



JORDAN VILLAGE

2020
CHARDONNAY

WINEMAKER'S NOTES

After making our top tier Le Grand Clos wines for the fourth stunning vintage in a row since 2017, in 2020 we also produced the Jordan Village cuvees for just the second time. These wines are sourced from select parcels in the Le Clos Estate vineyard, the Claystone Estate vineyard (both in the Twenty-Mile Bench sub-appellation), and the Talon Ridge Estate vineyard, situated just above the two other vineyards in the cooler, higher Vinemount Ridge sub-appellation.

These three Estate vineyards are planted on the first, second and third rises of the Jordan Bench (which comprises the eastern half of the Twenty-Mile Bench sub-appellation, while the Vineland Bench comprises the western half). These vineyards are now composed of mature vines, and we watch with excitement as they enter their top-quality years. Originally, our winemaker Thomas Bachelder, had selected all the single-vineyard sub-parcels through observation, trial and error (le 'Constat' en Français), between the years of 2004–2006. Currently, since 2017, we have been watching with a sense of marvel as we observe that the vineyards have not 'changed their stripes' at all.

In fact, the now deeply rooted, older vines are producing exciting, focused wines with clarity and intent, just as they did before, but

now with an even greater 'sense of place,' nobility and ageability. The parcels that comprise the Jordan Village series – once single vineyards in their own right -- are lovingly selected in advance by Thomas. Everything is rigorously planned, from the moment of pruning, after which the parcels are followed the season-long, and then carefully individually-hand-picked, hand-sorted and individually vinified as always with indigenous yeasts. The lots are then long aged separately parcel-by-parcel in French barrels sourced from north-eastern France (typically more than 18 months élevage). This patient ageing helps bring forward the sense of terroir and place, rounding off the tannins, and allowing the easy varietal fruitiness recede into a more complex, ethereal set of aromatics.

At bottling, the cuvées are refined through rigorous barrel selection, and then thoughtfully and painstakingly blended under the direction of Thomas Bachelder. The wines are finally aged several months in bottle prior to release, after which we recommend, despite how delicious they are two years after vintage, several years of further cellaring to highlight the enchanting, seductive bouquet and complexity still to emerge.

TASTING NOTES

From the 'artistic' vintage of 2020, one in which the warmth let winemakers make unhurried, considered choices, comes the fabulous Jordan Village Chardonnay, a rich and seamless barrel-fermented wine that showcases the complexity of the terroir of the Jordan Bench through the blending of four different parcels (Le Clos east and west, Claystone and Talon Ridge vineyards).

The nose needs time to knit together, currently showing entrancing, fine floral aromas of white flowers that emerge from the bouquet. The wine fairly pops from the glass with the wildly perfumed essence of lemon drops, classical

pear-nuanced liqueur notes and marzipan, with a beguiling, underlying signature chalky-saline minerality.

On the palate, a full glycerine mouthfeel emerges, followed by delicious lemon, lemon curd and pear drop notes that proceed straight-on to a clean, clear, rich, stony, mineral sea-salt finish. The barrel ferment elements are barely visible through the complexity of the wine.

Drinking Prime: From 2023-2026

Thomas Bachelder, winemaker

VINE MANAGEMENT

All of our vineyards are farmed sustainably in order to preserve the natural balance of the vines and respect their terroir. We use traditional practices in the vineyard, which we feel helps maintain the quality of the fruit and its aromatic identity. Each parcel is

treated individually according to its terroir specifics, and each vine is cared for by hand from pruning through to harvest.

At the start of the season, we begin by pruning, using a single or double Guyot system (depending on the spacing and the vine's



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vigour). We then tie down the canes to the fruiting wire. Following bud-break, we position each shoot by hand, removing lateral and shoulder spurs for better ventilation and better concentration on every single cluster. Just before véraison, we strip the leaves on the eastern side of the vine, exposing the cluster to more sun and airflow, which promotes healthy ripening and prevents disease development (in wetter, more humid years, we remove the leaves on both the east and west sides of the vine; in hotter years we may also leaf-pull on the western side, although later, to prevent 'sunburn' of the grapes). At mid-veraison, we green harvest if we

feel our crop is too large or if disease pressure is present. After veraison, we net the vineyard parcels at risk to protect our grapes from bird damage until harvest.

In terms of soil management, our goal is to nurture and maintain a natural level of microbiological life. We cultivate every other row and leave a selected cover crop in the remaining rows, which creates competition within the root system and allows the topsoil to remain loose and aerobic. Each year, we also break up the soil (deep-ripping) of every second row, in order to aerate the soil structure, and to help avoid compaction.

