



2015 FUMÉ BLANC ROSOMEL VINEYARD

WINEMAKING DATA

Harvest Dates: 26th to 28th of September, 2015

Brix at harvest: 23.3 – 23.5

Blend and grape source: 100% organically grown and certified Sauvignon Blanc from the Rosomel Vineyard

Alcohol: 13.5% **pH:** 3.24

Residual Sugar: 2.07 g/L **T.A.** 5.82g/L

Oak regime: 100% French oak: 7% new, rest neutral, fermented and aged in barrel for 7 months, then racked to concrete egg (43%) and stainless steel tanks (57%) for 4 months prior to bottling

Bottling Date: August 23rd, 2016

Filtered

WINEMAKER'S NOTES

In 2015 we exposed Sauvignon Blanc bunches at fruit-set to sunlight by removing leaves on the east side of the canopy only, while providing some shade on the west side to protect against sunburn. Green harvest was performed at the start of *véraison* and we only left the healthiest bunches that were well exposed to sunlight in order to promote ripening, concentration of flavours and the expression of *terroir*.

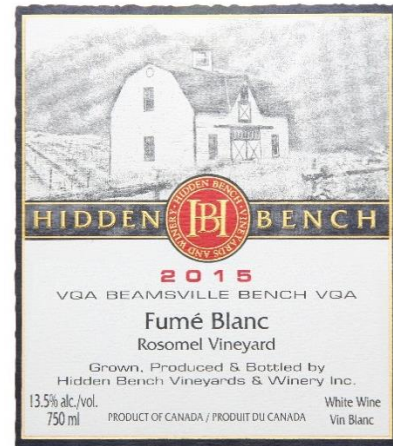
The grapes were handpicked; hand sorted and gently whole bunch pressed. The juice was then left to settle at 5°C for 24 hours prior to racking after which it was warmed up to 16°C and transferred to barrel. Fermentation occurred naturally with indigenous yeasts and the barrels were stirred bi-weekly during fermentation to increase mouth feel and creaminess. The 2015 Fumé Blanc was blended in July 2016 and filtered before bottling.

TASTING

Golden straw in colour with an elegant, subtle nose of melon, passionfruit, ripe gooseberry and hints of smoke. The palate is rich and well-structured continuing with the aromas on the nose of melon and tropical fruit, balanced by refreshing acidity. Flinty and smoky mineral notes persist in this Old World style Fume Blanc.

THE GROWING SEASON

The growing season in the lead up to vintage 2015 saw yet another winter characterised by record breaking, brutally cold temperatures and plenty of snow and ice. Persisting lower



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than average temperatures (to be precise, 8°C below 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 excellent warmth 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, allowing for good sugar accumulation and harvest at optimal flavours on all of the varieties we grow.

Vintage at Hidden Bench commenced on the 17th of September with Chardonnay and the last of the Bordeaux reds were picked on the 27th of October.

Despite lower yields following bud damage from 2014 and 2015, we saw an increase in yields in 2015. Quality of the 2015 vintage is exceptional due to the favourable ripening conditions and both the aromatic whites and wines in barrel show tremendous potential. Varieties well 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.