



The International Wine Review

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Report # 21: The Chilean Wine Revolution

Introduction



Over the past 25 years Chile has experienced a wine revolution. After decades of successfully exporting good quality, entry-level wines, Chile has suddenly emerged as an important producer of premium wines.

Leading the revolution are Sauvignon Blanc, Carmenere, Pinot Noir, Syrah, and Bordeaux blends. Almost every varietal now has exciting success stories. But the revolution isn't just about varietals. It's also about terroir and the success Chile and its winemaking pioneers have had in exploring its territory to identify new terroir matched to particular varietals.

Elqui, Limarí, Leyda, Lo Abarca, Marchigüe, Apalta, Empedrado, Bío Bío. These are names of some of the newer growing areas where Chile's reputation for premium wines is being riveted in the volcanic and granite rocks that created the special soils that feed the self-rooted vines that are unique to Chile. And, of course, there's that special climate of morning coastal fog fed by the Humboldt Current, of cooling winds coming down the snow-capped Andes, of sparkling clear skies over the Atacama Desert, and of long days and cool nights in the heavily forested south.

In this report the *International Wine Review* explains Chile's quality revolution and reports on the most recent releases of wines from Chile's wineries, both the traditional ones created by Chile's 19th century wealthy families as well as the new ones being developed by a new generation of winemakers and investors. Chile's medium priced, premium wines merit much more serious attention than they have received from the wine press to date, and our goal is to bring them to the attention of the members of the wine trade and the wine cognoscenti who read the *International Wine Review*.

This report is organized somewhat differently than usual, partly because of the sheer size of the topic—hundreds of wines tasted made from numerous varietals grown in a wide variety of terroirs. Our focus is, first, the regions where new and exciting developments are taking place and, second, the

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varietals that are especially successful in Chile's vineyards. For each varietal we also showcase some of the top scoring Chilean wines from our extensive tastings.

The second part of the report is devoted to our tasting notes and ratings of Chilean mid-priced premium and ultra-premium wines priced at \$15 and above in retail markets in the United States.

After visiting a number of wineries and tasting hundreds of wines, we are unabashedly enthusiastic about the wines of Chile and the potential for Chile to enter the ranks of the truly great wine-producing nations. This enthusiasm is both fed by and reflected in our evaluations of the wines of Chile. From Sauvignon Blanc to Syrah to Chile's signature grape Carmenere, we find wines of exceptional quality and surprisingly good value.

Acknowledgements

The preparation of a report of this magnitude involves many people. We especially would like to thank Lori Tieszen, Executive Director of Wines of Chile USA, and her colleagues for their outstanding collaboration and support, without which we could not have written this report. In particular, our heartfelt thanks to Margaret Snook of Vinos de Chile for proofing this report; any remaining errors are, of course, our responsibility alone. We acknowledge the many growers, winemakers, and sommeliers we met in Chile prior to and during our visit in November 2009. They and their colleagues warmly received us at their wineries, organized extensive tastings of their wines, and patiently answered our many questions. Enologists Marcelo Papa, Pablo Morandé, Miguel Torres, María Luz Marín, Sebastián Labbé, Brett Jackson, Grant Phelps, Carlos Concha, Aurelio Montes del Campo, Alejandro Wedeles, Vicente Johnson, Marcelo Retamal, Patricio Celedón, Francisco Baettig, Santiago Margonzzini and master sommelier Héctor Vergara were generous in sharing their knowledge with us. We also wish to acknowledge with appreciation the encouragement of our work by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mariano Fernández, who is a friend of the IWR and an authority on wine, and René Merino, President, Vinos de Chile. We also thank the many importers and distributors throughout the United States for their help in obtaining samples of the wines reviewed in the report. Finally, we wish to acknowledge two publications which we found to be invaluable resources—Peter Richards' *The Wines of Chile* (Mitchell Beazley, 2006) and Patricio Tapia's *Descorchado 2010: Guía de Vinos Chilenos* (Planeta, 2010).

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A Brief History of Chile's Wine Revolution

While the principal focus of this report is on the wine revolution of the past 25 years, the story of this revolution actually begins almost 500 years ago. The beginnings of vine and wine in Chile and events over the centuries have influenced the revolution today.

When Spanish monks arrived with the vine in the 16th century, they brought with them a robust grape called País (Mission in California) to make sacramental wine. Although not a noble grape, today País is still a widely planted varietal in Chile. Centuries after the monks' arrival, with independence from Spain and European immigration, knowledge of winemaking improved, and cuttings of Bordeaux varietals were imported in the mid 19th century. The phylloxera epidemic in Europe in the mid-19th century stimulated the migration of French winemakers to Chile. This was the beginning of the French connection [see box]. Soon thereafter many of today's historic wineries—Santa Rita, Undurraga, Concha y Toro, Cousiño Macul, Carmen, and others—were established by the wealthy families of the era. By the turn of the century there were about 45 thousand hectares (ha) of vines (about 40 percent of today's plantings). But the good times didn't last. The resumption of wine production



The French Connection

The French influence on Chilean wine was early and pervasive and continues today. In the 19th century, it began with the introduction of European varietals to Chile by Claudio Gay, and the employment of French enologists by the wealthy Chilean families who established wineries around the middle of the century. One of those enologists was Louis-Joseph Bachelet, who emigrated to Chile in 1860, after his Côte d'Or vineyard fell to phylloxera, to work for Subercaseaux vineyards; his great-great-grand-daughter Michelle Bachelet was inaugurated President of Chile in 2006.

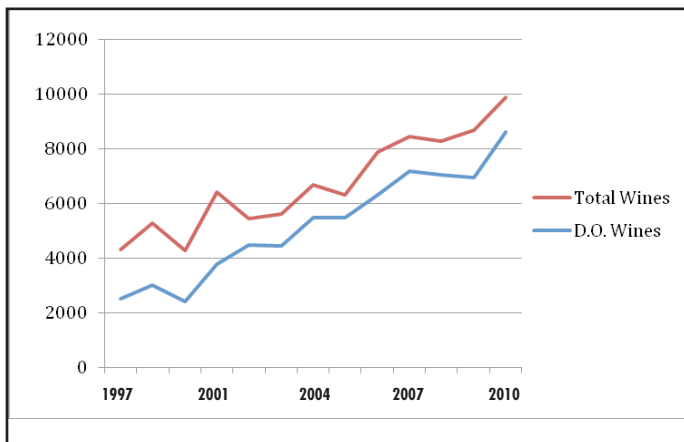
Today one finds a strong French influence throughout the industry. Several Chilean wineries were founded by the French, and several more are currently at least partly French owned, including Lapostolle, Los Vascos, Aquitania, and Altair. A number of other Frenchmen are employed as head winemakers, including Philippe Debrus (Botalcura), Jean Pascal Lacaze (Viña Quebrada de Macul), Michel Friou (Almaviva), Laurence Real (Viña las Niñas), Benoit Fitte (Viña Requingua), Patrick Valette (Neyen), and Arnaud Hereu (Odjfell). And several wineries have contracted well-known French wine consultants, including Michel Rolland, Pascal Marchand, Martin Prieur, and Benjamín Leroux.

in Europe and prohibition and agrarian reform in Chile all took their toll. By 1984 only 2 percent of wine production was exported, Chile's reputation for fine wine was nonexistent, and total plantings continued to decline.

Modern History. Today, Chile's wine industry looks far different than it did just 25 years ago. For one thing, production continues to grow rapidly, including higher quality wines designated by their denominación de origen (DO) (see graph). Vineyard plantings exceed 118 thousand hectares; 68 percent of total production is exported; Chile has a worldwide reputation for producing good wines of excellent value; and its fine wines earn growing fame. While some things have changed very little over the past 150 years—large, traditional wineries continue to dominate the industry, much has changed in viticulture and winemaking. And while the ten largest wineries account for 53 percent of all wine exports by value, the barriers to entry to the industry are more natural (water) than economic. Furthermore, by assuring a source of capital for new investment and the patience to accept long-term rewards, the old large traditional wineries have often played a positive role in the wine revolution.

As with all revolutions, this modern Chilean wine revolution is complex with many elements coming together to yield success. Some of these elements, discussed below, are terroir, plant material, technology, and winemaking talent.

Figure 1: Volume (Thousands of hectolitres) of Total Wine and DO Wine Production, 1997-2010



Pablo Morandé: Wine Revolutionary



Like many other of Chile's winemakers, Pablo Morandé got his start at Concha y Toro, where he worked for twenty years and, among his other achievements, created the iconic wine Don Melchor. In 1980 he traveled to Napa Valley in California and discovered the cool climate wines of Carneros. Upon returning to Chile, he found an area similar in climate

to Carneros in Casablanca, and by 1982 he had planted 20 ha. of grapes. In 1996 he and his partners were planning to build a new restaurant in eastern Casablanca when thoughts turned to creating a winery in addition. Today, as we can attest, the House of Morandé Restaurant on Route 68 is one of Chile's finest, while the Viña Morandé continues its experiments in its successful pursuit of excellence in wine.

The Search for Terroir

It's difficult to put a specific starting date on Chile's modern wine revolution, but 1982 is as good a choice as any. It could be said to begin in 1979 when Miguel Torres arrived in Curicó and introduced temperature-controlled stainless steel tanks and clonal selection to Chile. But in 1982 Pablo Morandé [see box], then with Concha y Toro, did something even more radical—he planted vines in a cool, wind-swept valley known for its quiet pastoral nature. This was the beginning of the great Chilean search for terroir, a pursuit so serious that it created a new profession—the terroir-hunter, as epitomized in Pedro Parra, who is as famous among Chilean growers as Michel Rolland is among enologists. The fact Undurraga has named its elite wines TH, for terroir hunter, illustrates the important role of terroir in the Chilean wine revolution.

Morandé's experimentation in Casablanca opened the floodgates, not only to Casablanca but, also, to the rest of coastal Chile and, eventually, to the cool, rainy south of the country. By the late 1990s vineyards had been planted in Limarí (1993), Elqui (1997), and San Antonio (1998) in the north and in Bío Bío (1993) and Malleco (1995) in the south. In addition to experimentation in regions north and south, growers are now seeking cool planting sites in coastal Maule (Empedrado), coastal Colchagua (Marchigüe), and coastal Aconcagua (Manzanar). A winemaker like Viña De Martino's Marcelo Retamal seeks unique terroir wherever he can find it, including at 2000 meters in eastern Elqui and in the Choapa Valley between Aconcagua and Limarí.

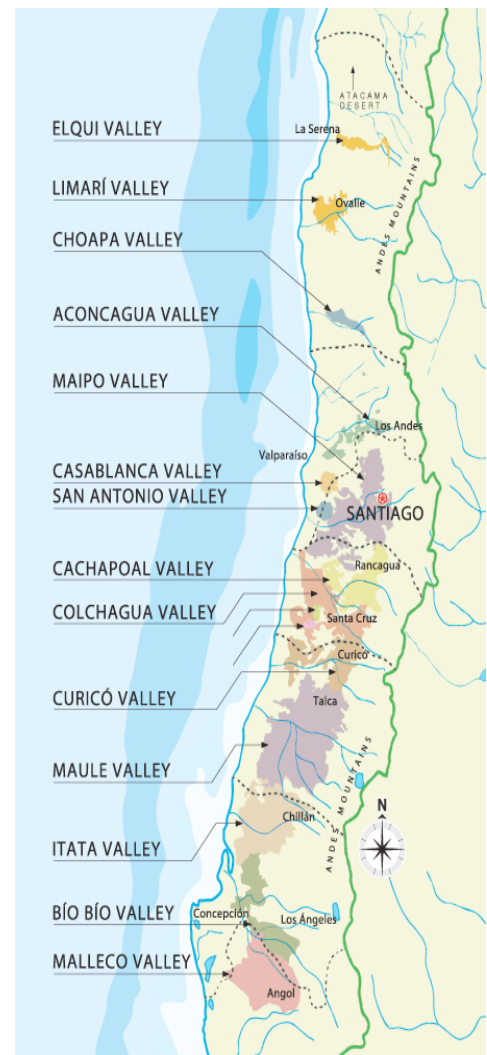
The Diverse Terroirs of Chile

To better understand the magnitude of this search for terroir, one needs to know something of the geography of Chile's winegrowing regions. With the Atacama Desert to the north, the Pacific to the west, the Andes to the east, and the rain and ice of Patagonia to the south, Chile is one of the world's most protected lands. The vineyards of Chile are located in the center of this narrow strip of land—from Elqui in the north to Malleco in the south—squeezed between the Pacific and the Andes. [see map] Somewhat surprising given the length of Chile's wine growing area, it that differences in longitude matter more than those of latitude when it comes to producing wine. Proximity to the sea or the Andes creates a cooler climate than that found in the central valley floor. There are substantial differences in annual rainfall—from 100 mm in Limarí to 1300 mm in Bío Bío—but the summers are mostly dry everywhere, and even vineyards in the far south need to be irrigated.

