

HIDDEN BENCH



2021 TÊTE DE CUVÉE CHARDONNAY

WINEMAKING DATA

Harvest Dates: October 24, 2021

Brix at harvest: 20.4 weighted average

Blend and grape source: 100% organic and estate grown

Chardonnay from the Rosomel Vineyard.

Appellation: VQA Beamsville Bench

Alcohol: 13.4% **pH:** 3.23

Residual Sugar: 2.21 g/L **T.A.** 6.47g/L

Bottling Date: April 5th, 2023

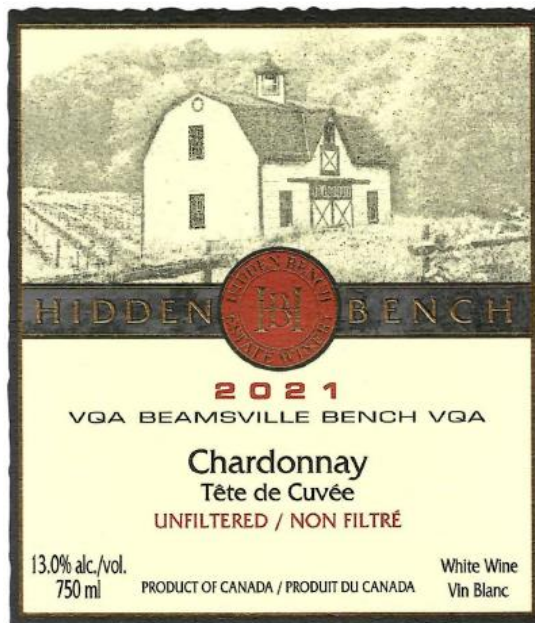
Oak regime: 100% French Oak: 16% New, 24% 2nd fill, 36% 3rd fill and the balance neutral. Blended in July 2022 then returned to stainless steel barrels (65%), with the balance split between 2nd and neutral barrriques (35%).

Vine Age: Planted 1976 to 1979

Time in barrel: 16 months

Un-fined. Unfiltered.

Certified Organic by Pro-Cert.



WINEMAKER'S NOTES

The vines for the 2021 Tête de Cuvée Chardonnay 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 harvesting was performed at the first sign of colour change in berries from green to gold. This is known as *véraison*.

All fruit was handpicked, hand sorted and whole bunch pressed to yield the purest juice. After cold settling for 24 hours, the juice was racked, warmed, and transferred to barrel for spontaneous fermentation. Barrel selections were made in the summer of 2022 for this iconic wine prior to blending and returning to a mix of oak and stainless barrels for an additional 7 months *élevage*. The wine was bottled unfiltered, unfined in April 2023.

TASTING

Sourced exclusively from vines planted in the late 1970s at the historic Rosomel Vineyard on the Beamsville Bench, the 2021 is another classic expression of our barrel-select, oak-aged Chardonnay. Aromas of green melon, Bosc pear, cinnamon stick, jasmine, lemon thyme, and cold butter. On the pallet, flavours of starfruit, tangerine oil, lemon candy, and fresh green herbs. Pair with a traditional Nova Scotia Lobster Roll with homemade mayo, or seared Scallops with butternut squash purée.

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.