



2020 ESTATE CHARDONNAY

WINEMAKING DATA

Harvest Dates: September 28 – October 14, 2020

Brix: 22.4 Weighted Average.

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

Alcohol: 13.5% **pH:** 3.24

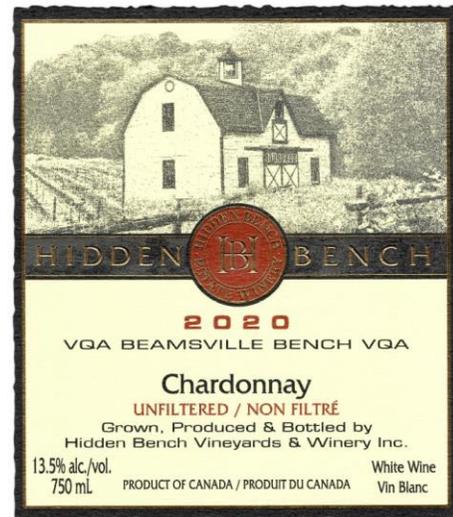
Residual Sugar: 3.4g/L **T.A.** 6.50g/L

Bottling Date: September 7, 2021

Oak regime: Crafted using a blend of Concrete (6.5%), French Oak Barriques (24% New, 13% 2nd Fill, 6% 3rd Fill) and French Oak Puncheons.

Time in Concrete/Barrel: 9 months

Certified Organic by Pro-Cert



ESTATE SERIES

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 – the removal of under-ripe bunches – was performed at the first sign of *véraison* in the berries from green to gold.

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/concrete by gravity. The wine was slowly fermented with indigenous yeasts reaching a peak temperature of 21-22 degrees Celsius. Malolactic fermentation occurred naturally and barrels were stirred bi-weekly during fermentation. The barrels for this wine were selected and blended in July 2021 and the wine was bottled, unfiltered, un-fined in August.

TASTING

Pouring with a pale gold colour, our 2020 Estate Chardonnay leads with aromas of caramel apple pie, toasted marshmallow, and orange blossom oil. The expressive palate is layered with flavours of stone fruit, cold cream, and warm baking spices like vanilla and cinnamon. The ripe fruit character of the 2020 vintage is balanced by refreshing acidity and subtle minerality indicative of our Beamsville Bench vineyards. Drink over the next 3 to 5 years alongside brown-butter and sage gnocchi, herb roast chicken or traditional boiled Canadian lobster.

THE GROWING SEASON

Bud swell started in early May which coincided with frost events in early May, meaning we had to take measures to protect low lying spots in both the Felseck and Locust Lane vineyards. Over three nights, our team burned hay bales to create a warm blanket over low spots. On the last night of the cold snap a helicopter was used to blow warmer air down into the vineyards.

Thankfully, by the third week of May, budbreak was complete across all grape varieties with no apparent significant damage. By summer solstice on June 21, all blocks in our vineyards were in full bloom with decent conditions for “berry-set”. Come July we knew it was going to be a very hot, dry summer with an early harvest. We took measures in our canopy management to provide shading to the young berries to prevent sun burn while still allowing good airflow. Having learned from the previous ‘extremely hot’ vintages such as 2012, 2016 and 2018, we knew that the ongoing drought conditions would lead to smaller berries and ultimately a reduced crop.

By mid-September we started harvesting Pinot Noir for Rosé, and then transitioned into vineyard blocks for table wine, such as Chardonnay. We have never experienced fruit at the physiological and sugar ripeness levels we achieved and with incredible fruit integrity that allowed us to sort more quickly than is typical throughout harvest. Harvest was complete November 4th and while not the largest harvest for Hidden Bench, we believe 2020 will be a benchmark vintage which we anticipate will yield full bodied, age worthy wines.