Weather.

Chile's winemaking region stretches from 29° latitude at Elqui Valley in the north to 38° latitude at the Malleco Valley in the south. For purposes of comparison, New Zealand's winemaking region runs from 36° at Auckland to 45° at Central Otago, and South Africa's Stellenbosch is 34° latitude.

Running north to south, weather patterns are not all that dissimilar—wet, cool winters and warm, dry summers. Summertime temperatures in Los Angeles in the south are in fact warmer than those of Santiago in the north. However, spring and autumn are cooler and with more rain in the south. In contrast, running the short distance east to west, weather patterns can be quite dissimilar. The foothills of the Andes (the precordillera) offer fresh winds and high day to night temperature differences even in the heat of summer, while the central valley can be consistently hot, and the coast is once again predominantly cool as a result of the Pacific's cold Humboldt current. The proximity to the Pacific also means the effects of El Niño and La Niña are strongly felt [see box].



El Niño and La Niña. El Niño and La Niña are temperature fluctuations in the Pacific Ocean that affect the climate. The fluctuations are cyclical and last between nine months and two years. El Niño received its name because its characteristic warming of the Pacific is usually noticed around Christmas time. It creates increased rainfall and snowfall in the west coast of the Americas. The La Niña, which often follows an El Niño condition, is associated with a cooling of the Pacific.

The El Niño can cause an unseasonably cool spring and more rainfall along the central coast of Chile. This produces problems with fruit set and humidity-related disease in the vineyard, and harvests may be smaller as a result. The La Niña on the other hand can cause warm, dry conditions and may produce somewhat larger harvests of ripe fruit. The effects of El Niño and La Niña on the wine are in general difficult to predict, depending in part on timing—when the phenomenon begins, how long it lasts, and how strong it is. Currently, Chile is experiencing a mild El Niño condition that is expected to continue through mid-2010.

Newly Discovered or Rediscovered Regions

[See also Annex 1]

The first new wine region to be discovered was **Casablanca** in 1982. Close to the sea, growers soon discovered that this cool climate region excels in growing varieties like Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, and Syrah. Numerous wineries now source fruit from Casablanca. Casas del Bosque, Kingston Family Estate, and Morandé's eponymous winery are three that focus on this region.



After the success of Casablanca, investors began searching for other coastal sites suitable for growing grapes, and they found three. **San Antonio** is just south of Casablanca and directly faces the sea. Once a water source for irrigation in the Leyda sub-region of San Antonio was identified, investors quickly followed in

1998. This region produces some of the most elegant and unique Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay, and Syrah in all of Chile. Look for wines from Viña Leyda, (pictured left) Casa Marín, Garcés Silva's Amayna, and Matetic. Wines may be labeled with the names of some of San Antonio's distinct communes—Leyda, Lo Albarca, and Rosario.

Elqui is a small northern appellation, also bordering on the sea with just two local wineries, Viña Falernia, which made a splash with its inaugural 2001 vintage Syrah, and Cavas del Valle, located further inland in much warmer conditions. However, several others have vineyards in the area. Further south from Elqui lies **Limarí** with its pioneering wineries Tamaya and Tabalí as well as the famed Quebrada Seca vineyard, which is the source of distinguished Chardonnays from both Maycas del Limarí and De Martino. Maycas del Limarí also makes a superb Syrah from this region.

To reach the other new wine-growing regions of Chile, one must leap far to the south where exciting things are happening in **Bio-Bio**. Here the VC Family Estates, of the large Corpora Group is taking the lead with world class Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay, and Pinot Noir. It is the developments in Pinot Noir that are most exciting with new Dijon clones matched to vineyard sites, guided by international Burgundy consultant Pascal Marchand. Still further south, one finds a small but very high quality project in **Malleco** managed by renowned winemaker Felipe de Salminihac under the auspices of his French-Chilean partnership Aquitania. The result is a Chardonnay that is more Burgundian than Chilean in style. Pinot Noir is in the works here, too.

New Developments in Established Regions

While the new regions are exciting and the source of many of Chile's top quality wines, they represent only a very tiny fraction of Chile's total vineyards and wine production. It is in the highly productive, established regions just north and south of Santiago that changes affect the low and middle-priced wine exported to the rest of the world.

Just north of Santiago one finds **Aconcagua**, a small valley where wine production is almost synonymous with the outstanding family-owned winery, Viña Errázuriz, which has been producing wines in Panquehue for over a century. This region is the site of Errázuriz's Señá winery, which produces an iconic red blend wine of the same name. Von Siebenthal has also made its mark with hand crafted red blends, Carmenere and Syrah, and Viña San Esteban has pioneered planting in the high altitude, steep-sloped precordillera.

Proceeding south, rapidly expanding Santiago has long been replacing old vineyards in the **Maipo** area with housing, and the wineries have been searching for special terroir to continue to make their wines. This is happening, sometimes in special places like Isla de Maipo, but in general the improvements in Maipo are being made in the already established, and famous, vineyards and wineries. This is, after all, the home of world famous wines like Almaviva, Don Melchor, Casa Real, and the wines of Haras de Pirque.

The Rapel Valley, south of Maipo, is divided into two appellations, **Cachapoal** in the north and **Colchagua** in the south. It is Colchagua where most the excitement is happening with new vineyards both near to the coast and on the hillsides further inland. The wineries in this area read like a who's who of Chilean wine—Casa Silva, Cono Sur, Viu Manent, Los Vascos, and the famous wineries of the Apalta region [see box]. Both Carmenere and Syrah do extremely well here.

Further south, one finds the old, established areas of Curicó and Maule. It is Maule, long the land of inexpensive and mediocre wines, where new things are happening, led by Calina, Gillmore, Reserva de Caliboro, and others. Its dry-farmed old vine Carignan, Malbec, and Cabernet Sauvignon have been rediscovered, and Miguel Torres' new slate-soiled, hillside Empedrado vineyard seems promising. Maule is the home of Talca University's CTVV (Centro Tecnológico de la Vid y el Vino), one of Chile's premier viticultural research centers and the home base of Yerko Moreno, viticultural advisor to many of Chile's prominent wineries.



Apalta: A Special Terroir.

Apalta is a special terroir—a semi-circle of hills bordered by the Tinguiririca River. It is an old wine growing region—Neyen's vineyards date back to the 19th century. Dry-farmed old vines

over an old riverbed were what first lured fabled winemaker Aurelio Montes to the area, but the hillsides of Apalta soon won him over. Poor soils, southern exposures, cool breezes, and drip irrigation convinced him in 1993 to begin planting high vigor Carmenere and Syrah on the hillsides, where yields are as low as 2.5 tons/ha, compared with 10 tons/ha lower down on the flats. Shortly thereafter, Casa Lapostolle invested in the region, planting vineyards near those of Montes. Ventisquero followed after, growing Syrah with the help of former Grange winemaker John Duval. The fruit from these investments is today found in some of Chile's very best wines—Lapostolle's Clos Apalta, Montes' Folly and Purple Angel, Ventisquero's Pangea, and Neyen.

VITICULTURE AND WINEMAKING

The Chilean Wine Revolution is not just about the discovery of new terroir. It is also about matching vines to terroir and introducing changes in plant material, technology, and winemaking. For example, over the past decade, growers have learned where and how to plant Carmenere to achieve a balance between plant vigor and crop load. And they are currently in the process of learning where and how to plant Pinot Noir.

Plant Material. Chile is a land blessed with few agricultural pests and diseases, and the Government aims to keep it that way. It takes an estimated seven years to import vine cuttings, quarantine and evaluate, and then reproduce them in sufficient quantity for commercial use. The high cost, time, and bureaucracy associated with importing plant material from abroad have meant that until recently almost all new vineyards were masal (field) selections of older vineyards. Thus, most Chardonnay in Chile continues to be the Mendoza clone, most Pinot Noir is the Valdivieso or Concha y Toro clone, etc., all derived from cuttings brought from France many decades ago. Winemakers seeking complexity or wishing to plant in extreme climates need access to the newer clones identified in France and UC, Davis. In addition to having limited access to clones, Chilean growers have often suffered from diseased plants provided by the country's nurseries¹.

Despite the difficulties of importing vine cuttings and rootstock, numerous new clones and rootstocks have made their appearance over the past decade. Sauvignon Blanc, Pinot Noir, and Chardonnay are all planted with French and UCD as well as traditional clones today. Syrah, which didn't exist in Chile two decades ago, is entirely planted to the same clones one finds in California and the Rhone Valley. Since phylloxera isn't present in Chile, most vines are self-rooted, but grafting to rootstock is becoming increasingly popular as growers seek out extreme growing sites. Rootstocks are popular in areas with sandy soil, where there is a high risk of nematodes, a significant problem in Chile. Drought resistant rootstocks are also used in areas with limited water supply and in risk of drought.

While the introduction of imported clones is already having an impact, their influence will be still greater in the future as vines age, as traditional clones are replaced, and as growers continue to learn how best to match clones to Chile's terroir. However, even more important to Chile than the introduction of new clones has been the discoveries that quite often Merlot wasn't really Merlot and Sauvignon Blanc wasn't really Sauvignon Blanc.

¹ Only two nurseries are currently ENTAV-INRA certified for rootstocks and varieties, meaning they are authorized to sell plants propagated from imported French vines. Other nurseries are applying for certification, so the shortage of virus-free plants should be resolved soon.



It was 1994 when the French ampelographer Jean Michel Boursiquot "discovered" that what passed for Chilean Merlot was often mixed with and confused with an old pre-phylloxera Bordeaux varietal called Carmenere. This discovery initiated a trial and error process to learn how to optimally grow

the vine to produce rich wines without the green, vegetal notes thought to be typical of the varietal. That growers and winemakers learned and learned well is apparent in the growing quality and popularity of Carmenere today.

Carmenere undoubtedly came to Chile along with other French varieties in the mid-19th century and was mislabeled. Another variety that was mislabeled was Sauvignonasse or Sauvignon Vert, which in Chile was given the name Sauvignon Blanc. Those of us who drank Sauvignon Blanc in Chile (it was rarely exported) remember wondering why it so poorly compared with that of the Loire. Beginning in the 1980s some growers started importing California (UCD 1) and French (242) clones and planting them in new growing zones with cooler climates. The result was indeed revolutionary, and today Chile produces some of the best Sauvignon Blanc in the world.

Technological Change. Changes in agricultural technology also played an important role in the Chilean wine revolution. These changes include the introduction of drip irrigation, hillside planting, canopy management, and, more recently, organic and Biodynamic practices.

Most (78%) of Chile's vineyards are irrigated. The traditional technology has been flood irrigation, which requires planting on flat land where canals can be easily constructed. Flood irrigation makes it difficult to control yields. The introduction of drip irrigation to Chile in the 1980s suddenly made it possible to both control yields and to plant on the less fertile, stony hillsides. Thus, Errázuriz planted on the steep hillsides of Aconcagua in 1992 at about the same time (1993) Aurelio Montes planted the hillsides of Apalta in Colchagua. Of course, drip irrigation also made possible the establishment of vineyards in places like Casablanca, San Antonio, Elqui, and Limarí where water is especially scarce.

Planting on the hillsides suddenly opened up yet another variable in the grape growing equation, that of orientation to the sun. On the flats, one can do little more than change the direction of the rows of vines, but on the hills one can plant on the north for maximum sun and heat or on the south to reduce exposure to the sun. Another way of controlling exposure to the sun is through canopy management. For example, on north-south planted rows, growers have learned to deleaf Carmenere after veraison on the morning side to promote ripeness and reduce the pyrazines that create green vegetal traits and to wait to deleaf the afternoon side until about 15 days before harvest to avoid overripe, jammy fruit. Improved canopy management to prevent burning and overripening has also been critical to the improvement of Chilean white wines.

