



LE GRAND CLOS SINGLE-VINEYARD

2021

PINOT NOIR

A NOTE ON LE GRAND CLOS

Both Le Grand Clos Chardonnay and Pinot Noir blocks happen to come from blocks on the western side of the vineyard: a happenstance of aspect, altitude, geology, and destiny! When tasting the wines from the Le Grand Clos blocks, one often first senses a great brooding tension of fruit and longevity under the mantle of a fine perfume. Simply profound. How the Le Grand Clos parcel defines itself in juxtaposition to that of Claystone Terrace, just several hundred metres away, is astonishing! The purity of the almost 'reluctant volume' here is unbelievable: the terroir wants to be chalky-lean - but carries the regal breadth and weight of a Grand Vin with ease; poise.

TASTING NOTES

Typical for this parcel, Le Grand Clos 2021 shows impressively-pure, mute but fine stony raspberry fruit, ripe cherries, plums, and dried herbs on the nose, overlaying red currants and red rose petals on the aromatic and dense mid-palate. It has huge drag, and the opulent, perfumed finish is chalk-laden, with wet stone, a hint of clove, and firm, but ripe, ageable, long tannins. Clearly, there is significant improvement to come: this wine still has much to teach us of local "sense of place," and of the longevity of Pinot Noir from the Niagara bench's most august terroirs.

A Final word on Terroir across Pinot Noir & Chardonnay: the family resemblance of the Le Grand Clos terroir is palpable in both Red & White versions: Both wines – from different grapes - show a very fine chalkiness (quite apart from the acidity), that weaves through, informing and freshening the considerable weight and unctuous texture of the wine.

VINE MANAGEMENT

We farm our vineyards traditionally and sustainably in order to preserve the natural balance of the vines, and maintain the quality of the fruit and the parcel's terroir specifics. Each vine is cared for by hand, from pruning through to hand-harvest. The vines are pruned to a single or double Guyot cane system (depending on the vine spacing and individual plant's age and vigour). As the vine grows, we position each shoot by hand, removing lateral shoots and shoulder spurs for better ventilation and concentration of the clusters. 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 (Typically, in more humid years, we also remove the leaves on the west side 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-véraison, we practice a green harvest if we feel the crop is too large, and/or if disease pressure is present, while also netting the parcels at risk to protect the grapes from bird damage until harvest.



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Our soil management goal is to nurture and maintain a natural level of microbiological life. We cultivate every other row (in alternate years) and leave a varied 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) in every second row, in order to aerate the soil structure, and to help avoid compaction.

GROWING SEASON & HARVEST

2021 was evidence of the old saying: the vintage is made from September 1st-on; don't let a great summer lure you into complacency! When one looks at the year in the rear-view mirror, 2021 was epitomised by variable weather! The warm, dry spring saw a slightly earlier than average bud break, leading the peninsula into an early bloom period, suggesting a very early, low-yielding harvest. However, a couple of big rains in July & August pushed crop levels higher, with cluster weights rising dramatically. The heavy, frequent rain continued through harvest, with just enough intermittent sun to ripen the early Burgundian varieties (Pinot Noir, Chardonnay, and Gamay Noir) to attractive levels. Yes, for some vineyards – especially the heavily-cropped ones – it was a race against time to get them picked and sorted during the sunny breaks, but in general, the brix and acid were only slightly diluted with the rains, and the resulting wines had beautifully-plush fruit, lower alcohols, yet with trademark Niagara acidity and minerality! A very useful, classic-tasting vintage!

2021 Growing Degree Days: "Growing degree days for 2021 were 1736. This is the highest total GDD in over 10 years! Contributing to the overall total, the months of June, August, September, and October were all above average GDD." Gerald Klose, Vineyard Manager

The resulting Chardonnays are quite classic: a 'pretty,' pure, floral-fruited year with great savoury minerality and solid acidity. The young, still-mute wines are in bottle but portend a great future. Niagara's Chardonnays age well!