GROWING SEASON & HARVEST

The year 2020 was a rare artistic vintage, a year in which sugar accumulation was slow, acid retention was good, and there was no rot present. One could wait for the perfect moment to make ripe wines that had great technical and flavour maturity, and spot on sugar and acid levels. A miracle vintage! The great wines we taste from 2020 will more likely be the fruit of artistic choices, and not just worry, happenstance, and intelligent compromise. Many people love Niagara's warm years: 2007, 2010, 2012, 2016 and 2018 for instance, but in the case of defining terroir through early-maturing grapes (grapes of Burgundian origin, amongst others), those years can be a bit round, a bit broad, oftentimes with what I like to call "stressy" tannins, in an otherwise lovely, juicy, just slightly overripe wine. Did 2020 escape this problem? "Yes, largely!" After the last frost in late spring, from budbreak to harvest, we had a gloriously dry and warm summer and fall. Rainfall events came just when the vine needed them to continue development, notably, after such a long, dry, hot summer, the fairly regular rains came to the vines' rescue, but not so often that we had disease problems.

Harvest Dates: In Niagara, it is normal to start to pick Pinot Noir and Chardonnay anywhere from September 10th to the end of September. After the summer that the northern hemisphere collectively experienced in 2020 (Burgundy, for instance, completed most of their harvest in the month of August!), we worried that we in Niagara would be forced to pick screamingly early, and risk making "jam:" dark, concentrated but ultimately monolithic wines. It didn't happen, as blessedly, the nights got cooler into September, harvest was delayed, sugar development was slow, and acids were retained (likely due to the vines at least partially "shutting down" their photosynthetic activity in the hottest part of the summer). In the end, we picked on typical dates! Aside from the young-vine sites (namely, low-yielding and thus precocious), Niagara picked the grapes for sparkling wines a little

VITICULTURE & PRODUCT INFO

Trellising System	Vertical Shoot Positioning: Single and Double Guyot
Planting Density	5299 vines/ha (2145 vines/Ac)
VQA Sub-Appellation	Niagara Peninsula
Alcohol	13 % Vol
pH	3.32
Residual Sugar	1.5 g/L
Total Acidity	5.7 g/L (expressed as Tartaric Acid)
Racking	Once, after full barrel ageing term, from barrel to vat.

later (!) than we thought we would, and the Pinots and Chardonnays (for still wines) were picked pretty much at the usual time. Thus, the cool nights of September and the summers' waning heat "rescued" the vintage from becoming a potentially "fruit bomb" vintage, and instead 2020 became a nearly perfect vintage in terms of sugar, acid and pristine fruit condition. Thomas Bachelder, Winemaker.

"Growing degree days for 2020 were 1584 GDD and, although it was one of the warmer recent years, the coolness of the nights in September and October helped us retain natural acidity, and made for an outstanding, ageable vintage." Gerald Klose, Vineyard Manager.

The grapes for our Jordan Village Chardonnay 2020 were harvested on September 25th, 26th, 27th & 29th, 2020.



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WINEMAKING & ÉLEVAGE OF THE JORDAN VILLAGE CHARDONNAY 2020

Our Chardonnay bunches are whole cluster pressed after judicious sorting across a vibrating table. The juice settles in tank at 8-10°C for a couple days before letting the tanks warm up, so that naturally occurring yeast from the vineyard may slowly start the fermentation. We believe indigenous yeasts make the most complete, textured, complex wines. We transfer the barely fermenting juice to 228 L barrels to complete their fermentation.

The wine is then 'élevé' – patiently aged for 16 to 18 months according to the needs of each cuvee and /or vintage. Malolactic fermentation occurs naturally over the course of winter and finishes in mid-Spring. As our Chardonnays mature in barrel, they develop complexity of fruit, while still preserving their crisp acidity. In order to preserve the flavour profile of each terroir, we make sure our new oak component does not exceed 20%, with the remaining barrels being one to four years old. We repeatedly taste barrel by barrel to select only those that are truly representative of their terroir.

After 19 months of ageing to move the wines away from only having 'varietal' characteristics and more towards terroir typicity,

we rack the wines out of barrel and leave them to settle in tank for about a month to achieve better integration and more elegance in the bouquet. We filter the wines just prior to bottling, then age in bottle for several months prior to release to further develop both aromatic bouquet and mouthfeel.

We experiment tirelessly with coopers, toasts and forests to find the barrels that express, not mask, terroir: highlighting finesse, verve, and subtlety. French barrels remain our choice due to the trees' slow growth patterns and ability to deliver a 'sense of place' with complete transparency.

We use French oak made by coopers we have hand-selected over the years for their finesse and commitment to quality. The wood comes uniquely from forests in the northeast of France, known for their tight grain and subtlety of perfume: the Allier, Tronçais, Jura, Bourgogne, and Vosges forests. These barrels, which are made of wood that has been air-dried for three years, are made principally by the Burgundian cooperage of Damy (Meursault) and Dargaud & Jaegle (Romanèche-Thorins), and Tonnellerie de Mercurey (Mercurey).