



2016 BLANC DE BLANC

WINEMAKING DATA

Harvest Dates: September 2, 2016
Brix at harvest: 17.9 weighted average
Blend and grape source: 100% organically certified and estate grown Chardonnay from the Locust Lane Vineyard.
Alcohol: 12.1% **pH:** 2.95
Residual Sugar: 0.43 g/L **T.A.** 8.61g/l
Bottling Date: May 23, 2017
Disgorging Date: January 25th, 2022
Time on lees: 7 months in barrel, 54 months on lees in bottle

WINEMAKER'S NOTES

After hand-harvesting and sorting, the fruit was transferred to the press as whole clusters. A maximum of 500L of juice per 1,000kg fruit was kept for the sparkling base wine. This juice is then settled for 48 hours before being racked off its heavy lees. Fermentation occurs in neutral oak barriques and the wine was aged for 7 months prior to finalizing the selections in the early Spring. Once blended, the base wine goes through *tirage*, the term for the secondary fermentation in bottle.

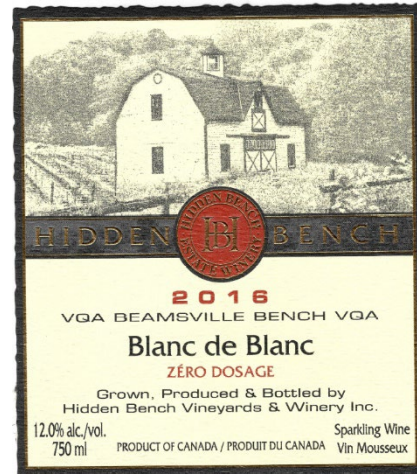
The bottles were aged for almost five years on their lees prior to the disgorgement in January of 2022, when the yeasts are removed, and the bottle is topped with the same wine. This is a pure expression of Brut Natur! Zero Dosage is a term used when no sugar is added to the finished wine, which provides the most authentic expression of our terroir.

TASTING

A fine, delicate, and consistent mousse with persistent bead, the wine opens with aromas of yellow apple, green pear, buttered brioche, and white flowers. True to the vintage, the base wine had a riper and richer fruit profile which creates a wine of structure, power, and surprising tropical fruit character on the palate. Five years of lees aging gives toasted bread and Parmesan rind character, which will continue to develop and evolve over time. If you're feeling flush, pair with classic Acadian Sturgeon caviar service, and if you're feeling adventurous try it with buttered and salted popcorn.

THE GROWING SEASON

Following a relatively mild winter, the season started off with an early but variable Spring with bud break starting on May 1st. By the end of May, conditions were much warmer and drier than normal, which persisted well into the summer.



TERROIR SERIES

Soil moisture levels were much lower than normal with most of the summer storms bypassing our Beamsville Bench vineyards. Younger vineyard plantings, with shallow root systems were most affected by the low soil moisture and the decision was made to remove the fruit and to hand irrigate these vines to avoid heat stress. Older, mature vines with deep established root systems showed no signs of stress and easily supported their balanced crop load.

The hot and dry weather, with a record breaking 33 days above 30°C, continued throughout the summer, with lots of bright sunshine and just enough rain to keep drought conditions from becoming too severe. Crop levels were good, with bunches increasing in size after mid-August rains.

Harvest at Hidden Bench started on the 2nd of September with Pinot Noir and Chardonnay for sparkling base wines, followed by Rosé, Chardonnay and Pinot Noir in mid to late September. Weather conditions were favourable throughout vintage with warm and dry conditions prevailing. Due to these dry conditions and meticulous vineyard and canopy management, disease pressure was minimal and it was a pleasure harvesting phenologically ripe and healthy fruit across all the varieties grown on our estate.

The exceptional weather of the 2016 vintage, permitted all grape varieties to show a lot of promise. Cool climate cultivars such as Riesling, Chardonnay and Pinot Noir show elegance and restraint, with typical Bench minerality, while the later ripening Bordeaux varieties show a richness with a ripe dark fruit character.