

JOIE

farm

"En Famille"

2017

RESERVE CHARDONNAY

White Wine / Vin Blanc

13.5% alc./vol. OKANAGAN VALLEY

750 mL

Product of Canada / Produit du Canada

VARIETALS

Chardonnay Musqué 100%

Con Vida Vineyard, Skaha Bluff

Plein de Vie Vineyard, Naramata Bench

(clones 95, 76, 548)

TECHNICAL INFO

pH - 3.49

Total Acidity - 5.8 g/L

Residual Sugar - 2.3 g/L

Alcohol - 13.1%

Product - +150862

Production - 387 cases

THE WINE

Our "En Famille" Reserve Chardonnay is made from our most prized old vine block of the Con Vida Vineyard on the Skaha Bluff and the Plein de Vie vineyard on the Naramata Bench. We blend the best fruit from each site to achieve a balance that is intensely ripe, mouth wateringly-fresh and savoury all at once. 2017 required dynamic and reactive canopy work given the cooler vintage as well as multiple picks as hang-time extended into late September. The wine is barrel-fermented with primary native yeast and underwent spontaneous malolactic fermentation. It was aged in a mix of premium French barriques and puncheons with only a judicious amount of new oak used. Extended lees contact and monthly bâtonnage enhanced the mouthfeel and resulted in a lengthy savoury complexity.

2017 VINTAGE

2017 was a far more "normal" growing season for the Okanagan Valley after a string of early, hot vintages starting in 2013. This must be taken with a grain of salt, however, as temperatures were still quite high compared to historical averages. The winter was extremely snowy and early spring was wet, supplying the vineyards with a good soaking and filling up the water table. This wet, cool spring led to bud break the second week of May for most of the varieties we work with. On average, this is two-to-four weeks later than 2016, depending on variety and site. Flowering occurred in early June when our cool spring jumped right into full-on summer weather. The heat following the wet, producing full vineyard canopy growth, suckering and shoot positioning. At many sites this growth was happening all at the same time. With all the heat from early July onward, we made the decision to leave a heavier crop in order to slow the potential for early sugar ripeness. We had success with this in the past and by the time the heavy heat and smoky skies arrived, we were happy to have chosen to do this again in 2017. Naramata saw no rain for 54 consecutive days this summer, and no rainfall accumulation for the months of July and August. Those months saw continuous temperature spikes and smoky skies. Once the fruit set, we left more than usual to ripen. Mildew was an ever-present threat from the high temperatures and minimal wind; this prompted our vineyard crew to act preventatively and quickly open the canopy to get more airflow. Veraison was a bit later than expected (the second to last week of August) but finished extremely rapidly. Our first pick of the year was on August 27th. This was for our two sparkling wines as well as the first in a series of picks for our Un-oaked Chardonnay. September brought cooler temperatures and slowed things down nicely; we had great hang-time for phenolic development. The rest of our varieties came in throughout October and all of our fruit was picked by October 27th and vinified by mid-November. Despite the hot and very dry summer, we saw low pH and lower brix levels than the previous three vintages, demonstrating that 2017 will express a cooler vintage profile. Overall, expect more freshness, minerality, and an excellent balance of acidity.

VINIFICATION

Grapes were sorted before being de-stemmed and crushed. The grapes soaked for one hour and were then slowly and gently pressed on a Champagne whole-cluster press cycle. The resulting must was hyper-oxidized (without a sulphur addition at the presspan) to stabilize colour and flavours. After a 24-hour settling, the juice was racked into French Allier and Vosges oak barrels and puncheons for fermentation. For this wine we used exclusively Burgundian coopers, Billion and Damy. 30% were new barrels, 15% were second fill, with neutral barrels making up the remaining balance (55%). Half of these barrels underwent an ambient fermentation while the other half were inoculated with a Champagne yeast for a clean expression of site and vintage. All underwent a spontaneous secondary malolactic fermentation, giving the wine a softer texture. Sulphur levels were carefully managed to preserve maximum bouquet, added only after malolactic fermentation was finished and before bottling. The wine was aged in oak for ten months and lees stirred regularly to encourage mouthfeel, complexity, and freshness. The first racking occurred in June 2018 and then again in July before bottling. The wine was cold stabilized and then filtered with crossflow filtration, which is incredibly gentle and helps to focus the layers of the wine. We chose a high quality, natural cork closure because we feel the gradual exchange of oxygen that natural cork allows will enable this wine to improve for five to seven years and hold for at least ten. The 2017 Reserve Chardonnay was bottle-aged nine months before its release.

TASTING NOTE

Its core of lemon oil and hazelnut skin is accented by juicy acidity and is further augmented by smoky coffee bean and bacon flavours - savoury elements of its Burgundian cooperage. Fruit from these vineyards are rich in ripe pineapple and creamy Meyer lemon flavours but always retain their fresh, racy edge. Enjoy this wine with umami-driven foods like miso-rubbed corn or chanterelle mushrooms.