



BERLUCCHI '61 NATURE BLANC DE BLANCS 2016
Franciacorta Millesimato

GRAPES: Chardonnay (100%), grown in the central parcel of the Arzelle estate vineyard, planted at a high density of 10,000 vines/hectare.

HARVEST PERIOD: Last third of August 2016.

VINYARD YIELD: 8,000 kg of grapes per hectare, with a yield in must of 30%, equivalent to 3,200 bottles per hectare.

VINIFICATION: The clusters are given a gradual, gentle pressing, yielding multi-quality fractions of must. Fermentation is in stainless steel, then the finest lots of wine mature 6 months sur lie in oak barrels.

MATURATION: The cuvée is assembled, in the spring following the harvest, with base wines 100% of the same growing year. The wine re-ferments and matures sur lie in the bottle for a minimum of 5 years, followed by a further 6 months after disgorging.

DOSAGE: Zero dosage.

SIZES: 750ml. bottle.

SENSORY PROFILE:

APPEARANCE: Generous, creamy mousse with a delicate, supple bead and a lingering crown of pin-point bubbles.

COLOUR: Intense straw yellow, with impressive heritage-gold highlights.

BOUQUET: Generous and deep, offering ripe apricot and melon, and candied apricot, then concluding on a rich note of black liquorice and pan brioche.

PALATE: An impressive structure bolsters crisp acidity, while a tangy finish creates a taut, dynamic conclusion that promises significant longevity.

SERVING SUGGESTIONS: This vintage-dated Millesimato is perfect throughout a meal: it heightens the flavours of elegant aperitif assortments, seafood dishes, risottos, main courses of fish, poultry and veal, and medium-aged cheeses.

SERVING TEMPERATURE: 10-12 °C.

DATA AT DISGORGING:

Alcohol 12.5%- Sugars: Trace

Acidity 6.00 g/l - pH 3.20.

INITIAL VINTAGE: 2012

TECHNICAL BACKGROUND

BERLUCCHI '61 NATURE BLANC DE BLANCS 2016

VINEYARD

The grapes that produce Berlucchi '61 Nature Blanc de Blancs are grown in the central parcel of the Arzelle vineyard; now more than 20 years old and optimally mature, Arzelle yields grapes perfectly suited for Millesimato, or vintage-dated, wines. The vineyard is planted to a very high density of 10,000 vines per hectare, trained to Guyot, and managed in accord with low environmental-impact, sustainable viticultural practices. Weather and soils play a crucial role as well. The Arzelle vineyard is planted in deep morainic soils, which give the grapes for base wines outstanding structure, while its particular microclimate and aspect warm the vineyard soils, which ensures optimal grape ripeness. This also privileges phenolic ripeness over technical maturity, guaranteeing base wines that are complex and powerful yet fruit-rich and savoury. The high-density plantings help to bring to the fore the Chardonnay's varietal characteristics, in terms of both technological and phenolic ripeness. In the latter case, the grapes are ripe in terms of their polyphenols and aromatic precursors, which translates into notable aromatic richness and structural solidity. Technological ripeness heightens the organoleptic characteristics desirable in a Franciacorta base wine, as well as a solid acidity, low pH, and a promise of significant cellarability.

GROWING YEAR

The 2016 growing season began normally, with budbreak occurring in early April. Favourable weather encouraged vine growth, which proceeded rapidly until flowering, about 20-30 May. May and June were fairly rainy, and from veraison onwards, significant differences developed between early-ripening parcels and those cooler and later-ripening areas, compared to the norm; the result was a stretching out of the various stages of the harvest. August was fortunately quite cool, and wide day-night temperature differentials occurred, particularly after mid-August, with a consequent further slowing of the ripening process. Such overall positive weather conditions gifted base wines of outstanding quality, with surprisingly complex, intense aromatics and firm structures well integrated with vibrant acidities.

VINIFICATION

The grapes are harvested exclusively by hand upon reaching optimal ripeness, in the final third of August 2016. The 18-kg crates were rapidly brought to the cellar, and the clusters placed into specialised, inclined-plate presses designed to provide a gentle, gradual pressure on the whole clusters, immediately releasing the juice. The base wines for Franciacorta '61 Nature Blanc de Blancs are made exclusively from the very first pressing fractions, the so-called free-run must, which for this vintage is 30 litres per 100 kilos of grapes. The musts are rapidly chilled to 10°C and transferred into small tanks, where an overnight gravity settling results in pure, clear musts, perfect for fermentation. That takes place in stainless steel fermenters, temperature-controlled to preserve the aromas that emerge during the process. After the fermentation, the wine goes into other tanks, together with its fine lees, since a maturation "sur lie" improves the final wine's structure and complexity. In the meantime, some of the finest-quality base wines are transferred to once- or twice-used barriques for the same maturation process, during which the oak heightens the wine's sensory profile. Following more than five years of resting sur lie and a minimum of six months' ageing after disgorgement, '61 Nature Blanc de Blancs is ready for enjoyment.

SENSORY PROFILE

Tasting '61 Nature Blanc de Blancs 2016 reveals it as the purest expression of Franciacorta and its premier grape variety, Chardonnay. Further, since it is made without the "touch-up" of a liqueur d'expédition, it represents the purest, uncompromised soul of this growing area. Its complex, evolved bouquet; vibrant progression; and near-endless finish make this Millesimato a remarkably intense and appealing wine.