

# Iapetus 'Tectonic' 2018

**Producer** - Ethan Joseph at Shelburne Vineyard

**Provenance:** Shelburne, VT

**Farming:** Sustainable using biodynamic preparations and a mix of chemical and organic sprays. No herbicides.

**Grape(s):** 100% La Crescent

**Vineyard(s):** 2 Vineyard sites

-McCabe's Brook in Shelburne. Composed of deep sandy, glacial loam with excellent drainage and the vines are trained to a hi-wire cordon system.

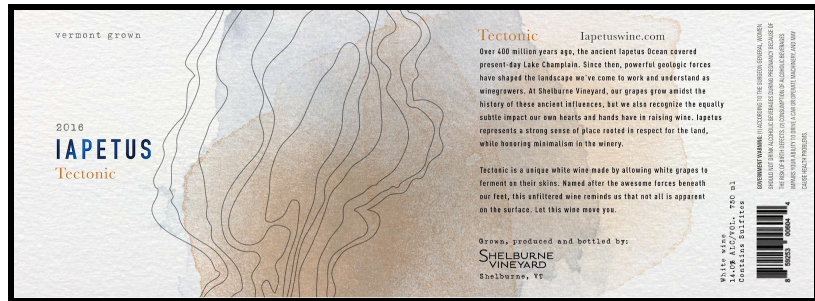
- Ellison Estate Vineyard on Grand Isle in Lake Champlain is a biodynamic vineyard planted in the aughts in moist soils with a high water table on a south facing hill overlooking the lake.

**Vintage:** "18 would have been stellar if it weren't for spring hail that reduced our crop at one site quite substantially. It was warm and dry. Fruit quality was high. The last few vintages have been all over the place, with more extremes."

**Fermentation/ Aging:** Destemmed, crushed and spontaneously fermented in stainless steel tank with a total of 84 days maceration. Natural malolactic fermentation. Pressed into tank for settling then racked into 80% neutral barrel and 20% steel for 7 months aging on fine lees with weekly battonage. Base wines are racked away from lees and blended in tank before bottling.

**Fining/ Filtration:** none.

**Sulfur:** About 60-70ppm added sulfite



## **The Producer:**

With a few of the US's most celebrated innovators paving the way, Vermont sits on the cusp of a viticultural revolution. Although less famed than his colleagues at La Garagista, Fable and Zafa, Iapetus' Ethan Joseph is one of the founding fathers of this emerging community. Iapetus exists as the searching label within Shelburne Vineyards just south of Burlington in Northern Vermont's Champlain Valley.

"I've also always considered myself a spiritual person" Ethan writes, "I need the science to inform me, but my mind's been opened enough to know that I must leave room for the magic/unknown. I am a skeptic of all things, tangible or otherwise. I tend to need to "prove" things myself, make my own informed decisions, and adapt whatever is to what/how I'm doing. I'm not dogmatic. There are no hard lines, no absolutes, no sides to be chosen. Truth exists in the gray areas; there's a delicate balance, nothing is weighted on the extremes."

The wines produced occupy an interesting middle ground, less typified by staunch naturalism and wild acidity than his peers but always spontaneously fermented and never fined or filtered. These are benchmark wines in the evolution of the American cold climate hybrid varieties and New England viticulture.

### **The Vineyard:**

With a scientific background focused on water resources and ecology, it is not surprising that Ethan would have a multidimensional approach to farming. The agriculture for Shelburne Vineyards is more than merely sustainable without quite qualifying as organic. Certain biodynamic preparations and organic sprays are used but Ethan tries to observe the whole system and will employ a chemical spray if he believes the specificity and minimum effective quantity (much lower than with organic sprays) offsets the toxicity. Essentially, Ethan is trying to suss out the most effective way to care for his land on a circumstantial basis without relying on dogma.

Ethan writes “We've been experimenting with different undervine cover crops, use mulch, and make and apply our own compost. We've established wild flower areas/insectaries, unmowed buffer areas, and significantly reduced mowing of the aisles. Soil health is paramount. Yes, trialing sheep. Why not? Diversify the farm, give the land another purpose while hopefully improving it.”

80% of the fruit comes from Mt. Philo in Shelburne. Planted in 2010 the site represents the largest block of La Crescent Shelburne Vineyards owns. The vineyard is well-drained and composed of deep sandy/ stony glacial loam. The vines are trained to a hi-wire cordon system.

The remaining 20% comes from Ellison Estate vineyard Grand Isle Vermont. Planted in the aughts, the vineyard was left abandoned for several years before Rob and Kenda Knapick purchased it in 2018. Through tireless effort and the counsel of Krista Scruggs the vineyard has been reborn thanks to organic and biodynamic practices. Situated on a hillside overlooking the lake, the soils are spongy with a high water table.

### **The Winery:**

The grapes from the two vineyards were destemmed, crushed lightly and fermented separately in steel tanks with 84 days on the skins. “2018 was a great vintage and fruit was nice and mature so we figured it was a good year for a long maceration. Longest we'd done. Part experiment, part informed decision.” This is also the first vintage where, in an effort to make wine without additions beyond sulfite, they had the confidence to go without inoculated cultures for malolactic conversion and so, while the

wine does go through a degree of malolactic conversion, it was less advanced and more of the initial acidity is preserved.

The base wines get pressed together, settled overnight in tank and racked into predominantly neutral barrel for 7 months of fine lees aging with weekly battonage. Of their barrel program Ethan writes: "Barrels range in age from 9yrs old to 3 at this point. I like a mix of new/newer and neutral. Had been getting our hybrid oak barrels from World Cooperage. Then switched to Hungarian oak in 2014 working with a company called Kalina. However, those barrels are no longer available and when we buy new again, we'll work with our same sales rep who is now at a different cooper. Focused more on building our white barrel program. Need more neutral oak there. Otherwise, continuing to try different toasts to see what they offer."

Base wines are assembled in tank for settling and bottled with 60-70 ppm added sulfite without fining or filtration.

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