



BACHELDER

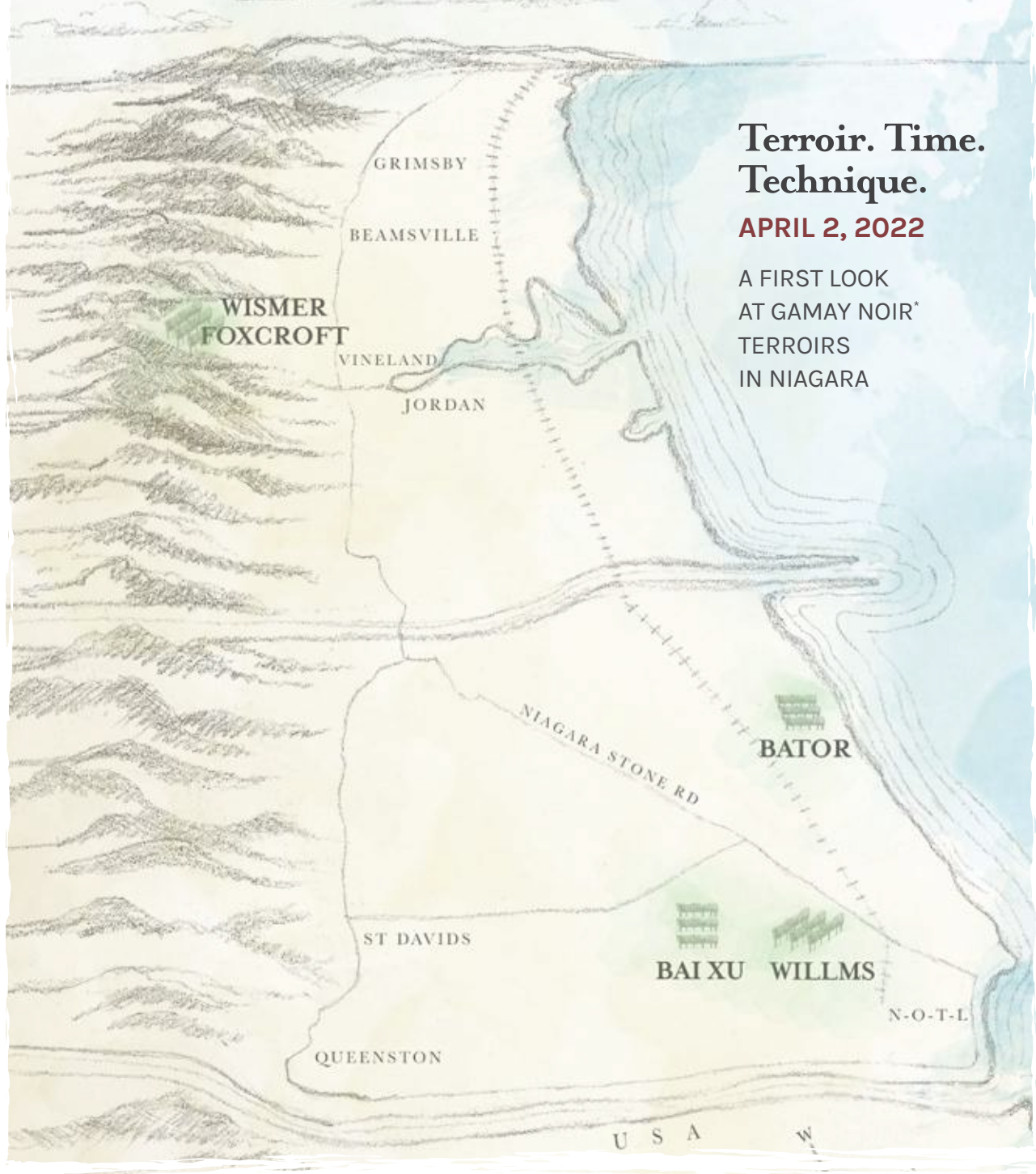
MAPPING NIAGARA. ONE VINEYARD AT A TIME.

the 'la Violette' offering

**Terroir. Time.
Technique.**

APRIL 2, 2022

A FIRST LOOK
AT GAMAY NOIR*
TERROIRS
IN NIAGARA



*AND DELICIOUS NEW LES VILLAGES 2020 PINOT NOIR AND CHARDONNAY RELEASES



GRIMSBY

BEAMSVILLE

WISMER
FOXCROFT

VINELAND

JORDAN

NIAGARA STONE RD

BATOR

ST DAVIDS

BAI XU

WILLMS

QUEENSTON

N-O-T-L

U S A



A Word from the Winemaker on Vintage 2020

2020: an artistic vintage in niagara

When trying to determine a "Pick date" to harvest, viticulturists and winemakers (often, the same person) struggle with decision-making due to the extremes of both warm and cool summer seasons. In the cool, late or rainy years, either we struggle to wait for ripeness, or try to pick between the rains to avoid rot, running from vineyard to vineyard, chasing clean fruit on the verge of breaking down. Then of course, come the long hours on the sorting table...

In the hot years, on the other hand, we try to avoid picking overripe fruit, while also avoiding bringing in stressy, tannic, dehydrated fruit. Sometimes, the sugars rush to levels that would seem to indicate ripeness, and we think we must pick, but the fruit is technically still green or immature. 2020, by contrast, was that rare artistic vintage... the sugar accumulation was slow, the acid retention was good, and there was no rot present... so 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.

So, will the Pandemic vintage be one for the record books, and make some of the century's best wines?

Many people love Niagara's warm years: 2007; 2010; 2012; 2016 and 2018... but for defining terroir through the early-maturing grapes (grapes of Burgundian origin, amongst others), they 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!"

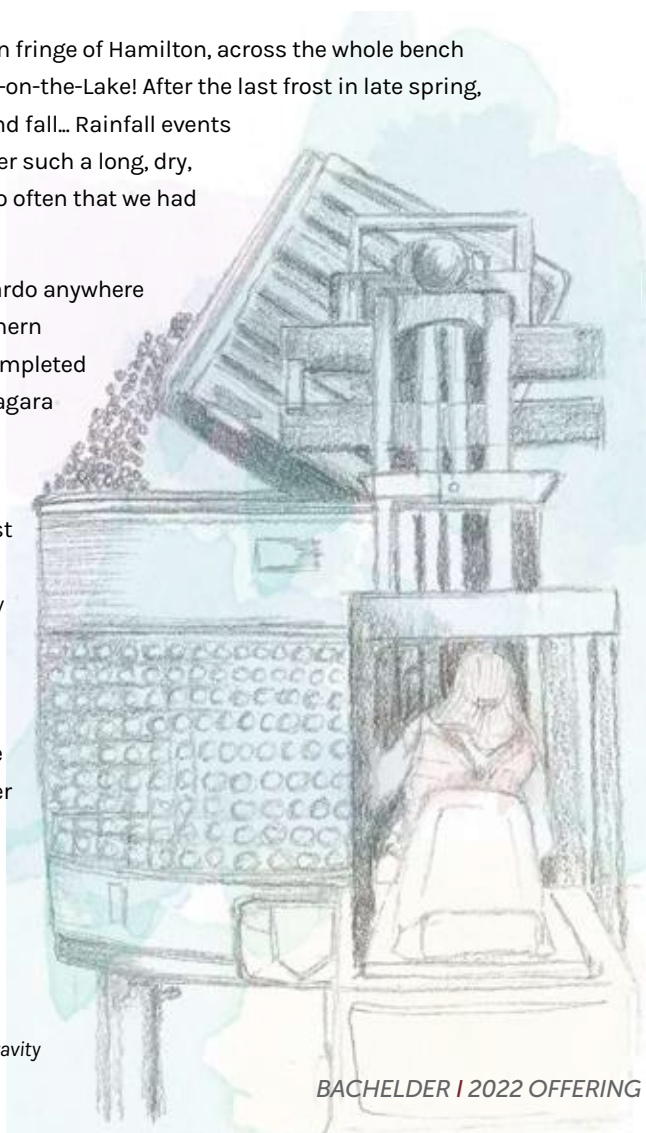
In 2020, Bachelder vinified fruit from vineyards starting from the eastern fringe of Hamilton, across the whole bench (from Beamsville to St. David's), and down to the very bottom of Niagara-on-the-Lake! After the last frost in late spring, from budbreak to harvest, we had a gloriously-dry and warm summer and fall... Rainfall events came just when the vine needed them to continue development. - i.e. after such a long, dry, hot summer, the fairly-regular rains came to the vine's rescue, but not so often that we had disease problems.

Harvest Dates: In Niagara, it is normal to start to pick Pinot Noir and Chardo anywhere from September 10th to end-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... Blessedly, the nights got cooler into September, harvest was delayed, sugar development was slow, and acids were retained (likely due to vines at least partially "shutting down" their photosynthetic activity in the hottest part of the summer). In the end, we picked on normal dates!

Aside from the young-vine sites (read low-yielding and thus precocious), Niagara picked the grapes for sparkling wines a little 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" one, and instead it became a nearly 'perfect' vintage in terms of sugar, acid and pristine fruit condition.

Anne Sperling loading grape bunches by gravity



In the end, we are lucky to have had 2019 and 2020 – two back-to-back Burgundian-style vintages that, in the right hands, the right terroirs, show grace, elegance and longevity.

We all had to be on our best game here – it is not only about making yummy wine – but we are conscious that these are also the days when Niagara* is in the real-time process of defining our terroirs, and stating, "Who and What we are." We are starting to find the answers to what our terroirs taste like... and the onus was on us to declassify and blend away the 'bigger, blowsier lots' in 2020, to pare down to the ones that show more sinew and terroir. It has been a serious moment, a great moment to be clearheaded, a time to tighten one's belt and one's resolve, to define and put out *potentially-smaller case-lots* of single-vineyards that collectors and journalists and sommeliers will still be lovingly arguing over and about a decade hence!