Pinot Noir: Ever since they were pressed off to barrel, the 2021 Burgundian reds have shown medium colour, surprisingly lovely floral perfumes, and great mineral verve. Classic fruit aromas mingle with great firm minerality that will hold the wines as they age and improve.

VITICULTURE & PRODUCT INFO

Trellising System	Single and Double Guyot
Planting Density	5292 vines/ha 2160 vines/acre)
VQA Sub-Appellation	Twenty Mile Bench
Alcohol	13.1 % Vol
pH	3.57
Residual Sugar	2.2 g/L
Total Acidity	5.7 g/L (expressed as Tartaric Acid)
Racking	Once, after full barrel ageing term, from barrel to vat.
Cases Bottled	1,600 six-packs (800 cases of 12)
UPC Code #	063657040140



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LE CLOS JORDANNE

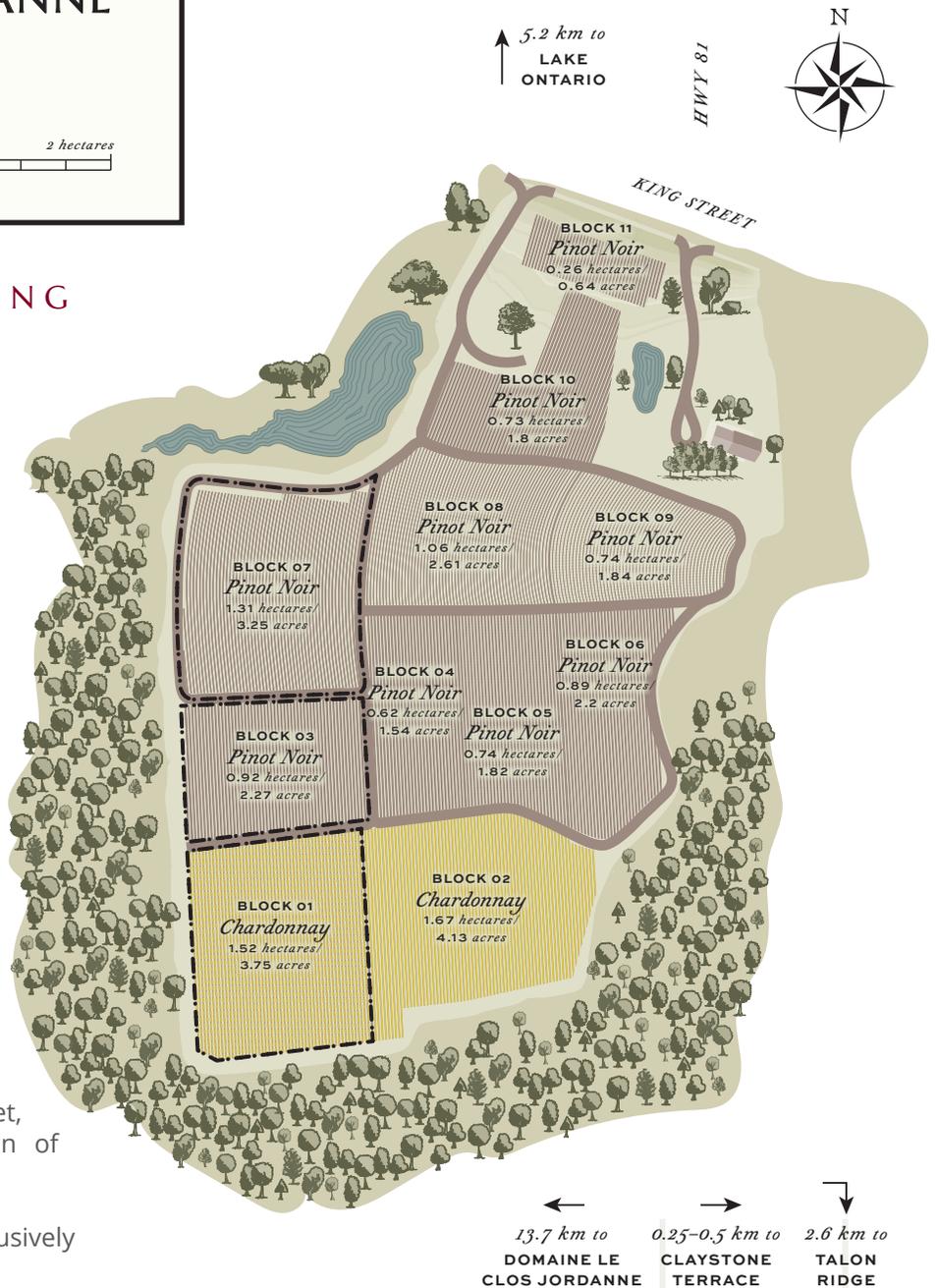
~ VINEYARD ~



VINEYARD SOURCING

Le Clos Jordanne vineyard is located on a premium parcel of the Jordan bench, on the first rise from the plain, a natural plateau near the slope of the escarpment. At 7.6 hectares, it enjoys light limestone soils created by the ancient ice shield with rich sediments, and produces the winery's fullest expressions of the terroir, all are ultra-premium. Planted with both Chardonnay and Pinot Noir between 2000-2001 it is surrounded on three sides by environmentally protected forest, woodland and pond nature areas which have been left in their natural state; featuring statuesque weeping willows and a picturesque pond complete with lily pads and wild flowers. It is located at 2738 King Street, Jordan Station, at the T-junction of Jordan Road and Highway 81.

Le Grand Clos is sourced exclusively from blocks 1, 2, 3 & 7.





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WINEMAKING & ÉLEVAGE OF LE GRAND CLOS PINOT NOIR 2021

The Pinot Noir grapes are only hand-picked when we think the flavours are "there;" when the skins are thick, ripe, starting to soften, and in good sanitary condition. We want the seeds to be almost completely brown, which is an indicator of true phenolic ripeness. When required, the Pinot Noir bunches are manually sorted on the vibrating table