



2010 CHARDONNAY TÊTE DE CUVÉE

WINEMAKING DATA

Harvest Dates: 21st to 24th of September, 2010

Brix at harvest: 22.8

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

Alcohol: 13.5% **pH:** 3.35

Residual Sugar: 2.66g/L **T.A.** 6.05 g/L

Bottling Date: April 5th, 2012

Oak regime: 100% French Oak: 54% New, 36% 2nd fill and 10% 3rd fill for the 1st 12 months; stainless steel barrels and neutral oak for a further 2 months; stainless steel tanks for 4 months

Time in barrel: 14 months

Filtered

WINEMAKER'S NOTES

The vines for the 2010 Tête de Cuvée Chardonnay were meticulously maintained to showcase our Beamsville Bench *terroir*. All grape bunches were exposed to sunlight at fruit set by completely removing leaves on the East side and partially on the West side of the canopy to maximize ripening. Green harvesting – the removal of under-ripe bunches – was performed at the first sign of colour change in berries from green to gold. This is known as *véraison*. A meager 16-19hL per hectare was harvested (0.95-1.1 tons per acre) in 2010. Vine age ranges from 12 – 34 years.

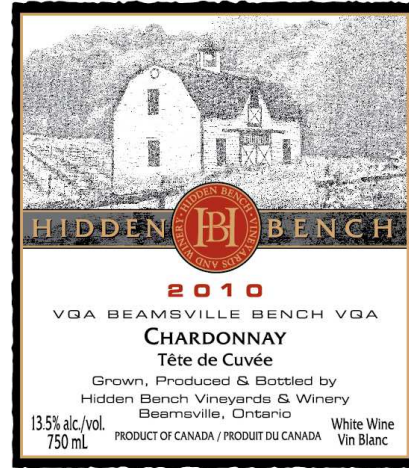
All fruit was handpicked, sorted and whole bunch pressed to yield the most pure juice. After cold settling for 24 hours, the juice was racked, warmed and transferred to barrel. The wine was fermented with indigenous yeasts reaching a peak of 22-24°C. Malolactic fermentation occurred naturally and all barrels were stirred weekly during fermentation only.

TASTING

The 2010 Tête de Cuvée shows a powerful and generous nose of ripe pear, roasted hazelnut and smoky spice, followed by a well structured palate, rich and creamy with exceptional length and finesse. Defined minerality characterizes this cool climate vineyard, even in a warmer than average vintage.

THE GROWING SEASON

2010 provided us with a longer than usual growing season as bud burst happened two weeks earlier than average on the Beamsville Bench. Winter and early Spring were relatively mild and dry with precipitation slightly lower than normal.



TERROIR SERIES

Overall, summer temperatures were higher than the seasonal average which, accompanied with a good amount of bright sunshine, helped us achieve near perfect maturity levels for most varieties

The growing season started well with a warm and sunny May, with a number of high-temperature records broken. Overall monthly temperatures were consistently above normal, which enabled fast and healthy vine growth. June saw more normal temperatures with higher precipitation, while the weather in July was hot, sunny and perfect for maturing our grapes.

Using world-class, precision viticulture, we meticulously maintained vine growth to open the canopy and expose fruit to the sun and encourage air circulation. Leaves were removed where they shaded grape bunches; vine shoots were positioned to reach vertically to the sun for maximum leaf surface area exposure.

The sunny and dry *véraison* period led to a warm September and gradually cooling October with cool nights and temperate days, which offered us, again, near perfect conditions for a long, cool, ripening period. Flavours developed slowly and beautifully in the vineyard permitting us to produce elegant and balanced wines – which are a genuine reflection of the *terroir* of the Beamsville Bench.

2010 has the potential to be an outstanding vintage, possibly one of the best in the previous 6 years. What makes this vintage so special is that conditions were favourable for most grape varieties, both the early as well as late ripening cultivars.

Cool climate precision viticulture contributes to the story of our *terroir* and vintage to vintage variation adds to the notion of 'truth' in wine.