The corollary of this is that the blended wines, the 'glass-pours' will doubtless be lovely, delicious, rich, gulpable wines that will gladden the hearts of wine lovers. (*and Ontario, and Canada)



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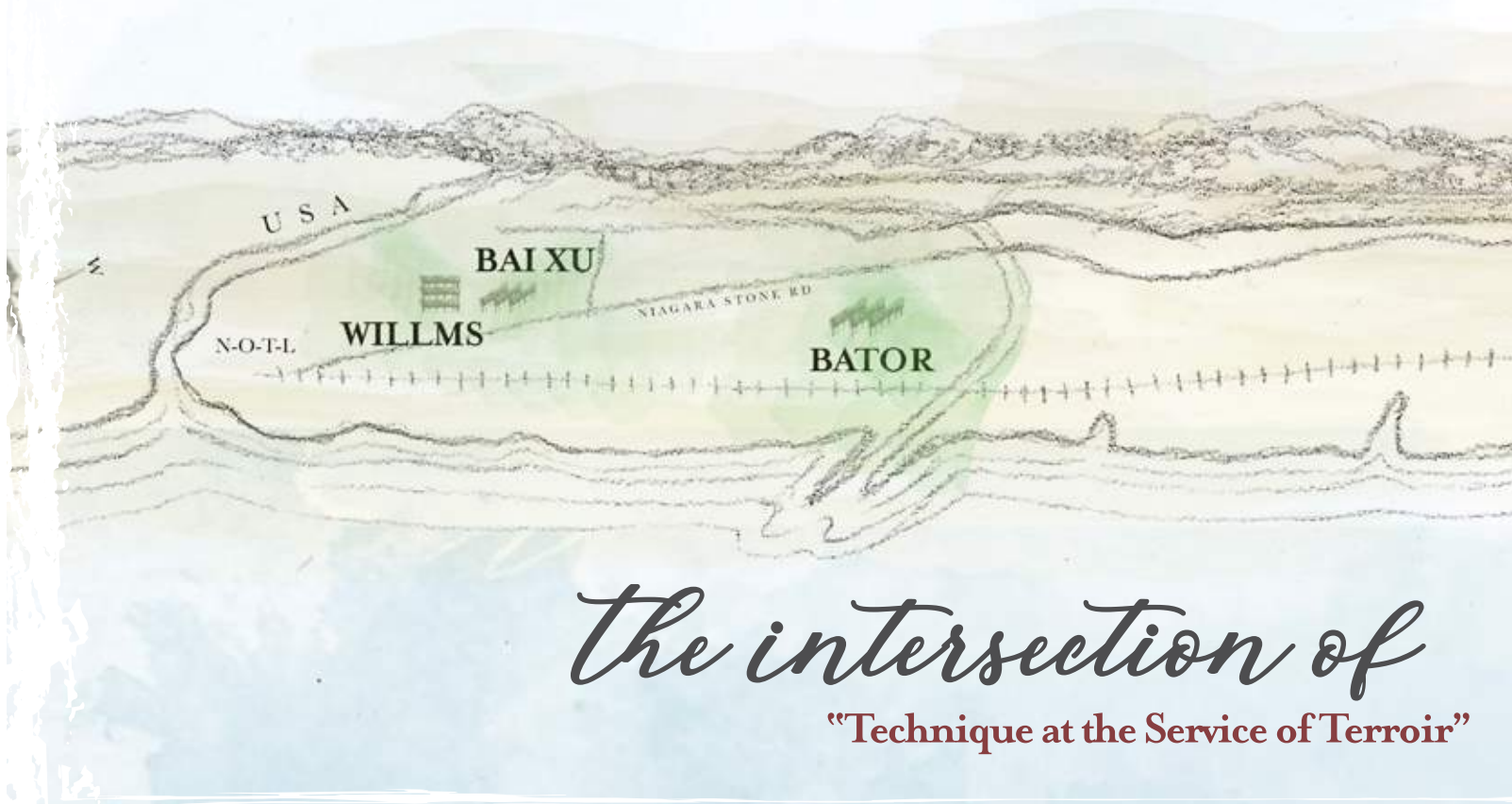
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The intersection of

"Technique at the Service of Terroir"

TERROIR.

THOUGHTS ON BEAUJOLAIS

"Great Beaujolais tastes like Beaujolais, like no other Gamay Noir terroir in this world!" TSB

I've heard a lot on this subject over the years, and thought much about it: "Can Pinot Noir winemakers really make Gamay? Can they possibly understand (or want) to vinify the way the Beaujolais do?"

Or that, conversely, one must use 100% destemmed berries if one wishes to make Pinot Noirs that speak clearly of their terroirs? That can be true, but how many winemakers in Burgundy or elsewhere like to use 'a few whole bunches' in their Pinot ferments? *Many!*

How many Beaujolais do 100% destemmed ferments with their Gamay, just like their cousins up north with their Pinot wines in Burgundy? *Many.*

So, if people are availing themselves of both techniques with both grapes, wherein lies the road to terroir, *other than the soil?*

Well, if the GOAL is transparency of intent; transparency of winemaking and élevage; in striving to understand the flavour of the site, and not just having a goal of making a "good wine," then we are all...

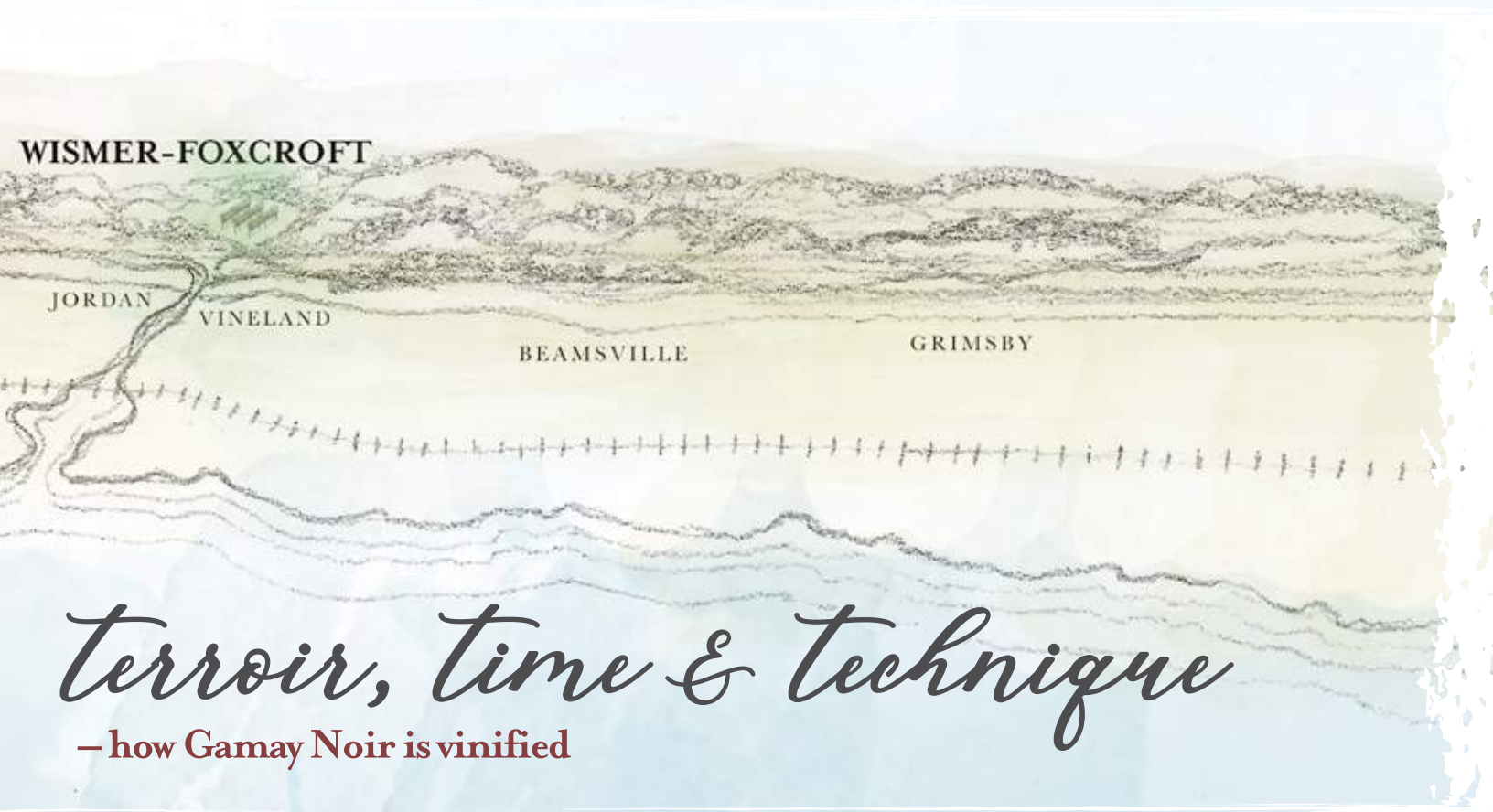
...PILGRIMS ON THE ROAD TO GAMAY.

Sure, Mary & I have made terroir Pinot for much of our adult lives, but we have also fully embraced Gamay Noir! We don't know exactly WHERE these wines are going... we have to lead them on their way, but, like you, we are here for the *shared journey*, the journey of these children of Gamay, of our children of Niagara.

Nobody wants to make Gamay in their own country whilst constantly referring to Beaujolais... But Beaujolais came first, and, as such merits some serious consideration *when your heart finds that it turns towards Gamay Noir.*

Confession: I have always loved BoJo, and Mary and I first visited shortly after our honeymoon, and, as it turns out, that was but a year before going to wine school a couple of hours north in Beaune, Burgundy.