Organic Agriculture. With its closed borders, favorable climate, and low incidence of pests and disease, Chile is an ideal place to practice organic and sustainable agriculture. Organic viticulture is a revolution still in progress. While the number of wines labeled organic is still small, many vineyards are practicing organic and sustainable viticulture. Several wineries, including Chile's second largest exporter Cono Sur, have made a strong commitment to going 100 percent organic and sustainable. The wineries facing the largest challenge are those located in coastal areas where high humidity and its related ailments are more likely to prevail. In addition, several wineries are taking the steps required to gain Biodynamic certification. Leading the Biodynamic wave are Emiliana, Matetic, Seña, Lapostolle and De Martino. Emiliana's "G" [Gê] was Latin America's first Biodynamically certified wine. One of Chile's preeminent winemakers, Alvaro Espinoza makes "G" for Emiliana and also makes wine with his wife Marina Ashton at their Biodynamic winery Antiyal.

Winemaking. Chile has adopted state of the art winemaking practices from around the world. The combination of young Chilean winemakers spending their off-season doing the harvest in northern hemisphere countries combined with the importation of winemakers and consultants from France, Australia, New Zealand, Spain, and the US has exposed the industry to the latest technology. Temperature controlled stainless steel tanks, gravity flow wineries, and French barriques were introduced to Chile over thirty years ago. Today, one finds a number of other winemaking practices quickly being adopted. These include the pre-fermentation cold soak, pneumatic presses, whole cluster fermentation, whole or partial destemming, and small, open top fermenters (for Pinot Noir). Extended time on the lees is used for many white wines, and malolactic fermentation is much less widely used for Chardonnay than just a few years ago. In addition, although one can still find over-oaked wines, enologists are making much more judicious use of oak and often using light or medium-toast to allow for better integration of oak with fruit.

Finally, while the industry remains dominated by large, commercial wineries, Chile is developing its own garagistes, who have advanced to the stage of forming their own association, MOVI (Movimiento de Vinñateros Independientes). In other countries, the garagiste has often played the role of innovator and played an important role in moving the industry forward. This may well happen in Chile, too.



Organic, Sustainable and Biodynamic Viticulture.

Chile is a natural place to follow organic practices, and a large number of vineyards and wineries are doing just that. Common pests like the vine weevil (burrito), the red spider mite, and even nematodes can be controlled through natural means. Although many vineyards could with little extra effort be certified 100 percent organic, not many have done so to date. Instead they certify selected vineyards and market a separate line of wines labeled "organic".

There is a large overlap between organic, sustainable, and Biodynamic viticultural practices. Organic generally means the use of natural as opposed to chemical fertilizers, insecticides and pesticides. Biodynamic is organic-plus in the sense that it follows organic agriculture but with much more specific and stricter practices. Both organic and Biodynamic practices are consistent with sustainable agriculture, but sustainable adds the element of minimizing the carbon footprint of the vineyard and winery in addition to using other resources, especially water, in a sustainable manner and ensuring the vineyard is in harmony with the larger environment.

Organic and sustainable certification practices can be confusing to the consumer, as there are a large number of certifying agencies in a number of countries. Biodynamic certification is unambiguous as there is only one certifying agency—Demeter International. The fact everyone (at least in the trade) knows what a Biodynamic certificate means is one of its attractions. A number of wineries—De Martino, Emiliana, Cono Sur, Chocólan—have ISO 14001 (environmental policies) and/or ISO 9001 (quality processes) certificates from the International Organization for Standardization in Geneva, but these are distinct from organic or sustainable certificates. Chilean wineries have been certified organic by several organizations including the German BCS Oko-Garantie GmbH, and they have received an environmentally sustainable certification from the UK-based Climate Care and Australia's Carbon Reduction Institute, among others.

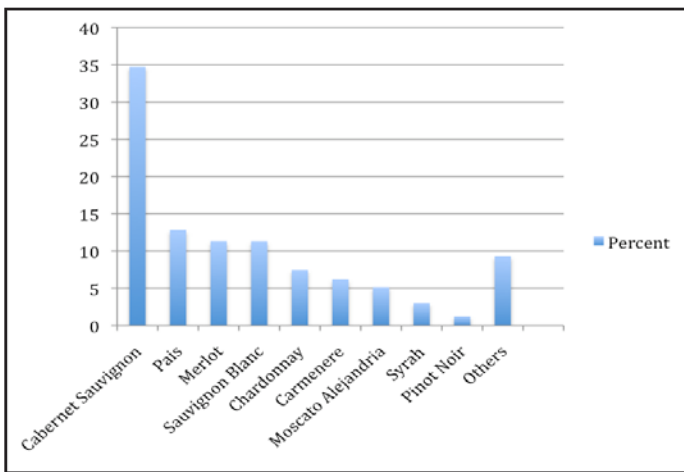
Chile's Wine Appellations

Chile's wine appellations, or Denominaciones de Origen (DO), were defined by the Government in 1994 to be coterminous with political jurisdictions. Thus, the Aconcagua Valley is coterminous with the province of that name, and Casablanca Valley is coterminous with the municipality of that name. These definitions may make political sense, but they make little wine sense as a single appellation often contains within it numerous, distinct growing areas. An ongoing effort managed by the Servicio Agrícola y Ganadero (SAG) in collaboration with the Asociación de Enólogos and Vinos de Chile aims to modify the appellation system so that it provides greater information to the consumer and, also, facilitates marketing. The best guess is that the system will be modified to identify not only the geopolitical region of origin but, also, whether or not the wine comes from either the coast or near the Andes.

Chile's Grapes

As noted earlier, grapes are an important part of the story of the Chilean wine revolution. The rediscovery of Carmenere, the planting of real Sauvignon Blanc in cooler climates, the introduction of new, virus-free clones, and changes in the vinification of grapes are all contributing to a much higher quality product that is still reasonably priced. In this section, we focus on Chile's most important varietals and their blends. Although it is the third most widely planted varietal (see graph), time and space do not allow us to go into detail about Merlot and other interesting grapes, including Viognier, Sauvignon Gris, Carignan, etc., but wines containing these varietals are included in the tasting notes.

Figure 2. Percent of Total Plantings in Chile by Varietal



Sauvignon Blanc

No varietals have benefited more from Chile's wine revolution than Sauvignon Blanc and Carmenere. Not long ago Chile was mistakenly making "sauvignon blanc" from a field blend of Sauvignon Blanc and an inferior varietal called Sauvignon Vert (also called Sauvignonasse), which was grown (and still is) in vineyards of the warm central valley. The result was a light, somewhat vegetal wine that developed oxidized flavors in the bottle.



Today's best Sauvignon Blanc comes from much better plant material, especially Clone 1 from UC, Davis [UCD 1] and Clone 242 from France, and is grown in cool climates, often close to the sea. These two changes—new clones and new vineyards—combined with improved viticulture and winemaking have revolutionized Chilean Sauvignon Blanc. The result is clean, crisp wines of considerable finesse and minerality, and sometimes salinity, with an understated varietal character more reminiscent of the Loire than of New Zealand.

Viticulture and Winemaking. Numerous growers have planted Sauvignon Blanc in cool, coastal areas in recent years. The low temperatures and small diurnal variations in temperature permit the kind of slow maturation of fruit that the grape requires to reach its full potential. The most famous, of course, are Casablanca and San Antonio. But growers continue to push the envelope with plantings far south in Bío Bío and far north in Elqui as well as in the coastal areas of Aconcagua and Colchagua. A majority of the most distinctive wines receiving our highest evaluations originate in San Antonio and its subdistrict Leyda.

Grown in cool climates, Sauvignon Blanc can take on more of a pungent asparagus and bell pepper aroma and flavor compared to the tropical fruit of warmer climates². Even within a relatively small geographic area, like Casablanca or San Antonio, one finds significant differences in wines depending on vineyard location (and clone). The Sauvignon Blanc of Morandé grown in the warmer eastern side of Casablanca has more tropical nuances than the Sauvignon Blanc of Casas del Bosque located on the cooler western side of the valley. Likewise, the Amayna Sauvignon Blanc is more tropical than the mineral-like, citrus fruit of Casa Marin's wines grown closer to the sea.

The Wine. Terroir, vineyard management, and winemaking combine to produce three main styles of Chilean Sauvignon Blanc. The first of these is terroir-driven, refined, and laden with minerals. Casa Marin's Ciprese Vineyard from San Antonio, Casa Silva's Cool Coast from Colchagua, and the Agustinos Bío Bío Sauvignon Blanc Reserva fit this style. The second is the more blowsy, tropical and lush style characteristic of somewhat warmer climates. The Undurraga from the Casablanca Valley fits this mold. The third style receives at least some oak aging. The Morandé Edición Limitada from Casablanca is fermented in large oak cveves and shows substantial tropical fruit with integrated oak. A more assertive wooded style is presented by the Amayna Barrel Fermented from Leyda which is aged in 100 percent new French oak. The result is Bordeaux-like, both refined and rich. Some of our top rated Sauvignon Blancs are listed below:

² See the *International Wine Review* Report # 17 on "The Sauvignon of the Loire" for more on the characteristics of the Sauvignon Blanc grape.

Top Rated Sauvignon Blanc	Price	Score
Casa Marin 2009 Sauvignon Blanc Cipreses San Antonio	\$25	92
Casa Silva 2009 Cool Coast Sauvignon Blanc Colchagua	\$25	92
Agustinos 2009 Sauvignon Blanc Reserva Privada Bio Bio	\$20	91
Garces Silva 2008 Amayna Sauvignon Blanc Leyda	\$20	91
Maycas del Limarí 2009 Sauvignon Blanc Reserva Especial	\$23	91
Morandé 2008 Sauvignon Blanc Edición Limitada Casablanca	\$21	91
Santa Rita 2008 Sauvignon Blanc Floresta Leyda	\$26	91
Concha y Toro Sauvignon Blanc Terrunyo Casablanca	\$25	90+
Aylin 2009 Sauvignon Blanc San Antonio	–	90
Casa Marin 2009 Sauvignon Blanc Laurel Vineyard San Antonio	\$25	90
Casas del Bosque Sauvignon Blanc Pequeñas Producciones Casablanca	\$25	90
Viña Chocalán 2009 Sauvignon Blanc Malvilla San Antonio	\$20	90
Cono Sur 2009 Visión Sauvignon Blanc Casablanca	\$15	90
Viña Falernia 2008 Sauvignon Blanc Elqui	\$15	90
Quintay 2009 Sauvignon Blanc Leyda	\$15	90
San Pedro 2009 Castillo de Molina Sauvignon Blanc Fumé Elqui	–	90
Undurraga 2008 Sauvignon Blanc Casablanca	\$20	90

Chardonnay



Chile has mastered the art of making consumer-friendly, inexpensive Chardonnay for the mass market. These wines come from relatively high-yielding vineyards in the central valley, are lightly oaked and, while drinkable, are of little interest to the connoisseur. At the medium price level and above, Chile has

had less success, often producing heavily oaked wines from over-ripe fruit, also sourced from the relatively warm interior valleys. However, as our winery visits and tastings show, the quality of Chilean Chardonnay has improved radically, and it is destined to improve still more in the coming years.

Improvements in Viticulture and Winemaking.

Changes in both viticulture and winemaking contribute to the well-balanced, much fresher tasting Chardonnays one often finds in Chile today. The new plantings in cooler climates along the coast and in the south of the country are especially exciting, resulting in different wine styles that reflect the different terroirs from coastal Limarí in the north to Malleco in the south. As is often true, it is the grapes grown in marginal climates that produce exceptional



wines. The Concha y Toro Maycas del Limarí project in far north Limarí, which like De Martino uses fruit from the special Quebrada Seca vineyard, and the Aquitania SoldeSol project in far south Malleco are both producing

superior Chardonnay wines that reflect where they are grown.

Chardonnay fruit is only likely to improve still further as new vineyards mature and growers continue to experiment with new vineyard sites. At present most vineyards, even new ones, are planted to Chile's traditional Mendoza clone, which often yields effusive tropical aromas and flavors. Changes in plant material will also make its contribution to quality. At Maycas del Limarí, for example, Concha y Toro is experimenting with UCD 4 and Dijon 85 and 86 clones.

