

Willms Vineyard

NIAGARA CRU WILLMS, CUVÉE PARCELLAIRE,
GAMAY NOIR, 55% GRAPPES ENTIÈRES

— PLANTÉ EN 1983-1987 (VIEILLES VIGNES),
VQA FOUR MILE CREEK



WINE DETAILS

INDIGENOUS YEAST FERMENT;
Indigenous Malolactic 100%

17 MONTHS IN TWICE;
THRICE-USED AND NEUTRAL
BARRELS, FROM BURGUNDIAN
COOPERS, & FORESTS

RACKED TO TANK BY GRAVITY /
UNDER PRESSURE OF
INERT GAS

MINIMALLY CLARIFIED

SUB-APPELLATION:

Four-Mile Creek
VQA Chardonnay &
Gamay Noir

DATE OF PLANTING: 1983

DISTANCE FROM LAKE ONTARIO:
6.9 KM

ELEVATION AT TOP OF
VINEYARD: 98M

METRES DIFFERENTIATION
FROM TOP TO BOTTOM OF
VINEYARD: 2M

ELEVATION OF OLD TOWN
NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE: 79M

The LA VIOLETTE RELEASE, MAY 2ND, 2023.

TASTING NOTE UPON RELEASE OF WINE AT 18 MONTHS OLD.

One of our two 'Line Two Wines,' along with Bator, Willms is similar but different: with red and black, dark, beguiling, berried fruit and impressive weight, class, poise, and a clean, slatey finish! Is this, perhaps, the 'terroir' of the vintage? Planted in 1983, we have learned that we simply cannot push these older Gamay Noir vines to give something they can no longer give. Young, they gave a deep, dark, concentrated, more tannic wine; now, we make sure to never over-extract, we just let it be! Many find Willms absolutely thrilling, compelling! Why? The purity of the 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!! It will likely be at its best from 2024-2027!

A WORD FROM MARY: Pinot Like: Watermelon Nose; laser-focused beam of fruit on the mid-palate.

DRINKING PRIME: Now - 2032

BEST FRUIT WINDOW: 2024-2027

GLUCOSE/FRUCTOSE: BONE-DRY; LESS THAN 12 G/L

HARVESTED: 17TH OF OCTOBER 2021

Just 84 CASES PRODUCED

THE PARCEL

This Chardonnay vineyard is right down near Old Town in NOTL, and is 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."

THE GROWER

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."

SOIL COMPOSITION

Clay-loam till: a combo of silt, loamy-clay, gravel, limestone, and sand. The soil is not incredibly sandy, but with a cultivator works up as nicely as if it were sand. 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. The rest of the vineyard has lots of stone and gravel.