P.S.: The Beaujolais Crus are some of my favourite wines in the world! "Drink them!" Alternatively, find a good Beaujolais-Villages (these may be made from a small producers' single-vineyard, may also be a region-wide blend). These are some of the French wines whose best terroirs have remained affordable. Support them when you can find a good bottle in the LCBO... or elsewhere. Québec's SAQ has an especially-good selection.



WISMER-FOXCROFT

JORDAN

VINELAND

BEAMSVILLE

GRIMSBY

Terroir, Time & Technique

— how Gamay Noir is vinified

TIME.

NIAGARA SOILS AND HOW WE DISCOVER TERROIR VS, TECHNIQUE

"The Gamay Noir à Jus Blanc shows race or breed when planted on a granitic base, and this is not repeated when the soil becomes more chalky, for instance. Gamay grown on granite with clay topsoil also changes character with age, and can take on Pinot Noir Characteristics that are quite astonishing."² Serena Sutcliffe

Well, we don't have much granite in our vineyards in Niagara... and yet Niagara makes great Gamay Noir. "What can this mean?" "To me it means that we have to write our own playbook on Gamay – decide what our dolomitic limestone, clay and silt terroirs mean... what they evoke in the wine!

Remember this: it's the Beaujolais Crus that are mostly planted on granite, whereas some of the Beaujolais-Villages I love best are planted on sedimentary soils that include Limestone ("Les Pierres Dorées" – formerly referred to as the "Bas-Beaujolais", are a yellowish-brown Lower Jurassic limestone)

We'll leave our thoughts on Beaujolais with another quote from James Wilson that says much about Terroir being evoked outside the Crus – and this might just also apply to Ontario: "Nevertheless, the variable soil conditions of Bas-Beaujolais, are offset to a large extent by the vigour of Gamay."

So Vigour factors into Terroir. Hmmm...Time, too, factors into terroir in a couple of ways...

Firstly, it takes time to suss out the terroir of a Gamay vineyard. Can we taste a bottle someone else has made from that vineyard? If not, how do we figure out how to work with a Gamay vineyard we have never worked with before, which has never made a single-vineyard before? Perhaps we have made a single-vineyard Chardo or Pinot Noir from that same vineyard? If so, there could be some clues there.

Otherwise... we can try to listen to the land by

- Getting into the vineyard in summer, before harvest, tasting the grapes – what are they like? How do they compare with other vineyards? Taste the juice as the grapes go to tank before fermentation. Is the juice ripe, green, iron-like, mineral, overripe, richly-juicy? Vinify that lot in consequence, go for the flavours you believe are unique to that vineyard: whether they are your favourite flavours or not, it is likely they need to be showcased if the individuality of the vineyard is to shine through in the wine at release.
- Time: before you bottle the wine, taste the next harvest in the field. Is it the same as you remember? Can you see new flavours because you now know the wine from the year previous?

TIME AND NEUTRAL BARRELS

Time and Élevage: How do we try to figure out the terroir that comes with time alone? Neutral barrels and Gamay Noir and taking the Time to let the wine round out in the presence of micro-oxygenation via the porosity of the cooperage. Consider Bigger-format barrels (500l and more) for the way they preserve the intense freshness and mineral purity of the wine...

Many Beaujolais and New-World winemakers like to bottle their Gamays before the next vintage by contrast, we like at least 14-16 months élevage to express terroir and not just fruit! Aside from the dirt bringing the sense of place, we like to try to be patient and make sure we are allowing time and oxygenation to help with the transparency of expressing terroir! As the youthful aromas *calm down into bouquet*, we find the Gamay more noble, more subtle, more complex, concentrated and expressive in its minerality on the finish. Don't worry, *it still won't suddenly become a Pinot!*

TECHNIQUE.

THE GENERAL TECHNIQUES OF GAMAY NOIR VINIFICATION

We want to understand the Gamay Terroirs in Niagara, and make them palpable. We want to make wines that are immediately delicious young but will display even more "sense of place" as they age... So it behooves us to look at what they do over in greater Burgundy: there are a bunch of ways they ferment in Beaujolais, but for those of us interested in serious, ageable, 'sense of place'-style Gamay, let's focus on just a couple: The **'Sémi-Macération Carbonique'** and the **'Vendange Égrappée à 100%'** (The others: *Thermovinification* (used largely for the least-expensive wines made from Gamay) and *Maceration Carbonique* (used to make quick-release 'Nouveau-style' and entry-level wines), and so are outside our scope here. (*100% destemmed grape bunches)



SÉMI-CARBONIC MACERATION

The most traditional way of making wine in Beaujolais (and elsewhere) consists of a so-called semi-carbonic maceration where the harvest comes in hand-picked, but a varying percentage goes in the vat as whole bunches, and some percentage of that undergoes some destemming, aiming to extract throughout the vatting time the polyphenols contained in the skins, but also in the stalks. Punching down, pumping over and 'rack and return' are methods of extraction used both to break down the cap (which has formed naturally at the top of the vat through action of CO₂, like bread dough rising), but also to promote flavour and colour extraction; here one judges the frequency of interventions according to one's knowledge of the terroir of the parcel; the structure that one desires in the wine (again based on one's knowledge of the terroir). The overarching principle here is maturity: knowing the phenolic (real) maturity of the grapes (vintage effect). Indeed, if there is a gap between the alcoholic maturity and the phenolic maturity (say, the greenness of the stalks, for example), one runs the risk of giving herbaceous/vegetal flavours to the wine by extracting green tannins. Temperature also has a very important role on the nature of the compounds extracted, and on the eventual structure of the wine produced.

However, this is to a greater or lesser extent mitigated by the bunches that stay whole throughout fermentation and only finally releases their rich, low-tannic wine when put into the press after ferment. Their role is paramount.

In Beaujolais, the belief is that the greatest wines for laying down are ones made by Semi-Carbonic Macération. However, in difficult seasons excellent viticulture is needed, to be sure one brings a ripe and healthy harvest into the winery, (we are dealing with whole bunches here), so as not to extract undesirable elements.

100% DESTEMMED HARVEST

The other favoured method for fermenting Gamay is the 100% destemmed harvest (also called "Burgundy-style vinification"), not the most widespread in Beaujolais, but very much on the increase. As its name suggests, no stalks go into the vat, just the individual berries themselves, and therefore no tannins from the stalks are extracted. In years when there is a gap in maturity between berries and bunches or when the bunches are damaged (hail), 100% destemming tends to help avoid herbaceous flavours and dry, unripe tannins. This technique gives us wines that tend to be silkier, less rustic, and for some, easier to drink young. With 100% Destemmed harvest, one can also think of doing an extended maceration, as there is less risk of extracting the "harder, greener" tannins. This technique produces wines that sometimes lack the elegance and complexity of whole-cluster wines... and sometimes have a silky complexity that is equally-ageable. Fascinating!!!

With a tip of the hat to Laurent Chenier and www.Beaujolais.fr, for their ideas and concise expression of the concepts of fermentation, extraction. I have interwoven them into my own thoughts and beliefs, paraphrasing them as I wrote.



WHICH OF THESE TECHNIQUES DOES BACHELDER USE?

EXPERIMENTATION WITH WHOLE CLUSTER

Whole cluster at the service of terroir, and not just for flavour and/or effect. How much Whole Cluster does it take to bring forward the particular nature of a vineyard, of that vineyard in a particular vintage? Especially when one doesn't know the vineyard... Experimentation, starting with a 'Gut-Feel' that comes from experience and tasting the grapes.

THE BATOR VINEYARD: FIRST EXPERIMENTATION: Located down in Niagara-On-The-Lake, this is our only vineyard to give us both Gamay Noir and Pinot Noir! At the dawn of our first vintage of Bator, in 2020, we realised we had a motherlode of experimentation possibilities on our hands here: and so we have of course done Three small lots: One Gamay Noir with some whole cluster in the mix; one 100% destemmed Gamay Noir; and one 2/3 Gamay Noir with a Third of Pinot Noir (yes, a single-vineyard P.T.G.*!!!!!!) *Passetoutgrain-style

A PROMISE FROM ONE WINE GEEK TO ANOTHER: If you care to taste these three single-vineyard wines at the same time (preferably with friends), your tastebuds will teach you much about the nature of terroir vs. technique. As a bonus, you will viscerally understand the differences that:

1. Whole Cluster
2. 100% Destemmed Harvest
3. and the addition of Pinot Noir

-all bring to Gamay Noir winemaking. That tasting is a Master Class in and of itself.

P.S.: this story about the Bator Vineyard's evolution in our minds and the cellar is also the story of our approach to all of our Gamay plots: continual experimentation and knowing when to stop (or *deaccelerate*) the whole cluster percentage search when you think you are in the "right zone" of expressing a vineyard's terroir.

INDIGENOUS YEASTS = SENSE OF PLACE

Lastly, but importantly: Buying packaged yeast is a good way to avoid sleepless nights, but it is not the best way to express local terroir. Better to use the yeasts that grew on the skins of the grape IN your vineyard IN that summer in question. Only they will bring maximum nuance, depth, texture, excitement, variability, complexity (and yes, sometimes, sleepless nights!)

*P.T.G. or Passetoutgrain is a time-honoured tradition of putting about 30-33% Pinot Noir into a Gamay Noir Blend. We call ours P.T.L.G. "Passez Toutes les Grappes" (or "Gimme all the Grape Bunches" - and the resultant wine has the verve and fruitiness of Gamay Noir, and the suave ageability of Pinot Noir!

