cool climate Chardonnay.

### THE GROWING SEASON

2011 could be characterized as a year of contrasts! The start to the growing season was slow with cool and wet conditions (75mm above average rainfall in April and May) experienced in early Spring until mid June.



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This was followed by an extended period of warm and dry weather from mid-June until the end of September with above average temperatures and below average precipitation. The harvest period was challenging as a number of unpredictable weather systems gave us significant above average precipitation from September 26<sup>th</sup> through October 5<sup>th</sup>.

Fortunately we had already picked a significant portion of our younger vines and were able to let the older vine fruit hang until after this rainy period due to the lack of breakdown. Overall the growing season ended up being fairly normal for our cool-climate viticulture area with 1557 Degree days, a harvest period that ran from September 19<sup>th</sup> to November 7<sup>th</sup>, and a lower than forecast yield averaging under 2 tonnes /acre or approximately 30 Hl /hectare of physiological and sugar ripe fruit.

The saving grace of the vintage for Hidden Bench was the meticulous vineyard, canopy and yield management of our vineyard team coupled with timely (read lucky!!!) picking decisions. Every decision was thoroughly debated and considered by the Hidden Bench vineyard and winemaking team. Despite numerous challenges, we were able to bring in our handpicked fruit at optimum ripeness and our extensive "triage" or sorting of the harvested fruit has yielded some excellent wines.

The 2011 wines show wonderful potential and should be viewed as typical examples of *terroir* driven, cool climate wines with elegance, higher acids and lower alcohols, in other words, age-worthy, balanced and easy to pair with your favourite foods.