

2020

DIVISION CHENIN BLANC "INONDE"

We bid adieu to the old-vine Chenin at Willard Farms with one of the brightest spots of the 2020 vintage with a wine ready to test time.

BOX SCORE			
VARIETY	CHENIN BLANC 100%	ALC	13.8%
APPELLATION	COLUMBIA VALLEY	PH	3.27
VINEYARD	WILLARD FARMS ORIGINAL BLOCK (PLANTED 1978)	PRODUCTION	31 CASES
AGEING	8 MONTHS NEUTRAL FRENCH BURGUNDY & STAINLESS STEEL BARRELS		
SOIL SERIES	MISSOULA FLOOD SEDIMENTARY MIX OVER BASALT		



VINTAGE RECAP

The 2020 vintage created some unique challenges for the entire West Coast, most notably the wildfires that plagued Oregon and California. Thankfully, Willard Farms and the Columbia Valley was spared from the fires and experienced mostly only high level haze. However, poor yields, like Oregon, were the norm in the Columbia Valley too from a poor fruit set during the flowering in June. The resultant small fruit crop had extremely high quality, but we unfortunately were 40% off of average yields, so our wine production is down considerably for 2020.

WINEMAKING + FERMENTATION

Working with these old vines we sleuthed back in 2013 was very bittersweet, but the wine created from this anxiety-inducing vintage turned out to be pure bliss. While we had to make some significant changes in production techniques for many of our fermentations in 2020 due to wildfire impact, fortunately, we were able to make Chenin Blanc the way we wanted. Pressed after a few hours on the skins directly into a mix of puncheons, barriques and stainless barrels to maximize lees exposure, "Inondé" completed natural fermentation and we chose our favorite two barrels for ageing. A modest sulfur addition was made post-malolactic fermentation, and the wine aged for 8 months before being blended and bottled without fining or filtration.

TASTING NOTES

Opening the last vintage of our Chenin Blanc "Inondé" from 2020 fills a complete picture of why this site has made such special Chenin for us since 2013. The aromatic presence is all CHENIN! Loaded with a waxy and mineral richness that immediately draws you in. The fruit is all honey covered peach and the beautiful tension of acidity to fruit defines the capacity of Chenin Blanc and why we love it so much. With only a few barrels of this made, we are going to savor this one for as long as possible and are confident some cellaring will pay off in spades.