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- Serena Sutcliffe, André Simon's Wines of the World Second edition by Serena Sutcliffe, 1981
- James E. Wilson. Terroir: The Role of Geology, Climate, and Culture in the Making of French Wines. 1998 (Buy this book unseen if you are interested in terroir... it will likely change your life!)
- Laurent CHENIER <https://www.beaujoloire.fr/actualites/79-comment-sont-vinifies-les-vins-du-beaujolois.html> (Laurent CHENIER is a passionate and informed writer and reseller of Beaujolais.)
- LittleWine: Daniela Pillhofer & Christina Rasmussen (writer) started a great UK online company reselling wine and offering an E-Zine with informative education and great articles penned by Christina. <https://littlewine.co/blogs/editorial/beaujolois-wine-region-gamay-granite-gobelet>



Our Single-Vineyards (« Crus ») and blends of VQA Gamay Noir



“Les villages” *gamay noir 2020* VQA Niagara Peninsula

GROWER BACKSTORY:

See individual vineyards



TASTING NOTE UPON RELEASE OF WINE, APRIL 2022:

A deft blend (read: "obsessed-over") of Gamay Noir parcels from single-vineyard origins, with the expression of the terroir of all-Niagara as its goal... this wine leads us on a dizzy dance combining the deep ripe fruit and silky tannins of N.O.T.L (Niagara-on-the-Lake) with the delicate perfume and limestone angularity of the best Bench (Escarpment) vineyard fruit. A bewitching nose of rose-petals, black raspberry and smoky cherry jelly - already incredibly delicious, best from 2023 -2025!!! Wismer-Foxcroft; Bai Xu; Bator; Willms... all these great terroirs have found their place in this wine that so effortlessly marries balance and a slaty minerality, dancing the line between easy drinkability and ageability.

VQA NIAGARA PENINSULA

- A CONSIDERED, CAREFUL BLEND OF SIX DIFFERENT SITES AND/OR CUVÉES
- VARIOUS SOIL TYPES; BOTH N.O.T.L AND BENCH, PRIMARILY CLAY, SILT, DOLOMITIC LIMESTONE, SOME SAND.
- PLANTING YEARS: 1981-TO 2015
- ELEVATION: VARIOUS, FROM 80M TO 160M
- INDIGENOUS YEAST FERMENT; INDIGENOUS MALOLACTIC 100%
- 16 MONTHS IN NEUTRAL BARRELS (OLDER BUT CLEAN), FROM BURGUNDIAN COOPERS, & FORESTS
- RACKED TO TANK BY GRAVITY / UNDER PRESSURE OF INERT GAS
- MINIMALLY CLARIFIED
- GLUCOSE/FRUCTOSE: 0.41 G/L
- HARVESTED FROM 18TH OF SEPT. TO 7TH OF OCT. 2020
- 467 CASES PRODUCED

Our Single-Vineyards (« Crus ») and blends of VQA Gamay Noir

a trilogy from the bator vineyard

GROWER BACKSTORY:

Located in the Four-Mile Creek Sub-App, in the extreme west of the appellation... not far from the border of St. Catharines. The Bator family bought the 80-acre tender fruit and grape farm back in 1950, and had planted mixed fruit and labrusca grapes, then when Robert Bator met Doris Todd, they bought the farm from his parents in 1980, and planted the vineyard portion to vinifera and some French Hybrids. Robert manages the vineyard to a modified Scott Henry system.

The upper canes are lifted to a vertical position using catch wires when they are long enough. Mechanical hedging is used to keep the height to a manageable level. Hand-thinning of non-producing shoots is used to allow air to circulate through the vines.

Every second row is clean-cultivated to facilitate nutrient penetration to the roots. Alternate rows have a cover crop of Ryegrass which is allowed to grow, to bind up excess nitrogen, facilitating crop and vine ripening in late summer.

PS. Their daughter Alyssa, who also lends a hand, is also the Winemaker at Riverview Estates.



THE PARCEL

This, our only vineyard to have all three of the Burgundian varieties we currently produce (Gamay Noir, Chardonnay and Pinot Noir), is not far from Virgil, near Old Town in NOTL, and is in the western side of the Four-Mile-Creek VQA. I discovered this vineyard in the first wave of the pandemic, whilst having my first restaurant meal in months: while out delivering wine to customers, I stopped for lunch in Old Town on a warm March day on the Treadwell's terrace. The Bator Gamay Noir was on the wine by the glass program, at that time made by 'The Fourth Wall' project. I fell in love with the raw intensity of the wine, determined that Fourth Wall Wines was no longer using the fruit, approached the Bator family, and, voilà!

WHY THIS MATTERS FROM A 'SENSE OF PLACE' PERSPECTIVE.

Although the Lakeshore close to the farm describes an irregular path heading North-east towards Old Town and the Niagara river, The location of the Bator Vineyard is close enough to the lake to minimize the coldest parts of the winter, and benefit from cool air off the lake to slow bud break in spring, yet also far enough from the Lake to acquire enough heat units for complete ripening.

These are early days for us with the Bator Vineyard, and it is clear that all three Bator Gamay Noir bottlings show their N.O.T.L. heritage, are pretty but solid, juicy, interesting, - like those from Willms and Bai Xu, the difference being a slight acid / tannic note on the finale. The Pinot Noir* - our first from the Four-Mile Creek, has good equilibrium and minerality. The fertile Pinot Noir Clone 375, which would be an unlikely choice for Bench Vineyards, may indeed be a good choice in this warmer Sub-App, as the abundance of fruit on the vine may prevent the sugars from skyrocketing, and the acids from dropping out.

**(to be released in the Toussaint Offering, November 1st, 2022)*

SOIL COMPOSITION:

The soil in the chardonnay is clay loam. The soils in the pinot noir and gamay are fine clay at the south end to sandy loam at the north end.

- VQA FOUR-MILE CREEK
- CLONES IF APPLICABLE: GAMAY NOIR: one acre planted 1998; one acre planted 2001; 0.35 Acres planted 2015. Clone 509 on 3309 rootstock was the main planting (a clone that entav / inra calls "balanced, aromatic and full-bodied wines," but a large part of the parcel is a field-blend. Pinot noir: 0.35 Acres planted in 2003. 0.35 Acres planted in 2014. All are clone 375 on so4 rootstock. 375 is a productive clone: rusty gaffney of www.princeofpinot.com calls this clone "clone 375. Average cluster, compact, small to average berries, quality aroma, legant and supple, limited ageability." Entav / inra says it makes for "supple and fruity red wines."
- CHARDONNAY: TWO ACRES PLANTED IN 2005, CLONE 76 ON SO4 ROOTSTOCK.
- PLANTING YEARS: GAMAY NOIR: 1998; 2001; 2015 Pinot Noir: 2003 & 2014; Chardonnay 2005
- ELEVATION: 90M +/- 2M
- DISTANCE FROM LAKE ONTARIO: Shoreline varies, from 3-4 Kilometres
- INDIGENOUS YEAST FERMENT; Indigenous Malolactic 100%
- 16 MONTHS IN NEUTRAL BARRELS (OLDER BUT CLEAN), FROM BURGUNDIAN COOPERS, & FORESTS
- RACKED TO TANK BY GRAVITY / UNDER PRESSURE OF INERT GAS
- MINIMALLY CLARIFIED



- GLUCOSE/FRUCTOSE:
BONE-DRY; LESS THAN 0.2 G/L

- HARVESTED 26TH & 27TH
OF SEPTEMBER 2020

- 69 CASES PRODUCED

- GLUCOSE/FRUCTOSE:
BONE-DRY; LESS THAN 0.15 G/L

- HARVESTED 26TH & 27TH
OF SEPTEMBER 2020

- 45 CASES PRODUCED

- GLUCOSE/FRUCTOSE:
BONE-DRY; LESS THAN 0.15 G/L

- HARVESTED 26TH & 27TH
OF SEPTEMBER 2020

- 48 CASES PRODUCED

niagara cru bator single vineyard

P.T.L.G. - PINOT NOIR 2020 VQA 4 MILE CREEK

TASTING NOTE UPON RELEASE OF WINE, APRIL 2022:

This classic Bator Gamay Noir/Pinot Noir blend is the first wine (#A.) in our "Bator Vineyard Trilogy." With 2/3 Gamay Noir, the smaller 33% of Pinot Noir still brings finesse, structure, and greater ageing potential. With small wild blueberries on the nose, the palate follows with chewy broader fruit, and a calcaire finish both rich and satisfying. One of our two 'Line Two Wines,' along with Willms, Bator is closer to the Welland Canal, a few kilometres west of the Niagara Stone Road,' while Willms is a few kilometres east towards the Niagara River. Ageing-Improvement Potential : 2-6 years.

'niagara cru bator single vineyard

GAMAY NOIR 2020 - 100% DESTEMMED VQA 4 MILE CREEK

TASTING NOTE UPON RELEASE OF WINE, APRIL 2022:

This Bator Gamay Noir is wine(#B.) in our "Bator Vineyard Trilogy," and was completely destemmed at harvest (like a classic Pinot Noir fermentation). Destemming the clusters of Bator Gamay Noir gives a wine that is finer, less Gamay, less exuberant, slightly more finely tannic. However, is very noble and fine and goes very well at the table: one can put it in the cellar. Tasted against the Whole Cluster version, you might think it bears more than a passing resemblance to Pinot, until you try the Bator P.T.L.G., which puts this wine into relief, showing really how much it DOES taste like Gamay. One of our two 'Line Two Wines,' along with Willms, Bator is closer to the Welland Canal, a few kilometres west of the Niagara Stone Road,' while Willms is a few kilometres east towards the Niagara River. Ageing-Improvement Potential : 2-6 years.

niagara cru bator single vineyard

GAMAY NOIR 2020 - 13% WHOLE CLUSTER VQA 4 MILE CREEK

TASTING NOTE UPON RELEASE OF WINE, APRIL 2022:

This 13% Whole Cluster Bator is wine (#C.) of our "Trilogy from the Bator Vineyard." So different from the silkiness of Willms and Bi Xu: Bator, with just 13% of whole grape bunches added, when looked at against the other two wines in the Bator Trilogy, makes us palpably feel the exuberant slightly rough & tannic, gorgeous dark and delicious black raspberry high-acid fruit that first attracted me to the Bator Vineyard. This terroir is enhanced by the character that the use of whole Cluster brings to the fermentation, and they make for a classic gamey Gamay feel in the wine.

