

HIDDEN BENCH



2021 FELSECK VINEYARD CHARDONNAY

WINEMAKING DATA

Harvest Date: October 7th - 20th, 2021

Brix at harvest: 20.6 weighted average

Blend and grape source: 100% organic and estate grown Chardonnay from the Felseck Vineyard.

Appellation: VQA Beamsville Bench

Alcohol: 13.3% **pH:** 3.23

Residual Sugar: <2.0g/L **T.A.** 6.72g/L

Bottling Date: April 5th, 2023

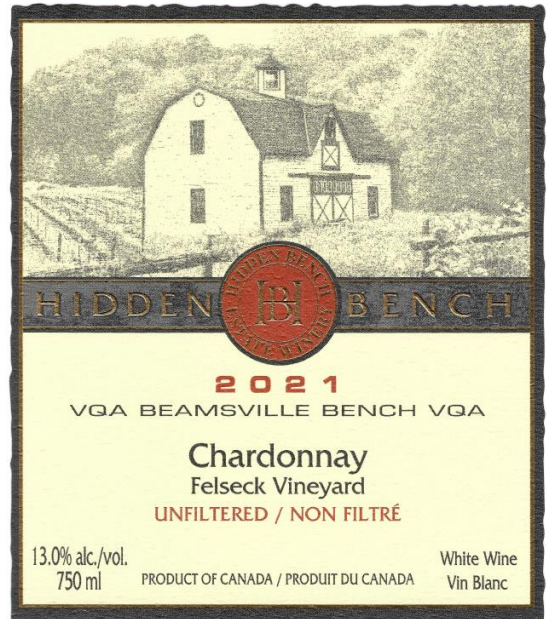
Oak regime: 100% French Oak: 19% New, 19% 2nd fill, 18% 3rd fill and the balance neutral. Blended in July 2022 then returned to stainless steel barrels (63%), with the balance split between 2nd and neutral barriques (37%).

Vine Age: 29 years.

Time in barrel: 16 months

Unfinned & Unfiltered

Certified Organic by ProCert



WINEMAKER'S NOTES

A long cool growing season and harvest in 2021 meant the most expressive and balanced flavours were captured. All sourced from a heritage block of East-West aligned rows planted in 1992. The fruit is hand-picked, sorted and then whole cluster pressed to capture the purest juice. After a brief settling, the juice is racked to barrel, and fermentation is allowed to occur naturally.

Following an initial ageing of 9 months the wine is blended then returned to a mix of oak and stainless-steel barrels for an additional 7 months to give the wine a balanced expression – capturing both fruit and textural elements from the extended élevage. Following a period of ageing in stainless steel tank the wine was bottled unfinned & unfiltered in April 2023.

TASTING

Brilliant pale gold in colour, this wine opens with aromas of toasted hazelnuts, vanilla poached pears, and white flower blossom. True to form, this vintage expresses flavours of fresh nectarine, yellow melon, and salted caramel, with salinity and struck match mineral essence integrated into subtle toasted character from the wine's 16-month élevage. A finely textured wine with impeccable balance and a long, lingering finish, this wine will reward 3 to 5 years of careful cellaring. Try with butter poached lobster tail or risotto with in-season corn and smoked bacon.

THE GROWING SEASON

Like all vintages, 2021 has its own unique story! The year started with a mild and relatively dry winter which protected buds and increased bud survivability to approximately 90%. The warm Spring led to an earlier than average budbreak coupled with an excellent vegetative growth phase through May and June resulted in early and complete flowering towards the Summer Solstice.

Fruit set was excellent and the larger than average crop was supported by ample moisture and heat during July and August. Our winegrowing team was kept very busy with leaf removal to open the canopy as well as fruit thinning/ balancing throughout the summer and at the end of August we and many other winegrowers anticipated an excellent and incredibly large vintage.

The age-old vigneron's expression Sept/October makes the vintage was once again exemplified in 2021! As we prepared for harvest in early September rain events of biblical proportions arrived (500-600mm in Sept./Oct.) caused logistical plans and crop yield estimates to be revisited by our team. The 2021 harvest was a challenge for our team, but we are pleased with the quality that our organic, hand harvested and sorted fruit and was able to deliver. 2021 vintage will be remembered as a winegrower's vintage where a nimble approach and attention to detail from vineyard to bottle delivered very good early varietal wines.

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