

Ross on Wye Cider & Perry Co. Ltd. Present

## RAISON D'ÊTRE 2018

**NEW:** 2018 Raison d'Être – 8.4% – £27+VAT 6x75cl (£4.50+VAT per bottle)

*Raison d'Être is the quintessential expression of ourselves; the purest definition of what cidermaking means on our farm. This cider is bone dry, fermented in an oak cask and aged, patiently and quietly, before bottle conditioning. 2018 was an exceptional year for cidermaking. The hot summer meant that sugars, alcohol, and flavour intensity all skyrocketed. This is a special vintage.*

The story of this cider begins back in September 2018, in more ways than one. At that year's Cider Festival we launched the 'Raison d'Être 2016' vintage. It was our statement of intent for where Ross Cider was going. A 750ml bottle of bone dry, bottle conditioned, pure juice, barrel fermented cider. Raison is a blend of Dabinett & Michelin – two bittersweets and the varieties which we grow the most of on the farm. Out of our enormous range of bottled and draught ciders, Raison d'Être is the blend that we most adore and the one we feel best champions our philosophy as cidermakers.

It is an uncompromising cider. All about the tannins and all about the barrel – ex-Scottish whiskey barrel – but it is still all about the year, the season, the fruit, the variation.

Raison d'Être 2016 sold out by the end of May 2019, less than nine months on.

Raison d'Être 2017, released one year later, sold out by the end of March this year.

Raison d'Être 2018 we knew needed to be special.

Back in late October and November 2018, when Raison was beginning to get talked about in more and more circles we never imagined, and was receiving such strong reviews, we knew that we wanted to be able to make more of it. 2016 and 2017 vintages were only 1,000L.

But 2018 was an off year for our orchards. It meant that varieties like Yarlington Mill or Ashton Brown Jersey, which we only have one row of on the farm, did not have enough apples to make a single variety that year. Instead our crop was focused in just two orchards that produced the bulk of our apples. One of them is a monovariety orchard of Harry Masters Jersey, but you can see the other in the label at the bottom. It's an orchard we call 'Gameolands.' Say it aloud and you might get it – it's because it's just above from the marsh that separates it from the rest of the farm. This is an eight acre orchard planted in 1984 full of Dabinett & Michelin. It's primarily south facing and in 2018 it produced some incredible fruit.

2018 saw an incredible summer. The whole year was, according to the Met Office, the second sunniest year the UK saw since 1929 (the sunniest being 2003!), but Herefordshire still received about average rainfall. This combination of factors meant that we had fruit with much higher sugars than normal – giving us two things. First, obviously, a higher alcohol percentage once fully



fermented. But secondly, this also has the effect of imbuing the cider with far more flavour, particularly fruity flavours, than on an average year. All of the cider we have drunk and enjoyed from 2018 has reflected this to some extent, but few varieties have reflected it as well as Dabinett & Michelin.

Still, this vintage of Raison d'Être has followed the same pattern of production as the previous two: apples given time to ripen in the grassy floor of our orchard, harvested and then pressed into a combination of oak barrels and neutral (plastic) fermenters, and allowed to wild ferment with a minimal dose of so2. The oak barrels were racked into neutral after approximately six months to prevent further microoxygenation – a little bit softens the cider, too much ruins it. Then, in two batches in March 2020 and July 2020, we bottle conditioned 4,000L of Raison d'Être 2018. And from September 3<sup>rd</sup>, it will be released into the world. Our favourite cider from *the* best year cidermaking has seen in the last decade. We hope you'll enjoy it.

**BBC FOOD & FARMING AWARDS WINNER 2019**

Apples grow here

**RAISON D'ÊTRE 2018**  
WILD FERMENT OAK CASK

natural cider

**2018 R D'Ê**

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Ingredients: Fermented Dabinett & Michelin apple juice, trace sulphites

Whole juice • Naturally fermented • Gluten free  
Suitable for vegans • Unsprayed orchards

Broome Farm, Ross-on-Wye, Herefordshire HR9 6QG

6.3 UNITS

Ross on Wye Cider and Perry Co. Ltd  
ALC. 8.4% VOL. • 750ml e ENJOY RESPONSIBLY