P.S.: In 2021, we upped this percentage to 30%. One of our two 'Line Two Wines,' along with Willms, Bator is closer to the Welland Canal, a few kilometres west of the Niagara Stone Road,' while Willms is a few kilometres east towards the Niagara River. Ageing-Improvement Potential : 3-6 years.



Erv Willms driving tractor at harvest

niagara 'cru' willms 'single vineyard'

**GAMAY NOIR 2020 - LES NATURISTES 55% WHOLE CLUSTER 1983 PLANTING,
VIEILLES VIGNES VQA 4 MILE CREEK**

- VQA FOUR-MILE CREEK
- CLONES IF APPLICABLE: BOTH THE GAMAY & THE CHARDONNAY CLONES ARE 'LEGACY,' 'HEIRLOOM,' I.E. 'UNKNOWN'
- PLANTING YEAR: 1983 (1987 FOR A SMALL SOUTHERN PART OF THE GAMAY BLOCK)
 - ELEVATION: 90M
- DISTANCE FROM LAKE ONTARIO: 6.9 KILOMETRES
- INDIGENOUS YEAST FERMENT; INDIGENOUS MALOLACTIC 100%
- 16 MONTHS IN NEUTRAL BARRELS (OLDER BUT CLEAN), FROM BURGUNDIAN COOPERS, & FORESTS
 - RACKED TO TANK BY GRAVITY / UNDER PRESSURE OF INERT GAS
 - MINIMALLY CLARIFIED
 - GLUCOSE/FRUCTOSE: 0.77 G/L
- HARVESTED 9TH OF OCTOBER 2020
 - 166 CASES PRODUCED

TASTING NOTE UPON RELEASE OF WINE, APRIL 2022:

One of our two 'Line Two Wines,' along with Bator, Willms 'Les Naturistes' is out there naked, because one simply cannot push these older Gamay Noir vines to give something they can no longer give. In mid-life, this vineyard gave a deep, dark, concentrated, more tannic wine. Now, we make sure to never over-extract, we just let it be. Of a clear, bright red, it explodes with mentholated red raspberries, and many find it absolutely thrilling, compelling! Why? The pure raspberry flavours, fine and silky? The old vines from 1983? The painstaking selection of only the best, most harmonious fûts for the Cru? Yes, to All!! Ageing-Improvement Potential : 3-5 years.

THE PARCEL

This, one of our oldest vineyards, is right down near Old Town in NOTL, and hails from the Four-Mile-Creek VQA, and was planted way back in 1983, when there was hardly any vinifera in Niagara! Both the Chardonnay (1983) and the Gamay Noir (1983 & 1987) are from old vines - the Willms Vineyard (which was called "Sandstone" in an earlier incarnation) is uniquely located between two bodies of water, some 6 km from the lake, and about 4 km from the Niagara River. It is a combo of silt, loamy-clay, gravel, limestone and sand."

WHY THIS MATTERS FROM A 'SENSE OF PLACE' PERSPECTIVE.

So different from the Bai Xu vineyard, just one line over on Line 3, The age of the Willms vineyard and the deeper roots of older vines in a warmer area is a mitigating factor, in that it helps buffer out the extreme summer weather, whether wet and or drought, and deliver reliable wines of terroir each year. Deep roots and slightly-different soils is part of the reason these two neighbouring vineyards give SUCH different wines.

SOIL COMPOSITION:

Clay-loam till: a combo of silt, loamy-clay, gravel, limestone, and sand. The Gamay block's soil is not incredibly sandy, but with a cultivator works up as nicely as if it were sand, even though the vineyard has lots of stone and gravel in that section. That said, the soils the 1983 Chardonnay is planted on are sandier than most: one can easily sink a shovel or a hoe into it.

GROWER BACKSTORY:

Erv and Esther Willms bought the farm in 1981, which had been a cow field for a long time. Along with son Eric and daughter Rebecca, today they run the old-vines part of the farm, much of which was planted in 1983 and 1987. When the vineyard has just been cultivated, then followed by a rain, the dirt is washed off the stones, and they are clearly visible. Thus, they named the vineyard Sandstone, when they founded the original 13th St. Winery in 1998, in which the Willms were partners (at that time, on 13th Street in Louth), and the winery bought all their grapes under the vineyard name "Sandstone."

niagara 'cru' bai xu single vineyard

GAMAY NOIR 2020 - 32% WHOLE CLUSTER; 1981 PLANTING, VIEILLES VIGNES VQA 4 MILE CREEK

- VQA FOUR-MILE CREEK
- CLONES IF APPLICABLE: GAMAY NOIR CLONE 358; CHARDONNAY CLONE 95
- PLANTING YEAR: 1981
- ELEVATION: 98M
- DISTANCE FROM LAKE ONTARIO: 8 KILOMETRES
- INDIGENOUS YEAST FERMENT; INDIGENOUS MALOLACTIC 100%
- 16 MONTHS IN NEUTRAL BARRELS (OLDER BUT CLEAN), FROM BURGUNDIAN COOPERS, & FORESTS
- RACKED TO TANK BY GRAVITY / UNDER PRESSURE OF INERT GAS
- MINIMALLY CLARIFIED
- GLUCOSE/FRUCTOSE: 0.9 G/L
- HARVESTED 9TH OF OCTOBER 2020
- 147 CASES PRODUCED

TASTING NOTE UPON RELEASE OF WINE, APRIL 2022:

One of the "Seven Wonders" of our cellar that shines so brightly, Bai Xu hails from the oldest vines we work with (1981) planted on Line Three in N.O.T.L. – The wines are cared for with great love by Jackson Bai himself. In the wine, we sense the calm purity and lightly-perfumed fruit of the immense viticultural effort that Jackson puts in. Instantly-recognizable as Gamay on the nose, just now, the still mute but intriguing raspberry liqueur bouquet bends to the successive old-vine flavours and mouthfeel that reveal the clay and limestone terroir of the parcel. Drink it tonight with immense pleasure: drink it five years from now just to experience the pure complexity and joy this wine will doubtlessly bring us! Ageing-Improvement Potential : 3-7 years.

THE PARCEL

The Bai Xu vineyard is one of the oldest vinifera plantings in the region: their Grape Grower number is 011!!! - The Chardonnay and Gamay Noir vines are the oldest we have the pleasure to work with - 40 years-old at the 2021 Harvest!!! The Byland Vineyard is located close to two major bodies of water, some 6 km from Lake Ontario, and about 4km from the Niagara River. The Chardonnay and Gamay are now old vines, and were planted at the same time circa 1981: The Chardonnay clone is 95, the Gamay clone is 358.

WHY THIS MATTERS FROM A 'SENSE OF PLACE' PERSPECTIVE.

The soil is quite different from the Willms vineyard, just one line north over on Line 2, The Lacustrine Clay soil seems to make Gamay Noir and Chardonnay with an immediate appeal. They may seem simple in their youth, but watch them develop as they age in your cellar! The age of the Bai Xu vineyard and the deeper roots of older vines in a warmer area is a mitigating factor in that it helps buffer out the extreme wet and or drought summer weather, and give reliable terroir wines, each year. Deep roots and slightly-different soils, that is partly why these two vineyards give SUCH different wines.

SOIL COMPOSITION:

The soil - very different from the neighbouring Willms vineyard is a mixture of sandy and loamy sediments over lacustrine clay with some silt, as well as limestone, with excellent moisture-holding properties, which help sustain the vines through the drier months of summer.

GROWER BACKSTORY:

Jackson and Amy Bai are the newer owners (2015) of one of the oldest vineyards in Niagara, which was planted 41 years ago, back in 1981! Jackson left his former career to become a vigneron and proudly does all the vineyard hand work himself.



a pair of niagara 'cru' wismer-foxcroft 'single vineyard'

-GAMAY NOIR 2020



THE PARCEL

- VQA TWENTY-MILE BENCH
- CLONES IF APPLICABLE: GAMAY NOIR CLONE 358 (on two different rootstalks); CHARDONNAY CLONE 95
 - PLANTING YEAR: 1998
 - ELEVATION: 120M
- DISTANCE FROM LAKE ONTARIO: 5.2 KILOMETRES
- INDIGENOUS YEAST FERMENT; INDIGENOUS MALOLACTIC 100%
- 16 MONTHS IN NEUTRAL BARRELS (OLDER BUT CLEAN), FROM BURGUNDIAN COOPERS, & FORESTS
 - RACKED TO TANK BY GRAVITY / UNDER PRESSURE OF INERT GAS
 - MINIMALLY CLARIFIED
- GLUCOSE/FRUCTOSE: 0.29 G/L (FOXCROFT 52% W.C.); 0.32G/L (FOXCROFT 33% W.C.)
- HARVESTED 6TH OF OCTOBER 2020
 - 61 CASES PRODUCED (FOXCROFT 52% W.C.) 209 CASES PRODUCED (FOXCROFT 33% W.C.)

What is it about the soil here, on the Vineland Bench, that makes for wine with such a distinctive mineral tang - in both red and white Burgundian grapes?? Quickly becoming a reference vineyard for Niagara, with different versions of Wismer-Foxcroft Chardonnay, Gamay, Riesling, and Cabernet Franc* available from several local terroir-obsessed producers in any given vintage, the Wimers-Foxcroft Gamay vineyard is found just below (north) of our Chardonnay blocks. It is on a good incline, a stony-silty clay site laced with magnesium oxide and limestone site. (*Bachelder makes no Riesling or Cabernet Franc!)

WHY THIS MATTERS FROM A 'SENSE OF PLACE' PERSPECTIVE.