The making of Chardonnay has also changed with more judicious use of new oak, reduced use of malolactic fermentation, considerable lees stirring to provide the creaminess usually obtained from malo, increased use of whole bunch pressing and barrel fermentation. The combination of new vineyards and refined winemaking has resulted in a new and higher quality Chilean Chardonnay. As shown in the table below, the very best ones come from new grape-producing regions, especially Limarí and Casablanca. Those from Limarí offer more orchard fruit and minerals with a firm acid backbone, compared to the more tropical nature of the fruit from warmer, eastern Casablanca.

Top Rated Chardonnays	Price	Score
Aquitania "SoldeSol" 2007 Chardonnay Malleco	\$28	92
Maycas del Limarí 2007 Chardonnay Quebrada Seca Limarí	\$40	92
Amayna 2007 Chardonnay Leyda	\$25	91
Chocalán 2009 Chardonnay Malvilla San Antonio	\$28	91
Maycas del Limarí 2008 Chardonnay Reserva Especial Limarí	\$23	91
Casa Lapostolle 2008 Chardonnay Cuvée Alexandre Casablanca	\$20	90
Casa Silva 2008 Chardonnay Angostura Gran Reserva Colchagua	\$19	90
Concha y Toro 2007 Chardonnay Marqués de Casa Concha Pirque	\$19	90
De Martino 2008 Chardonnay Single Vineyard Quebrada Seca, Limarí	\$30	90
Valdivieso 2008 Chardonnay Single Vineyard Wild Fermented Leyda	–	90

Carmenere



Carmenere is on a roll. At 7284 ha it is now the fourth most widely planted red varietal in Chile. In just the short period 2000-2006, plantings increased by 54 percent. Amazingly, the volume of Carmenere exports to the US increased by 91 percent just from 2008 to 2009. In terms of its rapid growth, Carmenere

is beginning to resemble another Bordeaux varietal that does much better in the New World than in France—Argentina’s spectacularly successful Malbec.

Carmenere did not do well in the cold, sometimes humid climate of Bordeaux. It requires both more heat and a longer growing season than Bordeaux offers. Not allowed to ripen fully, its high pyrazine content results in a green, vegetative note that can be off-putting. It is in many ways a sensitive grape that likes deep, well-drained (but not rich) soils; enough sun to fully ripen but not so much as to bake the fruit; and harvesting early enough to avoid an over-ripe jam character but late enough to avoid assertive green vegetal notes. It is a vigorous vine subject to coulure—poor fruit set after flowering—and low acidity, which can impart a flabby character on the palate. Fortunately, in a short period of time, Chile’s growers have managed to conquer most of these challenges through appropriate site selection and canopy management and are now producing the quality fruit that is expressed in the very high ranking wines listed in the accompanying table. Casa Silva’s Los Lingues vineyard illustrates the kind of terroir ideal for Carmenere: deep, alluvial and light red clay soils with excellent drainage and a low water table and daytime temperatures as high as 33° C falling to 12° C after the cool Andean breezes descend in the afternoon.

The first Chilean single varietal Carmenere was produced in 1996 by De Martino in Isla de Maipo. Today, in addition to Maipo, one finds superb wines being produced in Aconcagua, Colchagua, and Cachapoal.

The Wine. The rapid growth in the volume of Carmenere produced and exported reflects the rapid improvements in the quality of the wine. Winemakers now work with much higher quality fruit and largely let it speak for itself, but they also blend in other varietals, especially Cabernet Sauvignon, to provide added structure and acidity. [Tartaric acid is also frequently added to boost acidity.] But other blending varietals are used as well: Montes Purple Angel includes 8 percent Petit Verdot, and the Morandé Edición Limitada includes 15 percent Merlot. A 100 percent Carmenere, like the Arboleda and the Viña La Rosa La Capitana Barrel Reserve are not common. French oak is widely used, especially in top of the line wines. The Concha y Toro Terrunyo Block 27 spends 17 months in oak, and the Morandé Edición Limitada and Errázuriz Kai

see 18 months in oak. The high pH and low acidity of Carmenere means this is a wine best consumed relatively young.

Carmenere comes in several styles, but the best ones show ripe, spicy dark red fruit on a soft, velvet-like palate with notes of black pepper and possibly smoke, tar, herbs, or green pepper. The wines are medium weight and pair beautifully with a variety of foods. Tannins are usually soft with varying degrees of oak spice, depending on the barrel regime of the winemaker. The care required to produce good quality Carmenere, including keeping yields low, keeps its price in the middle range. Listed below are our top rated premium and super premium Carmeneres.

Top Rated Carmenere	Price	Score
Errazuriz 2007 Kai Aconcagua	\$120	95
Casa Silva 2006 Microterroir de Los Lingues Colchagua	\$55	94
Montes 2006 Purple Angel Colchagua	\$55	94
Santa Rita 2005 Carmenere Pehuén Apalta Colchagua	\$60	92
Concha y Toro 2006 Carmenere Terrunyo Block 27 Peumo Cachapoal	\$28	92
Casa Silva 2007 Carmenere Los Lingues Gran Reserva Colchagua	\$19	91
Montes 2007 Carmenere Alpha Colchagua	\$24	91
Ventesquero 2006 Grey Carmenere Maipo	\$28	91
Errazuriz Carmenere Single Vineyard Aconcagua	\$21	90
Arboleda 2007 Carmenere Colchagua	\$18	90
Concha y Toro 2007 Carmenere Marqués Casa Concha Peumo Cachapoal	\$21	90
De Martino 2006 Carmenere Alto de Piedras Single Vineyard Maipo	\$30	90
Viña La Rosa 2008 Carmenere La Capitana Barrel Reserve Cachapoal	\$18	90
Morandé 2007 Carmenere Edición Limitada Maipo	\$21	90
Santa Carolina 2007 Carmenere Reserva de Familia Rapel	\$20	90
Santa Rita 2008 Carmenere Medalla Real Colchagua	\$20	90
Veranda 2007 Carmenere Oda Apalta Colchagua	\$27	90

Cabernet Sauvignon



Chile produces more Cabernet Sauvignon than any other varietal. It is extensively planted in Maipo (6418 ha), Cachapoal (4833 ha), Colchagua (11,258 ha), Curicó (6753 ha), and Maule (9551 ha), and it is the principal varietal in each of these large regions. With such extensive plantings, Cabernet can be found in a variety of sites and terroirs from the

foothills of the Andes through the central valley and further west. Some of the wine made from these vineyards is of world class quality, while a large amount also makes its way into inexpensive bulk wine and entry level bottled wine.

Some of the best Cabernet Sauvignon vineyards are found in the foothills of the Andes, beginning in the north with Pirque and Puente Alto in the Alto Maipo. Concha y Toros's Don Melchor, the icon wine Almaviva, Cousiño Macul's Antiguas Reservas, and Santa Carolina's Reserva de Familia, for example, are produced in the Alto Maipo. But Colchagua also produces excellent Cabernet, especially from the Apalta vineyard (Montes Alpha, Lurton Gran Araucano, and Veranda). And Miguel Torres has demonstrated that Curicó, too, can produce first class Cabernet, at its Manso de Velasco vineyard.

Despite the varied provenance, the top rated Cabernet Sauvignons (see table) are somewhat similar in that the fruit often comes from single vineyards, is carefully selected at the sorting table, and sees extensive (often 12+ months) aging in French oak. For example, the Los Vascos Le Dix is sourced from a special parcel of 70 year old vines called El Fraile, and the wine is aged 18 months in new French oak barrels. Careful vineyard management combined with excellent winemaking produces Cabernets that compete well with those of Napa and Sonoma, and often at a fraction of the price.

The Wine Chilean Cabernet Sauvignon exhibits the characteristics of the varietal—violet and lead pencil aromas and a firmly structured palate of cassis fruit with hints of black tea. In addition, it's not unusual to find touches of mint or sage on the nose of a Chilean Cabernet, and earth and tobacco notes on the palate. Since most Cabernets have up to 15 percent of other varietals, the aromas and flavors of the wine can also take on some of the characteristics of the blending grapes—mainly, Carmenere, Syrah, and Merlot, but, also, Petit Verdot and Malbec. For wines seeing extended time in oak, one also finds elements of spicy, toasted oak and sometimes dark cocoa.

As noted above, Cabernet Sauvignon is grown across a large expanse of Chile's wine country with the characteristics of the wine varying with terroir, vineyard management, and winemaking. Entry level wines produced from fruit grown on higher-yielding vineyards in the warm central valley are often quite good and excellent values, but they offer a simpler and more accessible palate.

Grapes grown closer to the coast often produce wines with fresher tasting fruit. Cabernet from the Apalta region of Colchagua is often said to show more power, while that of the Alto Maipo shows more elegance. We encourage our readers to consult the tasting notes at the end of this report and experiment with Cabernets from diverse parts of Chile; many of them are less costly than the top-rated wines shown in the table, and they can be delicious.

Top Rated Cabernet Sauvignon	Price	Score
Cousiño-Macul 2006 Lota Red Wine Maipo	\$80	95
Concha y Toro 2001 Don Melchor Maipo	\$80	92
Domus Aurea 2005 Cabernet Sauvignon Maipo	\$55	92
Los Vascos Le Dix de Los Vascos Colchagua	\$48	91
Miguel Torres 2006 Cabernet Sauvignon Manso de Velasco Viejas Viñas Curicó	\$30	91
Montes 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon Alpha Colchagua	\$24	91
Carmen 2005 Cabernet Sauvignon Gold Reserve Maipo	\$72	90
Cousiño Macul 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon Antiguas Reservas Alto Maipo	\$15	90
J & F Lurton Chile 2005 Gran Araucano Cabernet Sauvignon Colchagua	\$30	90
Santa Carolina 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon Reserva de Familia Rapel	\$20	90
Santa Rita 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon Medalla Real Maipo	\$20	90
Veranda 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon/Carmenere Apalta Colchagua	\$20	90

Red Blends and Icon Wines



One of Chile's most successful wines in recent years is the red blend. Traditionally, the red blend was a Bordeaux blend mainly based on Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot. Today Cabernet Sauvignon is still almost always an important element in the blend; with its firm tannins, Cabernet provides the backbone of many blends. Top quality wines with at least 50 percent Cabernet Sauvignon include Casa Silva Altura, Caliterra Cenit, Montes "Alpha M", Neyen Espiritu de Apalta, Von Siebenthal Parcela #7, and Errázuriz's famous Seña.

One of the varietals that has benefited most from the Chilean wine revolution is Carmenere. And, fortunately, Cabernet blends especially nicely with Carmenere, which has abundant fresh fruit but often lacks the structure provided by Cabernet. Some of Chile's leading Carmenere-Cabernet Sauvignon blends include Antiyal Anityal, Lapostolle Clos Apalta, Emiliana "Gê", Viña La Rosa Ossa, and MontGras' Ninquén Cabernet Sauvignon Carmenere.

A wide range of other varietals are also found in Red Blends—Syrah, Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Malbec, Mourvedre, Carignan, and even Tempranillo. Carignan is especially popular with significant weight in Miguel Torres Cariñena Cordillera, O. Fournier Centauri, and Valdivieso Eclat. Miguel Torres Superunda is one of the few blends with a heavy concentration of Tempranillo, and the Valdivieso Caballo Loco has a significant percentage of Malbec.

Icon Wines. While there is no clear definition as to what constitutes an icon wine, in almost all cases it is the winery's most expensive [at least \$50], and presumably highest quality, offering. Icon wines receive special handling from the vineyard to the bottle. Grapes usually come from especially selected parcels where yields are kept low. Harvesting and sorting are done by hand; the winery is gravity flow; and the wines see extended aging in expensive, new French oak.

Also, an icon wine is almost always a Red Blend, an indication of how successful such blends are in Chile. A very few icon wines are predominantly Cabernet Sauvignon—Cousiño Macul's Lota, Montes "Alpha M", Los Vascos Le Dix, and Domus Aurea. But most are red blends as can be seen by looking at the number of wines above \$50 in the accompanying table.

