



## 2015 ESTATE CHARDONNAY

### WINEMAKING DATA

**Harvest Dates:** 17<sup>th</sup> of September to 7<sup>th</sup> of October, 2015

**Brix at harvest:** 21.9 – 22.6

**Blend and grape source:** 100% organically certified, estate grown Chardonnay from the Locust Lane, Felseck and Rosomel Vineyards

**Alcohol:** 13.0%      **pH:** 3.30

**Residual Sugar:** 1.48g/L      **T.A.** 6.00g/L

**Bottling Date:** August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2016

**Oak regime:** 100% French Oak: 20% New Fill, 15% 2<sup>nd</sup> Fill, 40% 3<sup>rd</sup> Fill and 25% 4<sup>th</sup> Fill

**Time in barrel:** 9 months

### WINEMAKER'S NOTES

The Chardonnay vines for this wine were meticulously maintained to showcase our Beamsville Bench *terroir*. All grape bunches were exposed to sunlight at fruit set by removing shading leaves on the East side and partially on the West side of the canopy to maximize ripening. Green harvest was performed at the first sign of colour change in berries from green to gold. This is known as *véraison*. A mere 26.2hL per hectare was harvested in 2015.

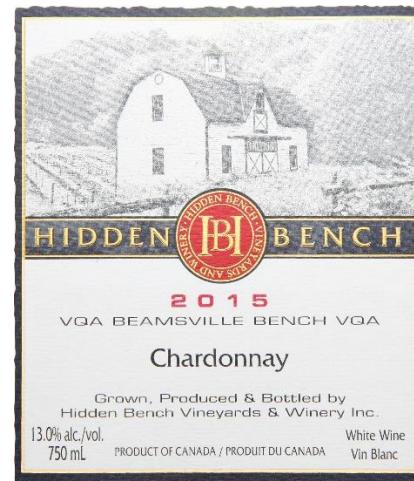
All fruit was handpicked, sorted and whole bunch pressed to yield the most pure juice. After cold settling for 24 hours, the juice was racked, warmed and then transferred to barrel using gravity. The wine was slowly fermented with indigenous yeasts reaching a peak of 20 degrees Celsius. Malolactic fermentation occurred naturally and all barrels were stirred bi-weekly during fermentation. The barrels for this wine were selected and blended in June 2016 and filtered before bottling in August.

### TASTING

The 2015 Estate Chardonnay is straw yellow in colour, with perfumed floral notes of white blossom, citrus and pear and a hint of butterscotch on the nose. The palate is richly layered with lemon/lime citrus notes, a velvety smooth texture and long, lingering mineral finish.

### THE GROWING SEASON

The growing season in the lead up to harvest 2015 saw yet another winter characterized by record breaking, brutally cold temperatures with plenty of snow and ice. Persisting lower than average temperatures (to be precise, 8°C lower than normal for February), lead to potentially devastating bud



### ESTATE SERIES

on our vines with many days spent worrying about their survival.

Spring weather was relatively normal and the first evidence of bud break appeared on the 8<sup>th</sup> of May. High rainfall in June was followed by a very dry month of July. Mother Nature finally allowed normalcy to return and the summer brought warm and sunny conditions.

The beautiful warm weather lingered well into September, giving the vines a chance to slowly ripen fruit and gain phenological maturity. These favourable conditions lasted until the end of October, which allowed for good sugar accumulation and optimal flavours in all varieties.

Vintage at Hidden Bench commenced on the 17<sup>th</sup> of September with Chardonnay and the last of the Bordeaux reds was picked on the 27<sup>th</sup> of October.

Quality of the 2015 vintage is exceptional due to the favourable ripening conditions in both the aromatic whites and wines in barrel show tremendous potential. Varietals adapted to the Bench did particularly well, such as Pinot Noir, Chardonnay and Riesling, while the Bordeaux reds benefitted from the long warm Fall conditions.

Despite being dealt two severe winters in a row, our particular and unique location on the Beamsville Bench, as well as scientific, meticulous and thoughtful viticultural practices, ensure that our vines are on the road to recovery.