Both on the Vineland Bench and on the Jordan Bench*, the majority of vineyards are planted to Chardonnay and Pinot Noir, and, in this case, Gamay Noir. This is a magic place, and we believe that the magic for Pinot Noir and Gamay Noir bench vineyards resides in both the altitude and distance from the lake. ...and the ancient, ex-marine soils, forming what could be called "Niagara's Grand Cru strip." The reddish-brown soils of the lower Vineland bench bring a special iron-tinged, rusty wildness to our Foxcroft Gamay Noir cuvées, and also brings those same terroir markers... into the Sub-App's fine, scented, and nuanced Pinot Noir parcels (like Wismer-Parke & Hanck).

**together grouped somewhat clumsily into the Twenty-Mile Bench Appellation.*

SOIL COMPOSITION:

Dolomitic-limestone influenced red-clay soils with a solid silt component. "Loamy textures over clay/loam till." Executive Summary: "Shallow Dolostone." At 5,5 Km from the Lake at an altitude of 120

metres, from the sweet spot of the 20-Mile Bench on reddish magnesium oxide-rich and dolomitic-limestone clay soils with a solid silt component, 'Wismer-Foxcroft makes wines with a wild, rusty, anise-scented, iron-tinged nuance, yet a pretty, savoury mouthfeel and a slatey finish.

GROWER BACKSTORY:

Now into the second generation, The Wismer family has been growing grapes on the Vineland Bench for 25+ years. They manage with great prowess - for themselves and others - some 300 acres. Craig Wismer, the leader/genius of it all, is a wine lover with a good palate, a man of passion and commitment, and he and I have been thick as thieves for years in our pursuit of understanding soils, terroirs, clones, and viticulture. However, brothers Chris and Ken have brought nuance and precision to already excellently-run vineyards.

niagara 'cru' wismer-foxcroft single vineyard

**- GAMAY NOIR 2020 - 52% WHOLE CLUSTER VQA
20 MILE BENCH**

TASTING NOTE UPON RELEASE OF WINE, APRIL 2022:

This wine, vinified with 52% whole grape clusters, is the bigger, rounder, richer in thrilling and pure stony black raspberry fruit with bloody overtones. It is more immediately-satisfying of the two Foxcroft Crus, possessing a long and juicy finale that is just slightly shorter and more chalkily-acidic than the 33%. If ever there was proof that 'Beauty is in the Eye of the Beholder,' than the polemic over Foxcroft 52% Whole-Cluster vs. the Foxcroft 33% Whole Cluster is surely just that. In our ad-hoc survey over the last two summers, roughly just over half prefer the higher percentage, but we find the 33% whole cluster speaks a little more clearly to us about its gravelly, iron-tinged soil origins, and since the taste of the land is what we are all about, we make a little more of that cuvée. Still it is immense fun to compare them young and wonder about their ageability. Two beautiful siblings. Ageing-Improvement Potential : 2-7 years.

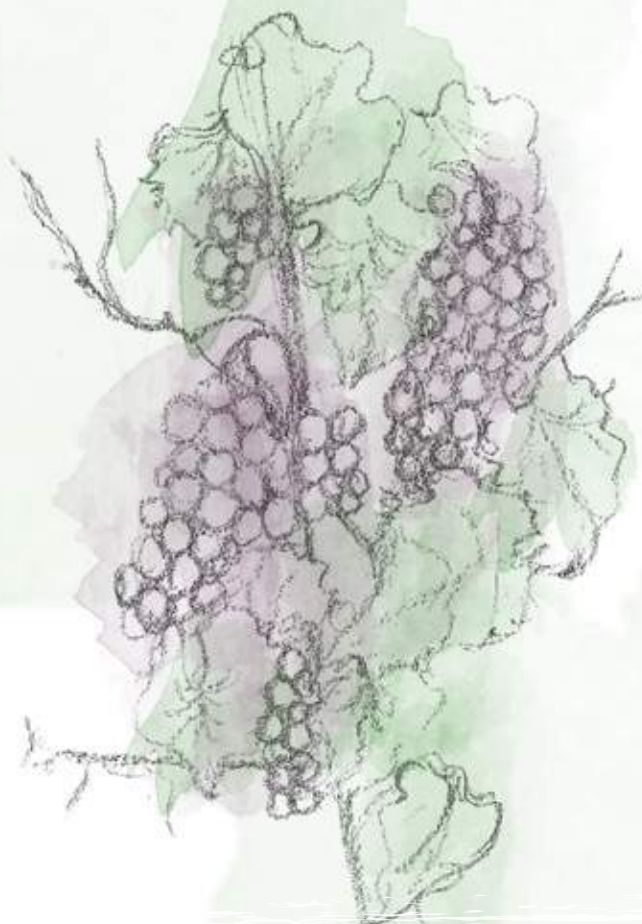
niagara 'cru' wismer-foxcroft single vineyard

**- GAMAY NOIR 2020 - 33% WHOLE CLUSTER VQA
20 MILE BENCH**

TASTING NOTE UPON RELEASE OF WINE, APRIL 2022:

This wine, vinified with 33% whole grape clusters, is the more fine, more closed, and more structured (for ageability) of the two Foxcroft Crus. Incredible presence and verve. It possesses a finish that is slightly longer, more tannic, with a more iron-like minerality. In our ad-hoc survey over the last two summers, roughly just over half prefer the higher percentage, but we find the 33% whole cluster speaks a little more clearly to us about its gravelly, iron-tinged soil origins, and since the taste of the land is what we are all about, we make a little more of that cuvée. If ever there was proof that 'Beauty is in the Eye of the Beholder,' than the polemic over Foxcroft 52% Whole-Cluster vs. the Foxcroft 33% Whole Cluster is surely just that. Still it is immense fun to compare them young and wonder about their ageability. Two beautiful siblings. Ageing-Improvement Potential: 3-10 years.

- VQA TWENTY-MILE BENCH
- CLONES IF APPLICABLE: GAMAY NOIR CLONE 358 (on two different root stalks); CHARDONNAY CLONE 95
- PLANTING YEAR: 1998
- ELEVATION: 120M
- DISTANCE FROM LAKE ONTARIO: 5.2 KM
- INDIGENOUS YEAST FERMENT; INDIGENOUS MALOLACTIC 100%
- 16 MONTHS IN NEUTRAL BARRELS (OLDER BUT CLEAN), FROM BURGUNDIAN COOPERS, & FORESTS
- RACKED TO TANK BY GRAVITY /UNDER PRESSURE OF INERT GAS
- MINIMALLY CLARIFIED
- GLUCOSE/FRUCTOSE: 0.29 G/L(FOXCROFT 52% W.C.); 0.32G/L FOXcroft 33% W.C.)
- HARVESTED 6TH OF OCTOBER 2020
- 61 CASES PRODUCED (FOXCROFT 52% W.C.)
209 CASES PRODUCED (FOXCROFT 33% W.C.)



our new les villages "map" labels

'niagara chardonnay 2020' les villages - niagara-on-the-lake

- VQA NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE

TASTING NOTE UPON RELEASE OF WINE, APRIL 2022:

These two Les Villages cuvées offer a rare opportunity to see how similar and yet how different the Chardonnays from N.O.T.L. and the Bench can be, made by the same producer, using the same techniques and cellaring. Straight off on the nose we perceive (with great joy) the classic N.O.T.L. Chardonnay hallmarks of honeyed, mentholated waxy notes, with white peach and pear. Silky-rich, even a bit exotic, but dead-dry with a spicy but savoury minerality, tight but not stony. One might even call this a 'N.O.T.L. Chardonnay for lovers of Bench wines!' (The Willms, Bator, Bai Xu and Patte Rouge parcels make up this complex blend.) Ageing-Improvement Potential : Will hold for several years, improving all the long.

- VQA NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE N.O.T.L.
- A CONSIDERED, CAREFUL BLEND OF FOUR DIFFERENT SITES
- VARIOUS SOIL TYPES IN N.O.T.L. PRIMARILY CLAY, LACUSTRIN CLAY, SILT, DOLOMITIC LIMESTONE, SOME SAND
- CLONES IF APPLICABLE: See individual vineyards
- PLANTING YEARS: 1981-TO 2005
- ELEVATION: VARIOUS, FROM 80M TO 85m
- DISTANCE FROM LAKE ONTARIO: FROM 6.5 TO 14 KILOMETRES, FROM 4 TO 7.7 KM FROM NIAGARA RIVER
- INDIGENOUS YEAST FERMENT; INDIGENOUS MALOLACTIC 100%
- 16 MONTHS IN 15% NEW OAK BARRELS, THEN TWICE AND THrice USED AND THE REMAINDER NEUTRAL (OLDER BUT CLEAN), FROM BURGUNDIAN COOPERS, & FORESTS
- RACKED TO TANK BY GRAVITY / UNDER PRESSURE OF INERT GAS
- GLUCOSE/FRUCTOSE: 1.8 G/L
- HARVESTED FROM 26TH OF SEPTEMBER TO 4TH OF OCTOBER 2020
- 162 CASES PRODUCED



