

Niagara Chardonnay 2014

Niagara, Ontario, Canada



PRODUCER

Thomas Bachelder is known by many as the first winemaker at Le Clos Jordanne. However, since 2009 Thomas and his wife, Mary Delaney, have been producing their own high-quality, cool-climate Chardonnay and Pinot Noir in three regions: Burgundy, Niagara and Oregon. Years of making Chardonnay, in hallowed areas such as Meursault and Corton-Charlemagne, have taught Thomas to be as low intervention as possible. Using the same winemaking techniques in each region (wild yeasts, minimal intervention and the same barrel makers), the difference in the wines is solely down to the vineyard, which makes for some very interesting blind tasting results.

VINEYARDS

The grapes for this wine come primarily from the organically-grown Saunders Vineyard (Beamsville Bench) and the Wismer Vineyard on Twenty Mile Bench. The combination of Niagara's strongly continental climate and the Dolomitic limestone-rich soils of these vineyards, imparts great minerality and freshness to the final wine.

VINTAGE

Weather conditions in Southern Ontario were variable and often record-breaking in 2014. It was unusually cold and dry in January followed by a brutally cold February that brought more snow than normal and shattered low temperature records across the province. Although April and May were relatively normal, the bizarre weather swings resumed with an exceptionally wet June followed by a very dry July. The summer growing season brought excellent conditions with few major storms and sunny warm weather in all appellations. September weather settled nicely into warm beautiful conditions for the start of harvest and, except for some rainy periods in October, fall weather was favourable.

VINIFICATION

Years of making Chardonnay - in Meursault and Corton-Charlemagne in Burgundy, in the Willamette Valley in Oregon and in Canada's Niagara - has taught Thomas to be as natural as possible in his winemaking. Pressing of the grapes was therefore very gentle and fermentation was carried out only with wild yeasts. Malolactic fermentation took place in specially selected oak barrels, followed by an extended ageing period which has made the wine broader on the mid-palate, more integrated, elegant, subtle, truer to its terroir and, surprisingly, less oaky.

TASTING NOTES

Bright lemon-yellow in colour. On the nose, lifted ripe lemon notes mix with hints of white stone fruit and flinty mineral nuances. It is medium to full bodied on the palate with a scented stone fruit character and a long and complex mineral finish.

Grape Varieties	100% Chardonnay
Winemaker	Thomas Bachelder
Closure	Natural Cork
ABV	13%
Bottle Sizes	75cl
Notes	Vegetarian, Vegan