Top Scoring Red Blends	Price	Score
Viña Seña 2006 Seña Aconcagua	\$65	95
Viña La Rosa 2004 Ossa Cachapoal	\$100	94
Casa Silva 2004 Altura Colchagua	\$NA	93
Emiliana 2005 "Gê" Colchagua	\$80	93
Casa Lapostolle 2007 Clos Apalta Colchagua	\$80	92
Montes 2006 "Alpha M" Colchagua	\$100	92
Neyen 2005 Espiritu de Apalta Colchagua	\$65	92
Cousiño Macul 2007 Finis Terrae Alto Maipo	\$38	92
Caliterra 2006 Cenit Colchagua	\$45	91+
Agustinos 2006 Escorial Red Wine Aconcagua	\$35	91
De Martino 2006 Las Cruces Old Bush Vines Cachapoal	\$30	91
Miguel Torres 2002 Conde de Superunda Curicó	\$55	91
O. Fournier 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon Merlot Carignan Centauri Maule	\$20	91
Viña Von Siebenthal 2006 Parcel #7 Reserva Aconcagua	\$25	91
Antiyal 2006 Antiyal Maipo Valley	\$55	90
Antiyal 2006 Kuyen Maipo Valley	\$30	90
Caliterra 2006 Carmenere/Malbec Tributo Edición Limitada Colchagua	\$25	90
Casa Silva 2007 Quinta Generación Red Colchagua	\$26	90
Emiliana 2007 Coyam Colchagua	\$29	90
Errazuriz 2007 The Blend Aconcagua	\$21	90
Viña Maquis 2006 Maquis Lien Colchagua	\$18	90
Miguel Torres 2006 Carinena Cordillera Valle Central	\$27	90
MontGras Ninquén 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon Carmenere Antu Ninquén Colchagua	\$20	90
Valdivieso 2006 Eclat Maule	\$27	90

Syrah



It's difficult to believe, but fifteen years ago there were no commercial plantings of Syrah in Chile. The first bottling was produced in 1996 in Aconcagua by Errázuriz. Today there are over 3,500 ha. planted, and one of Chile's most famous (and most expensive) iconic wines—Aurelio Montes' Folly—is 100 percent Syrah and produced in Apalta. Another indicator of Syrah's coming of age is the winner of the 2010 prestigious annual Wines of Chile award for Best of Show: San Pedro's 1865 Single Vineyard Syrah Cachapoal from the 2007 vintage.

As emphatically demonstrated in our tastings, the growth in the quality of Chilean Syrah is even more emphatic than its growth in the vineyard. Representing less than four percent of total red wine grape plantings, it is very much present in any listing of the country's best red wines. And this is despite the young age of the Syrah vineyards. The enigma then is why it isn't more popular. While the sales of many varietals have decreased in 2009, Syrah has suffered more than any other varietal with a 41 percent decrease in the dollar value of exports. This is attributable in part to the fact that from the start Syrah has been produced and marketed as a premium wine in Chile, so it carries a relatively high price, which has harmed sales as consumers move down market in recessionary times. However, for the consumer willing to pay a bit more for quality, Chilean Syrah is a steal. As shown in the list of top quality wines, for \$25 or less one can obtain a first-class Syrah of real character.

Viticulture Syrah is a highly adaptable grape that grows well in diverse terroirs and is strongly influenced by those terroirs. Chilean winemakers are exploiting this characteristic of Syrah by planting it in varied locations. From the first small plantings by Errázuriz in Aconcagua, it has spread up and down the country from Elqui south. Numerous winemakers are leading the march. Marcelo Retamal (De Martino) has planted at high altitudes (2000 m) in the eastern Elqui Valley. Casa Silva has planted at its Lolol vineyard in coastal Colchagua, just 15 km from the sea. The Garcés Silva (Amayna) family has planted Syrah in Leyda. And, of course, Aurelio Montes was the first to plant Syrah in Apalta.

The Wine. A full spectrum of styles of Syrah are produced in Chile. One end of the spectrum is ripe, rich and sweetly accessible, not unlike some Australian Shiraz. Indeed, some lower-priced wines are intentionally labeled Shiraz to convey to the consumer that this wine is similarly styled. These wines come from the warmer inland vineyard sites. At the other end of the spectrum one finds the Northern Rhone style of dark fruit and black pepper, often with distinct herbal and roasted meat notes. This is the style that has the Syrah cognoscenti excited. These wines are produced from fruit

grown in cooler vineyard sites, either along the coast (e.g., Maycas del Limarí in Elqui, Kingston Family in Casablanca, and Matetic in San Antonio) or at cooler hillside sites inland (e.g., Aurelio Montes in the upper slopes of Apalta in the Santa Cruz DO of Colchagua or San Pedro at its single vineyard on the piedmont of the Andes in Cachapoal).

In addition to being made and sold as a single varietal, Syrah has also proved itself to be an excellent blending grape. It is a minor grape in several outstanding blends and, also, a major grape in others (e.g., Antiyal Antiyal (50%), Antiyal Kuyen (55%), and Errázuriz The Blend (45%).

Some of the top rated single varietal Syrahs from our tastings are listed below:

Top Rated Syrah	Price	Score
Montes 2006 Folly Santa Cruz Colchagua	\$100	94
Maycas del Limarí 2007 Syrah Reserva Especial Limarí	\$25	93
Concha y Toro 2006 Syrah Terrunyo Rapel	\$28	92
MontGras Antu Ninquén 2007 Syrah Colchagua	\$20	92
Casa Marin 2008 Syrah Miramar Vineyard San Antonio	\$68	91
Kingston Family 2006 Syrah Bayo Oscuro Casablanca	\$28	91
Montes 2007 Syrah Alpha Colchagua	\$25	91
San Pedro 2007 1865 Limited Edition Syrah Elqui	\$40	91
Amayna 2008 Syrah Leyda	\$25	90
Viña Falernia SA 2006 Syrah Elqui	\$15	90
Kingston Family 2007 Syrah Lucero Casablanca	\$18	90
Matetic 2007 Syrah EQ San Antonio	\$36	90
San Pedro 2007 1865 Syrah Cachapoal	\$16	90

Pinot Noir



With only 1413 ha of vines Pinot Noir is currently a small player in Chile's wine revolution. However, it is one of the varietals benefiting most from the discovery of new, cool climate grape-growing regions. Beginning in the late 1990s, Pablo Morandé in Casablanca, Adolfo Hurtado of Cono Sur in Colchagua, and

Corpora in Bío Bío pioneered projects to produce world class Pinot Noir in Chile. These pioneers have now been joined by winemakers María Luz Marín in San Antonio, Byron Kosuge at Kingston Family Vineyards in Casablanca, Rafael Urrejola at Undurraga in Leyda and Casablanca, and Vicente Johnson at Quintay in Casablanca and many others in the quest for the holy grail of Pinot Noir.

Pinot Noir is not difficult to grow when planted on the right site, but finding it has been a challenge. The production of Pinot Noir in Chile has mainly focused on three wine-growing regions—Casablanca, San Antonio/Leyda, and Bío Bío. Using a mix of Chilean masal selection (the so-called Valdivieso and Concha y Toro clones) and French Burgundy (Dijon) clones (115, 667, 715, 777) and planting in some of Chile's coolest wine-growing sites, the pioneers have sought to produce a Chilean Pinot Noir that, while different, offers the elegance and purity of Burgundy.

Pinot Noir production in Chile has not involved any revolutionary winemaking techniques. All the best practices found to work in Burgundy and other parts of the New World are employed here. Young winemakers from the top wineries have worked vintages abroad in regions like Burgundy, California and Oregon. Likewise, consultants and winemakers from Burgundy have played a key role in the development of Pinot Noir projects in Chile. Martin Prieur worked with Hurtado in launching Cono Sur's Pinot Noir Project, and Pascal Marchand of the Boisset group worked with Corpora/Veranda in the start of Pinot Noir production in Bío Bío.

The Wine. The production of Burgundian style Pinot Noir remains elusive in Chile as it is in most countries. Most Chilean Pinot Noir shows medium to dark ruby hues from the intense sun of the Southern Hemisphere and ripe aromas of black cherry, black raspberry and plum. Most are fruit forward, but barrel aging at times robs the wines of natural freshness and delicacy. Still, as the accompanying table shows, many wonderful wines are being produced now, and with continued improvements in plant material and winemaking Pinot Noir would appear to have a bright future in Chile. Of special interest is Corpora's investment in Bío Bío where it is planting new vineyards and carrying out clonal research with the Universidad de Concepción. Its Agustinos Gran Reserva and other Pinot Noirs from Bío Bío suggests a newer, more elegant red-fruited style.

Top Rated Pinot Noir	Price	Score
Cono Sur 2007 Ocio Casablanca	\$50	91+
Undurraga 2008 TH Pinot Noir Leyda	\$20	91+
Casa Marin 2006 Pinot Noir Lo Abarca Hills Vineyard San Antonio	\$68	91
Montes 2007 Pinot Noir Alpha Leyda	\$25	91
Undurraga 2008 TH Pinot Noir Casablanca	\$17	91
Errazuriz 2008 Pinot Noir Wild Ferment Casablanca	\$21	91
Agustinos 2008 Pinot Noir Gran Reserva Bío Bío	\$20	90
Kingston Family Vineyards 2007 Pinot Noir Alzán Casablanca	\$30	90
Amayna 2007 Pinot Noir Leyda	\$35	90
Casa Marin 2006 Pinot Noir Litoral Vineyard San Antonio	\$68	90
Casas del Bosque 2007 Pinot Noir Pequeñas Producciones Casablanca	\$25	90
Matetic 2007 Pinot Noir EQ San Antonio	\$35	90
Morande 2007 Pinot Noir Edición Limitada Casablanca	\$21	90
Quintay 2008 Pinot Noir Casablanca	\$20	90
Veranda 2007 Pinot Noir Oda Miraflores Vineyard Bío Bío	\$27	90

Pinot Noir is a work in progress in Chile. But, there is little doubt that in the years ahead, with more research and experimentation, Chile's producers will discover the best sites for growing Pinot Noir and will turn out wines that are equal to the world's top producers. Indeed, this is already happening.

Pairing Carmenera with Food from Around the World

What's Cooking with Carmenera? Carmenera goes terrifically with food. It's a highly versatile red grape that goes well with a wide variety of dishes, especially spicy and savory ones. In this section, we provide readers with some suggestions on pairing Carmenera with different cuisines from around the world. Depending upon the dishes, Carmenera can be an adventurous and satisfying alternative to Merlot, Zinfandel, Syrah, Chianti Classico, Tempranillo and Malbec.

As noted earlier, Carmenera comes in several styles, but the most common one is ripe and spicy dark red fruit with a soft, velvet texture on the palate and with accents of black pepper, possibly smoke and tar, or herbs and green pepper. It usually has some oak spice aromas and flavors, too. It is medium weight with good structure and acidity, due in part to blending with Cabernet Sauvignon. And it has soft, round tannins on the finish.

Taking Account of Ingredients. While highly versatile for pairing with food, we find that Carmenere goes particularly well with dishes that contain the following ingredients:

- *Herbs and spices:* oregano, rosemary, and thyme, garlic, fennel, red and black pepper, curry powder, saffron, paprika, anise and cumin.
- *Fruits and vegetables:* olives, black and green, mushrooms, tomatoes, green pepper, eggplant, piquillo peppers, onion, sweet potato, corn.
- *Meats and Fish:* lamb, stewing beef, pork sausage, chicken, duck, rabbit, wild boar, venison, all depending upon the preparations.

Preparations. Carmenere is divine with savory dishes, especially earthy stews, and moderately spicy or even hot spicy dishes. It goes well with vegetables alone or meats and vegetables. It also handles well spicy dishes off the grill. As shown in the table, Carmenere pairs well with the cuisines of many countries.

