



2015 FELSECK VINEYARD CHARDONNAY

WINEMAKING DATA

Harvest Date: 17th to 30th of September, 2015

Brix at harvest: 22.0 – 22.6

Blend and grape source: 100% organically certified estate

Chardonnay from the Felseck Vineyard

Alcohol: 13.0% **pH:** 3.20

Residual Sugar: 1.32g/L **T.A.** 6.39g/L

Bottling Date: March 21st, 2017

Oak regime: 100% French Oak: 8% new, 70% 2nd fill, 23% 3rd fill and the rest neutral for the 1st 9 months; racked to 17% new, 50% 2nd fill and 33% 3rd fill barrels and neutral oak for a further 5 months

Vine Age: Planted in 1992

Time in barrel: 14 months

Un-fined. Unfiltered. Certified Organic by Pro-Cert.

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 removing all shading leaves on the East side and partially on the West side of the canopy to maximize ripening. Green harvesting was performed at the first sign of *véraison*. In 2015, yields were lower than normal due to winter injury at 1.43 tons per acre.

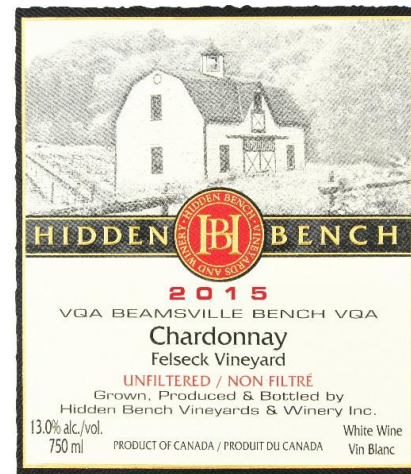
All fruit was handpicked, sorted and whole bunch pressed to yield the most pure juice. After cold settling for 24 hours, the juice was racked, warmed and transferred to barrel. The wine was fermented with indigenous yeasts reaching a peak of 20 degrees Celsius. Malolactic fermentation occurred naturally and all barrels were stirred bi-weekly during fermentation only.

TASTING

This classic cool climate Chardonnay shows a rich, toasty nose with aromas of baked apple and hints of melon, giving way to a layered palate of baked apple pie, nutmeg and lemon custard. Very lush and creamy, balanced by the stony minerality on the palate. The mouth-watering finish of this wine leaves you wanting more. Ready to drink now, this Chardonnay will reward those who have the patience to age it carefully for 5-8 years.

THE GROWING SEASON

The growing season in the lead up to harvest 2015 saw yet another winter characterized by record breaking, brutally cold



93 points – Michael Godel

TERROIR SERIES

temperatures with plenty of snow and ice. Persisting lower than average temperatures (to be precise, 8°C colder than normal for February), lead to potentially devastating bud damage 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 8th 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 17th of September with Chardonnay and the last of the Bordeaux reds was picked on the 27th of October.

Quality of the 2015 vintage is exceptional due to the favourable ripening conditions in both the aromatic whites and wines aged in barrel. Showing 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.