

2023 DIVISION-VILLAGES "L'ISLE VERTE"

Textured, honeyed, and lip-smackingly delicious old vine Chenin Blanc.

BOX SCORE			
VARIETY	CHENIN BLANC 100%	ALC	12.5%
APPELLATION	COLUMBIA VALLEY	PH	3.38
AGEING	6 MONTHS ON LEES IN 500L AND 228L NEUTRAL FRENCH OAK BARRELS	PRODUCTION	147 CASES



VINTAGE RECAP

The 2023 vintage started near the historical averages for the first time in many years. After a pleasant and dry start, May brought prolonged precipitation into early June, which slowed things down on the growth side. As soon as it dried out in early June, the season remained mostly dry and quite warm until early September. While there were definitely some hot stretches, which is quite normal in the Pacific NW during the summer, the heat waves were less extreme than in recent years like 2021. This was quite the opposite of many other parts of the U.S., especially the southern half, which experienced the hottest summer on record.

The Columbia Valley experienced some rains during the flowering period in June, which resulted in lower yield sets for much of the region, including at Phil Church Vineyard where we source the 50+ year-old Chenin Blanc vines. Notwithstanding the lower yields, we did end up with a nice crop for the vintage and picked over two separate passes during mid- and late-September in ideal conditions.

WINEMAKING + FERMENTATION

Like in years past, we created a pied de cuve (early native ferment) with a small number of grapes from the vineyard to build a strong yeast population from the native flora. The pressed juice was split between the heart of the press, which went directly into two puncheon (500L) barrels, with the rest being settled and fermented in neutral French oak barrels and stainless-steel barrels. The ferments took off easily this year and completed relatively quickly. The wines went completely dry this year, which is not always the case. Aging on the lees was kept to six months before being bottled, which is the typical amount for most other vintages.

TASTING NOTES

We thoroughly adored our first vintage in 2022 from Phil Church with its nervy acidity and layered ripe orchard-reminiscent fruit. The 2023 wine has all the classic Chenin fixings - taut electricity, a bit of pithy and flinty reduction, and then, of course, plenty of apple and pear fruit that connects with the waxy lanolin in the right amount. The mid-palate weight, which is richer this year, leads to a length that goes on for days. A truly delicious and satisfying white for all occasions.