Country/Region	Dishes to Pair with Carmenere
Chile	Corn dishes such as Pastel de Choclo (corn and meat pie); Churrasco with Pebre (Grilled Beef Tenderloin with Chilean Cilantro Sauce)
India	Hot and spicy foods like lamb curry and many other Indian dishes, especially those with eggplant and tomatoes, and tandoori chicken
Morocco	Kefta, lamb meatballs. Kefta is usually made with tomato sauce, mint, cilantro, cayenne paper, cumin and paprika, even goat cheese. Lamb Tangine. Lamb shanks braised in a tangine, served with couscous and vegetables—or any earthy braised meat, paprika, anise, cumin, saffron, fennel.
Italy	Sweet and spicy pork sausages, especially those with fennel, red pepper, and oregano. Salami and cold sliced meats, Bistecca alla Fiorentina, Pizza,
France	Ratatouille or a spicy Mediterranean Vegetable Ragout, Roast Duck with Sausage and Lentils, Beef Bourguignon, Cassoulet,
Spain	Catalan bean and sausage stew with mint, paprika, tomatoes, and Chorizo or Botifarra, Roasted pig.
California & Texas	Braised short ribs, Rack of Lamb with Rosemary and Garlic, Chile con Carne, Texas Ribs, Steak au Poivre



Viña Errazuriz and Carmenere

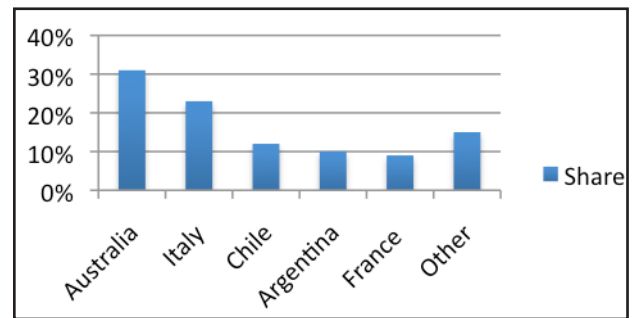
Viña Errazuriz pairs their ethereal Kai Carmenere with a magnificent dish of Boar Tenderloin over Portobello Mushrooms and Grilled Vegetables with a Carmenere Reduction and Cilantro Foam.

The Market for Chilean Wine

Chile is not one of the world’s largest producer’s of wine. It produces just 3 percent (986 billion liters in 2009) of the world’s total annual wine production. However, it is an important exporter of wine, and compared to many large producing nations in the world it is highly dependent on wine exports. Of Chile’s total production in 2008, 68 percent was exported. Most exports were in the form of bottled wine (61% of the total), but the remainder was mostly sold in bulk, especially to China and Germany. Chile faces a diversified market for its bottled wines with Europe taking about half, and the US and Canada together importing over 20 percent of Chile’s bottled wine exports.

The US Market for Chilean Wine

Figure 3. Share of US Wine Imports



Several factors make the US wine market especially important to Chile. First, importing 6.9 million liters of Chilean wine per year, the US is second only to the UK in terms of important wine markets for Chile. Second, wine consumption in the US continues to grow, up 18 percent in the past five years, and it will soon be the world’s single largest wine market. And, third, imports of wine to the US continue to increase, reaching 31 percent of total consumption in 2008. Chile already has the third highest share of the US import market (see graph), and it was one of the few countries to increase sales to the US in the difficult economic environment of 2009.

However, 90 percent of the wine consumed in the US is under \$16 per bottle, and Chile is presently over-represented at lower price points with only 3 percent of Chilean exports to the US priced above \$15. The large presence of Chile in lower-priced wines is one reason that its sales increased in 2009, reflecting the tendency of consumers to trade down to lower priced wines in economic recessions. In the longer run, the lower dollar will translate into higher prices for imported wines of a given quality, which poses a serious marketing challenge to Chilean exporters.

Wines Above \$15. Since this report focuses on wines above \$15 in price, the important question is what is Chile's future in this price segment in the US market. There are reasons for optimism. First, on the demand side the growing demand for wine, including premium imported wine, in the US may slow, but it is unlikely to reverse. Second, the rapidly improving quality of Chilean wine, as reflected in the evaluations of wine critics, will undoubtedly increase demand. Third, the relatively low costs of producing wine in Chile gives it a price advantage relative to other exporting countries, especially in Europe.

Part of the answer to the question of the future for Chilean mid-priced wines depends on the ability of the industry to rapidly respond to the market. Recently, one finds growing demand for Carmenere (especially), Pinot Noir, and Sauvignon Blanc, and these are precisely the varieties where new plantings are increasing the most rapidly. More problematic is the case of Syrah, which is a wine Chile does exceptionally well, but its sales in the US are declining.



Demand and Supply. Despite the demonstrated capacity of Chile to quickly respond to the changing marketplace, if there is one reason to be less than enthusiastically optimistic about the future for mid-priced wines it falls on the demand side. With its tri-level distribution system, the US is a particularly difficult place to market wine. The exporting winery needs

to first find an importer, then a distributor, and finally a retailer. The kink in the system is the distributor, which holds a quasi-monopoly and has little incentive to sell unknown (i.e., new) wines, especially those of little volume. At the same time, retailers have limited shelf space to display a potentially limitless number of wine brands from around the world, so they also have little interest in displaying wines that are new and untested in the US market. The result is that today one has great difficulty finding many of the mid-priced wines that receive such positive evaluations in this report.

The large size of Chile's main exporters provides the deep pockets and the commercial ties required to successfully market mid-priced wines. The top five exporting firms account for 45 percent of total wine exports, and Concha y Toro alone is responsible for 24 percent of the total.

Frequently the only Chilean wines one finds in the US retail wine shop are those from these large exporters.

Since some of the most interesting mid-priced wines are being produced by relatively small wineries that don't have deep pockets, the question is how they can be successful in the US market. The most obvious solution is to build demand from below in selected markets. A lesson can be learned from María Luz Marín of Casa Marín, who has had considerable success personally marketing her wine to restaurants and retail shops in the US. While difficult and expensive for a small producer, it is this kind of personal marketing that is essential to introduce a new brand in the American market.

Small and medium-sized wineries are especially helped by collective marketing strategies such as those Wines of Chile undertakes on behalf of its ninety members. Its strategy focuses on promoting tastings of Chilean wines in the US for the trade; sponsoring trips by sommeliers, writers and others to become familiar with Chile's wines and wine regions; and hosting the annual Wines of Chile awards in Santiago to highlight the best wines of the vintage. Wines of Chile is perhaps the single most active and effective producer marketing association we have yet encountered in our international travels.

The Chilean Wine Revolution is still a quiet revolution, despite the extensive marketing activities of the Chilean wine industry. Today, most wine lovers and members of the trade in the US still only think of Chile as a producer of good quality entry level wines. Most have not yet realized just how exciting are Chile's new high quality Sauvignon Blanc, Carmenere, Pinot Noir, and other varieties. The challenge ahead is to generate enthusiasm in the marketplace for these new products coming out of Chile's Wine Revolution and to brand Chile as a preeminent producer of premium and ultra-premium wines.

The Chilean Wine Revolution: Tasting Notes and Ratings

The International Wine Review team tasted more than 400 wines for this report. The focus of our tasting was on premium and ultra-premium wines which range from \$15 to \$30 or more in retail markets. This is where we believe the Chilean wine revolution has had its greatest impact and where consumers and the trade will find many outstanding mid-priced values in Sauvignon Blanc, Pinot Noir, Carmenere, Syrah, red blends and a few other varieties such as Malbec and Carignan.

The wines reviewed here are only a portion of the mid-priced premium and ultra premium wines being produced in Chile today. These selections are the result of a call for samples from producers and their importers and of extensive tastings conducted centrally and at over 20 wineries during IWR's visit to Chile in November 2009.

All of the wine reviews and ratings included in this report can be found in the IWR's Tasting Notes Archive on www.i-winereview.com. If you are a subscriber, you may use the i-WineReview Search to find the complete ratings and reviews of individual producers and their wines. Non-subscribers are also able to use the search to learn the ratings of individual wines but not the reviews themselves.

In addition to tasting mid-priced premium wines, we tasted more than 100 wines below \$15. While we were unable to include these wines in this report, we are posting our tasting notes and ratings for them in the IWR's Tasting Notes Archive at www.i-winereview.com. A separate article on Chile's best buys under \$15 is also being prepared for publication.

The IWR rates wines using the 100 point system. We do not write evaluations of wines which receive a rating below 85 points. The ratings are as follows:

95-100	A wine of distinction
91-94	A wine of outstanding or superior quality
88-90	A wine of good to excellent quality
85-87	A wine of fair to good quality
84 and below	Not recommended

All of the wines reviewed here are sold in the U. S. with a few exceptions noted in the tasting notes. Unfortunately, some wines are in short supply, and readers will have difficulty finding them. To identify wine distributors, readers are advised to contact the winery's importer. Readers might also contact our Recommended Retailers throughout the country listed at www.i-winereview.com or check with the wine shop Puro Chile, a New York-based company that sells and promotes Chilean products. (www.puro-chile.com).

Agustinos

Pioneers in the Aconcagua Valley and Bío Bío growing areas, Agustinos produces excellent Sauvignon Blanc, Pinot Noir and other wines. They have made heavy investments in new vineyards, dry farmed and organic, and are committed to sustainable development practices in the vineyard and winery. Agustinos is part of the VC Family Estates, of the Corpora Group, a highly successful family owned food and beverage holding company. Importer: Winesellers Ltd Skokie, IL; Great Wines Corporation, Miami, FL

Also Reviewed:

2008 Carmenere Reserva Maipo Valley (87)
2008 Malbec Gran Reserva Bío Bío Valley (87)
2007 Syrah Gran Reserva Aconcagua Valley (87)

Agustinos 2009 Sauvignon Blanc Reserva Privada Bío Bío Valley (\$20) 91

This is an exceptional, superbly balanced wine from Bío Bío, a region not typically associated with Sauvignon Blanc. Pale straw in color with minerals, lime zest and lees notes on the nose. Austere in character with understated flavors of light citrus and minerals. Benefits from about four months on its lees and longer skin contact than usual.

Agustinos 2008 Chardonnay Gran Reserva Bío Bío Valley (\$20) 89

A leesy medium straw Chardonnay from the Yumbel Vineyard in the Bío Bío. Ripe pear, melon and lees aromas and flavors with good acidity and a clean finish. Fermented in stainless steel and left on its lees for 11 months without battonage.

Agustinos 2008 Pinot Noir Reserva Privada Bío Bío Valley (\$15) 89

This is a lovely feminine Pinot Noir displaying a dark ruby color with aromas and flavors of black cherry, toast and earth notes. The attack is soft and elegant and the palate velvety smooth with round tannins, good acidity and a fruity finish. Sourced from the Santa Carla Estate Yumbel Vineyard that is planted with the Concha y Toro Pinot Noir clone.

Agustinos 2008 Pinot Noir Gran Reserva Bío Bío Valley (\$20) 90

The Agustinos Pinot Noir Gran Reserva is bigger and more complex wine than the Reserva. It displays a dark ruby color with ripe cherry aromas and floral notes. Dark and earthy in character, it is soft on the attack and offers attractive mineral and earth flavors on the palate. It also has firm round tannins and a fruity finish. The grapes are sourced from a rich volcanic section of Santa Carla Estate and are fermented partially with stems and whole clusters. The wine is aged in extra fine grained barrels for 14 months.

Agustinos 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon Gran Reserva Aconcagua Valley (\$20) 89

This substantial Gran Reserva Cabernet Sauvignon from the La Redonda Estate offers aromas of ripe dark red berry fruit and has a savory attack of ripe fruit, sweet oak, a touch of cinnamon and Asian spice. The tannins are round and velvety, and the finish is long and satisfying

Agustinos 2006 Escorial Red Wine Aconcagua Valley (\$35) 91

Agustinos' superb red blend (45% Cabernet Sauvignon, 35% Cabernet Franc and 20% Carmenere) is sourced from the Escorial Estate Vineyard and displays ripe red berry fruit with cedar notes and a touch of mint on the nose. On the palate it offers savory ripe huckleberry fruit and a wild, gamey note, with hints of cigar box. Nicely concentrated, the tannins are kept in check and the finish is persistent.