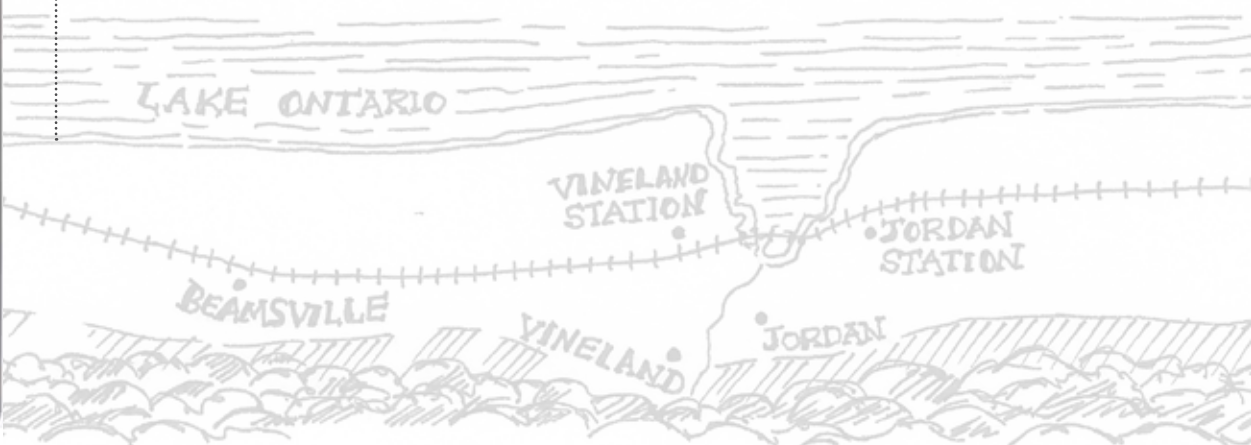
*niagara chardonnay 2020 'les villages
'- bench*

- VQA NIAGARA ESCARPMENT

TASTING NOTE UPON RELEASE OF WINE, APRIL 2022:

These two "Les Villages" cuvées offer a rare opportunity to see how similar and yet how different the Chardonnays from the Bench and N.O.T.L. can be, made by the same producer, using the same techniques and cellaring. How does one recognise a Chardo from the Bench? You can smell the effortless minerality in this wine peeking through the fruit before ever tasting a drop! The fruit is so pure, this fabulously-rich citrus-scented wine speaks of marine odors similar to crushed oyster shells. On the palate, the wine presents like the great, rich, saline-tinted, mineral terroir Chardonnays that we all know and love! (The parcels of Saunders, Wingfield Ouest & Est, Foxcroft Sud & Nord are all here.) Ageing-Improvement Potential : Will improve for 3 to 5 years.

- VQA NIAGARA ESCARPMENT "BENCH"
- A CONSIDERED, CAREFUL BLEND OF FIVE DIFFERENT SITES/CUVÉES
- VARIOUS SOIL TYPES, PRIMARILY CLAY, DOLOMITIC LIMESTONE, MAGNESIUM OXIDE, SILT
- CLONES IF APPLICABLE: See individual vineyards
- PLANTING YEARS: 1990-TO 1999
- ELEVATION: VARIOUS, FROM 120M TO 169M
- DISTANCE FROM LAKE ONTARIO: FROM 3,25 TO 6,9 KILOMETRES
- INDIGENOUS YEAST FERMENT; INDIGENOUS MALOLACTIC 100%
- 16 MONTHS IN 15% NEW OAK BARRELS, THEN TWICE AND THRICE USED AND THE REMAINDER NEUTRAL (OLDER BUT CLEAN), FROM BURGUNDIAN COOPERS, & FORESTS
- RACKED TO TANK BY GRAVITY / UNDER PRESSURE OF INERT GAS
- GLUCOSE/FRUCTOSE: 1.95 G/L
- HARVESTED FROM 21ST OF SEPTEMBER TO 13TH OF OCTOBER 2020
- 209 CASES PRODUCED



Our New Les Villages «Map» Labels

niagara pinot noir 2020 'les villages' – *Bench*

- VQA NIAGARA ESCARPMENT

TASTING NOTE UPON RELEASE OF WINE, APRIL 2022:

When the 2020 single-vineyards are released later this year (1st of November 2022), this wine will rival them for its complexity, drinkability, and even its ageability! Made from 100% Bench vineyards on the Escarpment in Vineland and Beamsville, the impossibly complex bouquet darts between raspberries, violets, and dark red blackberries, followed by notes of fresh deep-red plums, and vibrant rhubarb: it is rich, velvety and silky with a hint of cherries & vanilla on the long finale. From the single-vineyards of Hanck, Wismer-Parke, Wismer-Parke Wild West-End, Saunders and Spencer-Morgan, it delivers the goods we have been waiting for: the rich, hauntingly-complex and limestone-mineral flavours of the bench! Improvement Potential: Will improve for 3 to 10 years!

- VQA NIAGARA ESCARPMENT "BENCH"
- A CONSIDERED, CAREFUL BLEND OF FIVE DIFFERENT SITES / CUVÉES
- VARIOUS SOIL TYPES ON THE VINELAND & BEAMSVILLE BENCH. PRIMARILY CLAY, DOLOMITIC LIMESTONE, SILT, SOME SAND IN BEAMSVILLE.
- CLONES IF APPLICABLE: See individual vineyards
- PLANTING YEARS: 1999-2014
- ELEVATION: VARIOUS, FROM 110M TO 150m
- DISTANCE FROM LAKE ONTARIO: FROM 3,25 TO 6km
- INDIGENOUS YEAST FERMENT; INDIGENOUS MALOLACTIC 100%
- 16 MONTHS IN 15% NEW OAK BARRELS, THEN TWICE AND THRICE USED AND THE REMAINDER NEUTRAL (OLDER BUT CLEAN), FROM BURGUNDIAN COOPERS, & FORESTS
- RACKED TO TANK BY GRAVITY / UNDER PRESSURE OF INERT GAS
- MINIMALLY CLARIFIED
- GLUCOSE/FRUCTOSE: 0.1 G/L
- HARVESTED FROM SEPTEMBER 13TH TO 28TH 2020
- 360 CASES PRODUCED



an improbable hero

AN UNOFFICIAL, PERSONAL LOOK AT THE NIAGARA GAMAY NOIR MOVEMENT IN WELL UNDER 2300 WORDS

- An unplanned destiny; yet seemingly flourishing in Niagara Today -

"I feel like Gamay Noir is immediately understandable and forever unknowable."

I am told that, in its early days in Niagara, as growers had heard that the Gamay Noir can be easier to grow than Pinot Noir, the vine sometimes did get pushed into high yields, being grown by some growers the way they grew their juice grapes. One forgets how much wine we do now, when compared to how much grape juice was done back then. So, when Gamay was first planted, the wines were often used for basic blends and inexpensive varietal wines: this may be our clue as to why the wines did not immediately impress enough to become a staple in the region.

The second clue is winter hardiness: Dr. Helen Fisher (*beloved of students and viticulturists, and lauded for her research at both Vineland Research Station and U of Guelph*) points out that excess yields followed by cold winters create a situation in which a winter-hardy vine like Gamay, when pushed too far, can end up with winter injury, trunk damage, and lower crops.

Our great local writer Linda Bramble (*Niagara's Wine Visionaries, and many others*) also remind that one of the reasons Gamay did not get planted at a faster rate was that, for awhile at least, there was a limit on which vines you could import, at what quantity, and the clonal choice was limited.

- **Trick Question:** The first great Ontario Gamays were made by which winery??? The answer came from Michael Vaughn, of www.vintagesassessments.com (a not-for-profit, invaluable guide to LCBO Vintages releases, as well as many other topics vinous) who organised and sponsored a tasting himself at Canada House, London in 1976 (With Hugh Johnson, Harry Waugh and others) and Chateau-Gai's 1973 and 1974 Gamay Noirs were a triumph! (I note here that the marketer at the time was Don Triggs (who was to go on to found Vincor, Delaine Vineyard, Osoyoos-Larose, Le Clos Jordanne and Culmina), and the Chateau-Gai Winemaker was none other than Paul Bosc, who went on to found Chateau des Charmes, and who has continued to continue to champion Gamay Noir to the present day!)
- "While it is well known that Donald Ziraldo was granted the first new winery licence in Ontario after Prohibition in 1974, it is lesser known that this licence was used to make 500 gallons of wine from Gamay for submission to the LCBO. According to Rod Phillips in the Wines of Canada, the 1970s and 1980s marked a dramatic period of growth with plantings of vitis vinifera in Ontario increasing from 2 % in 1976 to 10% in 1986, and increasing ever since." (Janet Dorozynski, DipWSET, PhD; Writer, Speaker, Judge, WSET Certified Educator. Bylines: Luxe Magazine Ottawa, WineAlign.com, Quench Magazine. Contributor: Oxford Companion to Wine)

I have tasted aged and beautiful examples of Karl Kaiser's efforts with Gamay at **Inniskillin**, (and they still produce Gamay Noir to this day, under winemaker Nick Gizuk), however, Karl was more interested in Pinot Noir, and it was really Paul Bosc who led the way, over at **Chateau de Charmes**. His Gamay Noir and Gamay Droit were and remain references: in addition, their nurseries provided Gamay Noir stock for much of the Peninsula. I visited the Boscs before I ever went to school in Burgundy, and I remain in awe of their accomplishments. To this very day, CdC is still making rich-fruited, classic St. David's Bench Gamay Noir and Gamay 'Droit' under winemaker Amélie Boury. From Tony Aspler: "Thomas, I remember being in the original Bosc vineyard with Paul Bosc Sr., seemingly eons ago, when he showed me one vine that was much taller than the others. From this vine, he cultivated his Gamay Droit."

- Ken Douglas (and Erv Willms) were two of the four founders of the Original **13th Street Winery** and vinified their '**Sandstone**' (**Willms Vineyard**) Gamay and Reserve Gamay. From Ken Douglas: "Paul Bosc Sr. was the first real champion of Gamay for sure. Erv grew for him, and had Gamay vines which we were using to make our own (home) wines prior to founding 13th Street. Using the Willms vineyard on Line Two, We were trying for a "Henri Jayer" (Henri was from Vosne-Romanée), - northern Burgundian approach to the wine, which we felt was more like the original Beaujolais Crus (medium weight) that were subsequently displaced in the 70's by the lighter "Carbonic"-style wines.
- Twenty years ago, **13th Street Winery** was already shipping their Gamay Reserve to the Fat Duck, The Post Hotel and other top restos in London. Back in 2001, it was scored the highest wine of the year at the Ontario wine awards. All this Gamay fever started simply: with a case of 1959 Chateau des Jacques Moulin à Vent that was in Ken's dad's cellar, and it fired Ken's young person's imagination! He never looked back.
- I became a friend of Ken's and, as such was lucky enough, in my first years at Le Clos Jordanne (2003-2010), to taste every single one of those Sandstone vintages, some of them multiple times. I admired them, as I did the great Beaujolais Cru wines, but, as LeCJ grew just Pinot Noir and Chardonnay, the thought never went any further. That all changed

when we started Bachelder and, making wine for our project in Burgundy, I saw my friends chasing after plots of the best Côte de Brouilly et al. to bring back north and vinify in the Cote d'Or (Hmmmmmmmm..)