and then completely destemmed. After a short cold maceration, we let the tanks warm up, and the naturally-occurring yeast from the vineyard slowly starts the fermentation. We believe indigenous yeasts make wines more reflective of each specific vintage year, and every individual parcel: complete, textured, complex, ageable wines. After the fermentation, we leave the young wine 'on the skins' for several days to a week, to delicately macerate and capture all the aromas, finesse, and complexity appropriate to the vintage and terroir. The wine is then gently pressed and run to selected French oak barrels* (typically 20-25% new, just enough to continually renew our precious fleet of barrels) for the natural malolactic fermentation. The wine is then patiently aged for 20-22 months to integrate both the tannins and the fruit. This extended élevage in the oxygenative medium of French oak barrels permits the tertiary perfumes and textures develop and emerge, a technique that helps push terroir to the forefront. Throughout the long months of ageing, we repeatedly taste barrel - by - barrel to select only those that are truly representative of the terroir of each individual parcel. After bottling, the wines are aged a further four to six months in bottle before release to let the aromatic bouquet and mouthfeel further develop and integrate.

*We obsess over our barrels, searching for those that deliver terroir through oxygenation, polymerization of tannins and concentration, and not just oak flavours! Hence, we experiment tirelessly with coopers, toasts, and forests to find the barrels that express (not mask) our terroir.

French barrels remain our choice: the oak comes uniquely from forests in the northeast of France. Due to the trees' slow growth patterns and soils on which they are grown, these forests produce barrels known for their especially tight grain and subtlety of perfume, and have an uncanny ability to reinforce our fruit with verve and nuance; to deliver a 'sense of place' with startling transparency.

Thomas Bachelder, winemaker.

Thomas Bachelder, Winemaker.