Amayna is a family-owned winery located in the Leyda Valley. The project began in 1999, and was the first to commercially plant vines in Leyda Valley. The winery has 370 acres of vineyards, of which approximately 100 are designated for the winery's own production. The winery makes Loire-like Sauvignon Blanc, excellent Chardonnay, an earth and smoke Pinot Noir, and an elegant Syrah. Importer: T. Edward Wines New York, NY

Amayna 2008 Sauvignon Blanc Amayna Leyda Valley (\$20) 91

This medium straw colored, full-flavored Sauvignon Blanc shows mainly the tropical fruit characteristic of the UCD 1 clone, although about half the fruit comes from the French 242 clone. On the nose there's floral, ripe melon and pear fruit, while the palate reveals nicely concentrated

Amayna 2007 Sauvignon Blanc Barrel Fermented Leyda Valley (\$35) 90

This is a delicious, medium gold straw colored wine aged in 100 percent new French oak but with little of the varietal character one expects out of a cool climate Chilean Sauvignon Blanc. There's smoke, hazelnuts and ripe papaya on the nose and a robust yet creamy palate of oak and tropical fruit with dulce de leche notes.

Amayna 2007 Chardonnay Leyda Valley (\$25) 91

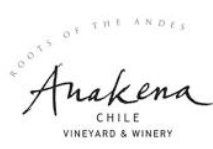
One of the best Chilean Chardonnays we've tasted. Medium gold straw in color, it has a perfumed nose of honeysuckle, mango and toasted almond that carries over to a lush and delicious palate. Finishes with excellent acidity and smoke and vanilla notes. Sees 20 percent new oak and no malo.

Amayna 2007 Pinot Noir Leyda Valley (\$35) 90

The 2007 Amayna Pinot Noir offers dark cherry and raspberry fruit, the kind found in Pinot Noir from Central Otago (New Zealand). It has ripe and concentrated fruit and oak flavors with notes of lavender. Although high in alcohol (14.5%), it is a bold and delicious Pinot.

Amayna 2008 Syrah Amayna Leyda Valley (\$25) 90

The opaque purple Amayna Syrah is a beautifully balanced fruit-driven wine showing violets and white pepper on the nose and a lush, rich palate of dark berries, minerals, and violets with bitter chocolate notes. Aged for 12 months in 70% new French oak.



Founded by Felipe Ibañez and Jorge Gutierrez, **Viña Anakena** is located in Cachapoal Valley at the foothills of the Andes Mountains in the Rapel Valley and has vineyards in the Cachapoal Valley, Colchagua Valley, and San Antonio. A selection of their red wines is reviewed here. Importer: Evaton, Inc., Stamford, CT

Also Reviewed:

2008 Riesling, Viognier, Chardonnay Casablanca (87)
2006 Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Carmenere Rapel Valley (86)

Anakena 2007 Syrah ONA Rapel Valley (\$18) 89

This is a dark ruby, juicy Syrah from the foothills of the Andes. It shows light scents of roasted meat, very ripe black fruit and earth that carry over to the palate. The wine is nicely balanced with ripe tannins and has a solid finish.

Anakena 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon Syrah ONA, Rapel Valley (\$18) 89

A delicious Cabernet Sauvignon Syrah blend, this wine exhibits an opaque ruby color, a velvety smooth attack, soft, ripe and concentrated black fruit flavors on the palate, round tannins and a nice long lasting finish.



Antiyal Winery is owned and operated by the talented winemaker Alvaro Espinosa and his wife Marina Ashton. They make two outstanding red blends, Antiyal and Kuyen, from their own

biodynamic estate vineyard and other vineyards in the Maipo Valley. Importer: Global Vineyard Wine Importers, Berkley, CA

Antiyal 2006 Antiyal Maipo Valley (\$55) 90

This is an attractive blend combining the red fruit and spice of Carmenere (50%) with earthy garrigue, cedar and black currant fruit of Cabernet Sauvignon and Syrah (50%). The wine is velvety smooth and moderately intense on the palate with fine grained tannins and a long finish. It is drinking well now but will improve over the next five years.

Antiyal 2006 Kuyen Maipo Valley (\$30) 90

The 2006 Kuyen is composed of 55% Syrah, 35% Cabernet Sauvignon, and 10% Carmenere. Dark ruby-colored, it has an enticing perfume of pain grillé, spice box, vanilla, blueberry, and black currant. On the palate, it is smooth-textured, elegant, and easy-going. Nicely balanced, it has enough structure to evolve for 1-2 years. It will provide pleasure through 2015.

Apaltagua.

This small family winery is located in the Colchagua Valley's Apalta winegrowing region and specializes in Carmenere. The winery is owned by the Edward Tutunijan family and is dedicated to the Carmenere grape. Two well made Carmeneres from Colchagua and a Chardonnay from Casablanca are reviewed here. Importer: Global Vineyard Importers Berkeley, CA

Apaltagua 2007 Carmenere Envero Colchagua Valley (\$15) 88

This flavorful Carmenere is sourced from 60 year old vines and offers a dark ruby color and a nose of red and black plums and rose petals with a touch of smoke. It has a soft lush attack of tangy dark plum fruit and a distinct bright red fruit note on the finish.

Apaltagua 2007 Carmenere Grial Colchagua Valley (\$75) 90

The Carmenere Grial is this winery's top Carmenere bottling. It is a complex and savory wine with rich plum and heavily toasted oak aromas followed by velvety plum fruit flavors, lots of spice, and notes of smoke, tobacco and chocolate. The tannins are soft and round and the finish is long lasting. A well-made wine for oak lovers.

Aquitania.

The wines of Viña Aquitania are jointly produced by Chilean oenologist Felipe de Solminihac, Paul Pontallier, the winemaker of Chateau Margaux, Bruno Prats, the former owner of Chateau Cos d'Estournel, and Ghislain de Montgolfier, the owner of Bollinger Champagne. The vineyard is located in the Malleco Valley in southern Chile. They have several wines, mostly reds made in their Alto Maipo Valley winery just outside of Santiago.

Aquitania "Sol-de-Sol" 2007 Chardonnay Malleco Valley (\$28) 92

This is among the best Chardonnays we've tasted out of Chile. It's elegant and beautifully balanced with perfect acidity. There are lovely aromas of melon and pear with a touch of mint on the nose and tropical coconut, lychee fruit and pear on the rich and focused palate.



Arboleda was founded by Eduardo Chadwick (also owner of Viña Errazuriz) in 1999 and produces high quality wines from sustainably managed estate vineyards in Aconcagua, Leyda and Colchagua Valley. Importer: Frederick Wildman and Sons New York, NY

Arboleda 2008 Sauvignon Blanc Leyda Valley (\$15) 89

A creamy palate characterizes this pale straw Sauvignon Blanc from the famous Leyda Valley. It shows lychee and minerals on the nose and nicely concentrated tropical fruit with good acidity on the palate, finishing tart and crisp.

Arboleda 2007 Carmenere Colchagua Valley (\$18) 90

The Arboleda Carmenere is a beautifully crafted wine sourced from low-yielding vineyards in Colchagua Valley. It offers an opaque ruby purple color and pure fruit aromas of black cherry, cassis and blueberry. Youthful and fresh on the palate, it reveals lush black raspberry fruit and sweet vanilla oak with a touch of tobacco and cedar spice on the finish.

Aresti Family Vineyards.



organic range. The mid-price reserve wines are reviewed here. (Importer: Broadbent Selections, San Francisco, CA)

Established in the Curicó Valley in 1951 by Vicente Aresti, the Aresti Family Vineyards produces a variety of Estate Selection wines for everyday enjoyment, as well as a reserve and

Aresti 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon Reserva Curicó Valley (\$18) 86

Medium dark ruby in color, this Cabernet Sauvignon offers dark red fruit, black currants and spice on the nose with a touch of vanilla. On the palate it reveals flavors of earth, dark fruit and eucalyptus with firm tannins and earthy herbal flavors. Finishes very dry.

Aresti 2006 Carmenere Reserva Curicó Valley (\$18) 86

This bottling is 90% Carmenere with 5% Malbec and 5% Syrah. It offers pleasant aromas and flavors of dark raspberry, black pepper and toasted oak. It has a soft attack with moderate fruit flavors, a somewhat dry mid-palate, and a short finish.

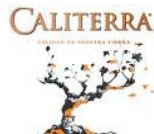
Aresti 2006 Merlot Reserva Curicó Valley (\$18) 86

The Merlot has a dark ruby garnet color and aromas of ripe plums, sweet oak, earth, and dried fig. It is soft on the attack with moderate fruit flavors, spicy oak, round tannins, and has a dry mid-palate and finish.

Aylin is a new venture by the talented winemaker, Sven Bruchfeld, who most recently served as enologist at Santa Carolina and is a partner in Polkura Winery. Bruchfeld only produces one wine, but it is a good one.

Aylin 2009 Sauvignon Blanc Leyda 90

This Sauvignon Blanc is the first vintage of Aylin, a garage winery of Sven Bruchfeld, former winemaker at MontGras. The wine is fresh and crisp and has lovely citrus aromas and flavors along with good texture and high acidity. 10% of the wine sees oak. The wine is not yet imported.



Caliterra began operations in 1996 producing entry level wines for the US market. Initially a joint venture between Errázuriz and Robert Mondavi, Errázuriz took control of Caliterra in 2004 and since then has been improving the quality and range of its wines. Caliterra owns a 1,085 ha estate in Colchagua Valley. Hillside plantings have been introduced and some 55 ha, of a total of some 242 ha planted, are in transition to organic viticulture. The Tributo wines reviewed here are produced from the estate's finest grapes. Caliterra's chief winemaker is the talented and affable Sergio Cuadra. Importer: Aveniu Brands, Baltimore, MD

Caliterra 2007 Carmenere Tributo Single Vineyard Colchagua Valley (\$18) 89

This Carmenere is sourced from the Boldo Block of Caliterra's Estate Vineyard in Colchagua. A blend of 86% Carmenere, 10% Merlot and 4% Syrah, it displays a dark ruby color and aromas of fresh red and black berries with mocha notes. It has an attack of predominantly dark fruit with nice framboise notes, a touch of underbrush, and a long flavorful finish.

Caliterra 2006 Carmenere/Malbec Tributo Edicion Limitada Colchagua Valley (\$25) 90

Caliterra's blend of 60% Carmenere and 40% Malbec is a successful cuvée in which each variety complements the other. The Carmenere is soft and aromatic with low acidity, while the Malbec contributes fruity, floral aromas, tannic structure, and acidity. Dark ruby in color the wine exhibits a ripe nose of dark red fruit, blackberries, and smoky oak. It has good depth of flavor, excellent structure and balance and a long finish without any green notes.

Caliterra 2006 Cénit Colchagua Valley (\$45) 91+

The 2006 Cénit blends 53% Cabernet Sauvignon, 27% Malbec and 20% Petite Verdot. Made in a modern international style, it offers attractive spicy aromas of pepper, blackberry fruit, herbs and smoky oak. On the palate it also boasts flavors of dark fruit with red berry fruit accents and a licorice note. The tannins are round and the finish is long.

Carmen.



Founded in 1850, Carmen is one of the oldest wine brands in Chile. In 1987 it was purchased by the Claro Group, owners of Santa Rita. Carmen has pioneered organic viticulture, produced the first Petite Sirah in Chile, and was among the first wineries to discover and market Carmenere. Carmen currently owns some 600 ha of vineyards. Its wines are of good quality and its Petite Sirah and Winemaker's Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon Gold Reserve are especially noteworthy wines. Importer: Aveniu Brands, Baltimore, MD.

Carmen 2009 Sauvignon Blanc Curicó Valley (\$15) 87

This is a pleasant, pale yellow straw Sauvignon Blanc showing citrus and gooseberry on the nose. There's a fresh attack of citrus fruit with good acidity and grass notes.

Carmen 2005 Cabernet Sauvignon Gold Reserve Maipo Valley (\$72) 90

The 2005 Cabernet Sauvignon Gold Reserva is step higher than the 2005 Cabernet Sauvignon. It has a dark ruby garnet color and aromas of smoke, black currant fruit, minerals and black olives. On the attack it is velvety smooth with ripe concentrated fruit, notes of coconut and fine grained tannins on the finish. A beautiful wine that should last a long time.

Carmen 2005 Petite Sirah Reserve Maipo Valley (88)

Viña Carmen's Petite Sirah is one of the few of this varietal produced in Chile. It is a very good one with an inky, ripe purple color, aromatic black fruit aromas and lovely violet and blackberry flavors on the palate. Aged for 12 months in 100% new French oak, the oak is hardly noticeable and the wine is beautifully balanced with a firm finish. A beautiful wine for Petite Sirah lovers, but unfortunately not imported.