- Just one line south of Sandstone (which is now called Willms "Les Naturistes" BTW), lies our **Bai Xu** vineyard on Line Three, owned by Jackson and Amy Bai, who purchased it in 2015. It was Frank Di Paola who planted the grapes for what is now the **Byland Estate Winery** back in 1981. This vineyard sold its production to Magnotta for some 25 years before Jackson founded the Byland Estate Winery.
- **Cave Springs:** Len Pennachetti and Angelo Pavan are leaders and inspired the industry in so many ways. They started a Gamay program early on - and have steadfastly continued ever since. I have always followed their Gamay with great interest. From Chris Waters: "Really important to recognize how much Angelo Pavan and the team at Cave Spring (notably Ilia Suter, and now, also, Gabriel Demarco) contributed to the rise of Gamay Noir in Niagara. One of the first real advocates, in my mind."
- **Vineland Estates:** Just up /down the road from Megalo, Vineland are Gamay advocates, for sure: Brian Schmidt is a gifted winemaker and terroiriste. Not to be pigeonholed just for making fabulous Riesling and Cabernet Franc, they also champion Gamay Noir and Pinot Meunier.
- **Henry of Pelham:** Paul Speck told me a story about how, despite growing much Baco Noir, for a time, they actually shipped much more Gamay Noir than Baco. Since then, they have concentrated on making an Estate Gamay Noir, and some Gamay also goes into making Rosé.
- What to say? Martin **Malivoire's** story is littered with accolades, and despite making some of my favourite PN and Chardo in The Peninsula, made a visionary move early-on: he planted Gamay Noir to make Rosé!!! (as Darryl Fields (now, Vines to Vintages) who was the vineyard manager at the time, told me). Ann Sperling and Shiraz Mottiar moved the Rosé program to Red and established the style. For years now, Shiraz is the sure & steady hand at the helm, and with teammates Dan Stouck and Elisa Massi, continue to make inspired single-vineyards and blends from the Gamay Noir grape (even, sometimes, a \$\$ PTG-style that is achingly-beautiful). I buy their Gamays whenever I wake up in time before they sell out! From Ken Douglas: (and echoed by others): "Martin Malivoire jumped on the Gamay wagon early on, as he saw how well we (the original 13th Street) had done with it, and has done a nice job!" From Tony Aspler: The ultimate hero is Martin Malivoire, who championed the variety long before anyone else. I personally have long advocated the planting of Gamay when growers were experimenting with Pinot
- JL Groux, **Stratus:** Chris Waters reminds me that "J.L. made some Gamay when he was at **Hillebrand**, but went on to do some serious renditions of Gamay at Stratus, along with Dean Stoyka." At **Trius / Peller:** Gamay has always been in the lineup, but has become more of an inspired focus since Craig McDonald and his team took over the winemaking.
- Mira Ananicz of Vincor's '**Ancient Coast**' (in the day, was a great advocate of Gamay Noir, and made more of it than most other wineries)
- Jean-Pierre Colas arrived in Niagara from Chablis just before Mary & I, put Peninsula Ridge on the map, then, at the (new) **13th Street**, makes some seven Gamays, including single-vineyards like '**Sandstone**,' a 'Vin Gris,' and even a Blanc de Noir bubbly made from Gamay. He is a mentor to many, and when he talks, I listen.
- **Megalomaniac** has made serious single-vineyard Gamay Noir (called 'Gamay Avant-Garde' and 'Unconventional') for the last few years, then under the tutelage of Sébastien Jacquey and Chris Frey. Check out ALL their top terroir stuff: PN; Char do; Sauvignon Blanc and Cabernet Franc) Originally from just outside Sancerre, I hired Sébastien to come to Canada to second me at Le Clos Jordanne in the vines and the cellar. We did the life-changing interview in St. Nicolas-lès-Cîte aux, which took place over several hours on my great friends Bernard & Florence Zito's large couch (Bernard was Chef des Vignes at Domaine de la Vougeraie at the time, he help Pascal Marchand plant Le Clos Jordanne before our arrival) Fellow Quebecois Isabelle Meunier had just left LcJ to follow her dream to found 'Evening Land' in Oregon with Dominique Lafon of Meursault (Now Rajat Parr). Ilsa's own single-vineyard project in Oregon these days is LaVinea. 2Sébi is now Directeur General at Chateau de Sours in Bordeaux!
- **NEWER GAMAY PROJECTS!!!** At **Fielding:** Richie Roberts is a gifted winemaker who amongst many other things, makes delicious Gamay Noir. **Adamo:** Shauna White made classic renditions of this juicy grape from the Heubel vineyard, but also as a Nouveau. She is in B.C. now undoubtedly making some kick-ass Gamay. **Featherstone** is now an old hand at

an improbable hero

Gamay, making perfumed yet rich Gamay Noir year-in and year-out. **Westcott:** Winemaker Casey Kulzyk is doing a delicious Temperance Red blend that is a PTG-style. **Hidden Bench's** Alex Baines (Jay J.) and Harald's recent, stunning efforts with young vines: The best is yet to come. **Flatrock** winemaker Alison Findlay has made a new 'Explore' Gamay Noir which promises great things, including, potentially, a future planting. I have had some pretty transcendent Gamays from my old buddy Francois at **Pearl-Morrisette**. (*Although we did different stops upon the way, Francois has a similar path to mine (Québec to Burgundy to Niagara)*... Heather **Laundry's** glorious organic Gamay Noir vineyard on the Lincoln Lakeshore, and **Southbrook's** juicy, transparent terroir bottlings thereof. (*Bill Redelmeier, Ann Sperling and Casey Hogan*) Gorgeous bottles! **Leaning Post:** Ilya and Nadia Senchuk, from the 'Wild-West' of Niagara in beautiful 'Frontierland,' are committed to making fragrant Gamays with a 'sense of place.' Phil Dowell (*Ex-Coldstream Hills and Inniskillin winemaker*) has long crafted lovely Beamsville beauties over at **Angel's Gate** and **Kew**. **Big Head** and their carbonic and "Raw" Gamay Noir wines. **Rosewood:** Ryan Corrigan makes both a 100% Gamay Noir called 'Night Moves,' and a PTG-style. **Prince Edward County** does Gamay: I have had nice Gamay Noir from '**By Chadsey's Cairns**,' and **Casa Dea**, **The Grange** and others, like **Traynor**, are also making waves with Gamay.

WHAT ELSE? WHO ELSE?

- Janet **Dorozynski** (*Trade Commissioner with Global Affairs Canada in Ottawa*), and Magdalena **Kaiser**, (*Director of Public Relations & Marketer at WMAO*), who are both tireless champions of Gamay Noir in Ontario. #GoGamayGo!
- And, of course, you **journalists, Bloggers, restaurants, somms** who have long loved and championed Gamay, and have exhorted us to make more: Tony Aspler, Rick VanSickle, David Lawrason, Chris Waters, John Szabo, **3M's:** Michael Godel, Michael Pinkus & Michael Vaughn, René Sferrazza André Proulx, Jamie Goode; Anthony Gismondi, Sara d'Amato, Veronique Rivest, Nadia Fournier, Treve Ring, Laura Caar of CHEZ NOUS; Karyne Duplessis-Piché and so many more: **do you really think you went unheard?**

In **Beaujolais:** thanks to that open-minded man at the local winemaking provisions store in Villié-Morgon back in 1991: thank-you for making the time to help a young Canadian Home Winemaker. Thank-you Louis-Claude Desvignes, thank-you the Labruyères of Regnié, Thank-you Château des Jacques (when Mary and I were just-married and on bicycle): thanks mostly to that same Chateau des Jacques later-on, under Guillaume de Castelnau (and Jacques Lardiére) who have been friends, employers, and mentors. Bernard ZITO (Zito et fils) for showing me the way and teaching me by example and by words what really matters in terroir, viticulture, winemaking and drinking. "La vie, quoi!"

This Catalogue is **dedicated** to the
Serious,
the Gulpable,
and the Seriously-Gulpable
Gamays of Ontario

And, dedicated with a huge nod to *all those great years of Gamay Noir* from **Tawse** and **Redstone:** the Wine of Moray & **Paul Pender**, Rene Van Ede, and now Jessica Otting and her team. Dear, dear, free-spirited Paul, true to yourself and genuine with others, I will never forget you!

Thomas Bachelder, April 2022

Ps, if I have forgotten anyone who has been key in the Gamay movement, please forgive me – I was not born here, and I do not know the whole story, but am trying to piece together what I can. We are standing on your shoulders! If you make great Ontario Gamay Noir and are not mentioned here, so sorry for the omission! I am not a journalist; I am a wine lover who vinifies terroirs. Send me a bottle!

Thank you

Lynn Maceira for her lovely setting of this Terroir Catalogue, as well as the Toussaint Catalogue / November 2021

Shelley Szczucki for her beautiful maps and illustrations - www.thecharmingplace.com

Proofreading Français : Louis Gagnon

Proofreading English : Mary Delaney



BACHELDER

MAPPING NIAGARA. ONE VINEYARD AT A TIME.