Carmen 2007 Winemaker's Reserve Red Maipo Valley (\$45) 91

The Winemaker's Reserve is an attractive blend of 50% Cabernet Sauvignon, 20% Carmenere, 10% Syrah, 10% Petit Syrah, and 10% Merlot. Aged for 14 months in oak, the nose reveals sweet, ripe red and black fruit and smoke and is followed by an attack of more ripe fruit and earth and leather notes. It should drink well through the next 10 years.

Casa Lapostolle.



Founded in 1994, Casa Lapostolle is owned by the Marnier Lapostolle family of France, who also own Grand Mamier. Their goal has been to create world class wines in Chile using French expertise, including the famed international wine consultant, Michel Rolland. Casa Lapostolle owns three vineyards totaling 350 hectares; the most notable is the superb Apalta Vineyard in Colchagua Valley. 100% of Lapostolle's estate vineyards are organically and biodynamically managed. All Casa Lapostolle wines are of a very high quality. Importer: Moët Hennessy USA

Casa Lapostolle 2009 Sauvignon Blanc Casa Rapel Valley (\$10-\$15) 88

This medium straw Sauvignon Blanc includes a small amount of Semillon, which contributes a lanolin note. The nose is quite effusive, showing yellow melon and white pepper. The palate reeals flavors of ripe melon and apple. The Semillon in this blend is from Apalta, while the Sauvignon Blanc is from Las Kuras and Colchagua.

Casa Lapostolle 2008 Chardonnay Cuvée Alexandre Casablanca Valley (\$20) 90

The Cuvée Alexandre is like drinking a tropical fruit salad with light vanilla and toasted oak notes. This is a very well balanced and integrated wine that's round in the mouth with tropical mango, ripe pineapple and coconut flavors. Fruit for this wine is sourced from the Atalayas Vineyard, located just 22 km from the Pacific. Aged in 54% French oak, 46% stainless steel and sees no malo.

Casa Lapostolle 2007 Carmenere Cuvée Alexandre Apalata Estate Colchagua Valley (\$30) 89

The Carmenere Cuvée Alexandre is a cut above Casa Lapostolle's regular Carmenere. It is opaque ruby with dark plum fruit and oak spice on the nose. Aged for 12 months in French oak, 51% new, it is soft and velvety smooth on the palate with nicely concentrated red and black fruit and firm tannins on the finish.

Casa Lapostolle 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon Cuvée Alexandre Apalta Vineyard Colchagua Valley (\$20) 88

Casa Lapostolle's dark ruby Cabernet Sauvignon (85% Cabernet Sauvignon and 15% Merlot) displays attractive aromas of black currants, red berries, and wood spice. Aged for 10 months in French oak, it offers a lush attack of nicely integrated cassis fruit and is well balanced with fine grained tannins and a long finish.

Casa Lapostolle 2007 Merlot Cuvée Alexandre Apalta Apalta Vineyard Colchagua Valley (\$20) 90

The dark ruby Merlot (85% Merlot and 15% Carmenere) offers spicy red plum fruit and blueberry aromas. The palate shows rich concentrated red fruit flavors, with notes of rosemary, wood spice, and sweet tannins. The blend of Merlot and Carmenere adds flavor. Aged for 11 months in French oak; has some tannic grip.

Casa Lapostolle 2007 Clos Apalta Colchagua Valley (\$80) 92

The Clos Apalta is a stylish red blend consisting of 61% Carmenere, 24% Cabernet Sauvignon, 12% Merlot and 3% Petite Verdot. It displays an attractive opaque ruby purple robe and has fragrant aromas of black currants, loam, and toasted oak. It is rich and elegant on the palate with highly concentrated black fruit flavors and notes of chocolate, licorice and coconut. A big shouldered wine made for aging, it requires two-three hours of decanting for maximum enjoyment.



Casa Marin is a family-owned winery located in the San Antonio Valley, only 4 kms. from the coast. It was founded in 2000 by Maria Luz Marin, owner and winemaker pictured here with Donald Winkler, Executive Editor of the IWR. The winery produces elegant estate bottled Sauvignon Blanc, Pinot Noir and other wines. Importer: Domaine Select Wine Estates, New York, NY

Casa Marin 2009 Sauvignon Blanc Cipreses Vineyard San Antonio Valley (\$25) 92

One of Chile's most outstanding Sauvignon Blancs made from fruit sourced from a very low yielding hilltop vineyard of extremely poor soils close to the sea. Light straw in color, it shows minerals and perfumed citrus with honeysuckle and chalk notes on the nose. This super refined and delicate wine is full flavored, exhibiting beautiful balance and a chalky texture. Tasted just one month after bottling at the winery, this terroir driven wine may very well evolve a bit by the time it reaches the American wine store shelf.

Casa Marin 2009 Sauvignon Blanc Laurel Vineyard San Antonio Valley (\$25) 90

Another beautiful, medium straw colored Sauvignon Blanc from one of Chile's outstanding winemakers. Somewhat higher yields than normal result in slightly less concentration than usual. Shows spicy jasmine, ripe citrus and green bean notes on the nose and sweet, tropical fruit on the palate, finishing very long. This is a multi-faceted wine that pleases at many levels.

Casa Marin 2009 Sauvignon Gris Estero Vineyard San Antonio Valley (\$35) 89

Bottled 1 month ago. Pale yellow with aromas of green pear, nettles, and white asparagus. Almost sweet on the attack with a generous palate of ripe lemon citrus and a touch of white pepper. Finishes clean with a long perfumed note. Made with 80% French oak, 50% new. The other 20% is done in stainless steel.

Casa Marin 2009 Gewürztraminer Casona Vineyard San Antonio Valley (\$37) 90

Platinum straw with a beautiful, pure nose of rose water with a subtle spicy note. Displays a dry attack of very flavorful lychee and white pepper. This delicate and refined wine is absolutely unique.

Casa Marin 2008 Riesling Miramar Vineyard San Antonio Valley (\$37) 91

This Riesling, one of the few currently produced in Chile, is sourced from a hilltop vineyard. It displays a subtle nose of apple flowers and petrol notes with a refined, delicate palate of white peach and orange zest. It has a lovely long finish with good acidity and, according to Maria Luz, it goes splendidly with Julia Child's recipe for chicken breasts.

Casa Marin 2008 Syrah Miramar Vineyard San Antonio Valley (\$68) 91

This is a low alcohol (11.7%), cool climate Syrah. Spicy herbs of nutmeg and clove and violets show on the nose, while the palate reveals dark berry fruit, the essence of violets and spice. A truly unique, terroir driven wine. Bottled but not yet released.

Casa Marin 2006 Pinot Noir Litoral Vineyard San Antonio Valley (\$68) 90

Maria Luz Marin's 2006 Pinot Noir Litoral Vineyard exhibits a dark ruby garnet color with aromas of mushroom and earth. It has a lush and supple attack of sweet dried dark cherry fruit with notes of earth, roasted nuts and baking spices. This one is nuanced, has high alcohol (15%.) and provides a nice long finish.

Casa Marin 2006 Pinot Noir Lo Abarca Hills Vineyard San Antonio Valley (\$68) 91

The 2006 Pinot Noir Lo Abarca Hills Vineyard is more complex than the Litoral Vineyard. It displays a ruby garnet hue and aromas of spicy dark cherry fruit with earth and underbrush. It offers a soft attack, and nice depth of dark cherry fruit flavor with beautifully integrated sweet oak, smoke and earth. It finishes with lovely sweet tannins.



Casa Silva

Casa Silva is a family-owned winery in Colchagua Valley with five generations of winegrowing experience. In 1997, Mario Silva, the current owner, began producing his own wine and today this winery is one of Chile's new generation of premium wine producers. Casa Silva has invested heavily in research on Carmenere and is today one of the finest producers of this variety in Chile. Casa Silva's excellent winemaker is Jose Ignacio Maturana. Importer: VinDivino, Chicago, IL

Casa Silva 2009 Cool Coast Sauvignon Blanc Paredones (\$25) 92

One of the very best Sauvignon Blancs produced in Chile made from fruit sourced near the coast in the Colchagua Valley. On the nose there are minerals and light, perfumed citrus, while the refined, restrained palate is very bright with chalky minerality. An absolutely superb wine that compares favorably with first-class Pouilly-Fume.

Casa Silva 2008 Chardonnay Angostura Gran Reserva Colchagua Valley (\$19) 90

The medium straw Angostura Gran Reserva Chardonnay is a delicious wine, superbly balanced and round and soft in the mouth. Shows ripe pear and melon aromas and flavors with just a touch of vanilla. Just 15 percent of the wine sees a modicum (6 months) of oak. The fruit is sourced from 35 year old vines in a fairly warm area of Colchagua. Just 3% of the wine undergoes malo.

Casa Silva 2008 Reserva Lolol Viognier Colchagua Valley (\$NA) 89

This Viognier displays a pale lemon hue and offers aromas of white peach and melon. On the palate it reveals concentrated stone fruit flavors with slightly leesy notes on the mid-palate and finish. The tannins are ripe, and the finish is nicely focused.

Casa Silva 2007 Quinta Generación White Colchagua Valley (\$26) 90

The White Qunita Generacion has a pale straw color and a perfumed nose of light peach, flowers and orange zest. A blend of Vigonier, Sauvignon Gris and Chardonnay, it offers ripe fruit flavors with good acidity, clarity and freshness, and persistence.

Casa Silva 2007 Quinta Generación Red Colchagua Valley (\$26) 90

The Red Qunta Generación is a delicious blend of Carmenere, Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah and Petit Verdot. It exhibits an inky hue and a nose rich in dark fruit aromas, minerals, loam and bitter chocolate. Aged for 12 months in new French oak, it is velvety smooth and flavorful with loads of red and black fruit and sweet oak and has a long and persistent finish.

Casa Silva 2007 Carmenere Reserva Colchagua Valley (\$15) 89

This reserva is a well crafted fruit forward wine with rich berry fruit and notes of licorice on the nose. It is soft on the attack and velvety smooth on the palate with good depth of flavor and slight rusticity. It has round tannins and a smooth long finish.

Casa Silva 2007 Carmenere Los Lingues Gran Reserva Colchagua Valley (\$19) 91

The Los Lingues Gran Reserva is a step up in quality from the reserva. It has a dark purple hue, aromas of red and black berry fruit, pepper and dark chocolate. On the palate it reveals layers of richly concentrated dark fruit, oak spice and violets, round tannins and a long finish. A beautifully textured wine with amazingly good flavor and sweetness.

Casa Silva 2006 Microterroir de Los Lingues Colchagua Valley (\$55) 94

Casa Silva's Microterroir de Los Lingues is one of the finest Carmeneres produced in Chile today. Despite the fact that it is harvested some 15 days before other Carmenere in the Colchagua Valley, the wine is fully ripe and flavorful without any signs of pirozene on the nose or palate. Semi opaque ruby in color, it displays aromas of perfumed red berry fruit, violets and smoked meat. On the palate it offers uplifting layers of fruit, roasted meat and licorice all beautifully framed in French oak. Tasting this wine makes one realize the great potential of Carmenere in Chile, provided it is in the right hands.

Casa Silva 2007 Syrah Gran Reserva Colchagua Valley (\$19) 88

The dark ruby Syrah Gran Reserva is beautifully flavored with an expressive palate of dark red fruit with accents of black raspberry and minerals, finishing with a licorice note. The nose is redolent of blackberry and grilled meat.

Casa Silva 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon Gran Reserva Colchagua Valley (\$19) 88

This Cabernet Sauvignon displays aromas of cassis, earth and dark chocolate. It is velvety smooth on the palate with ripe black and red berry fruit flavors, soft round tannins and a long lasting finish.

Casa Silva 2007 Petit Verdot Gran Reserva Colchagua Valley (\$19) 89

One of the very few Petit Verdots produced in Chile, this one displays an inky hue and dark blue and black berries on the nose with chocolate notes. On the palate it reveals concentrated dark fruit flavors, toasted oak and chocolate notes. The tannins are round and firm, and the finish is amazingly long. A very fruit forward and pleasing wine.

Casa Silva 2004 Altura Colchagua Valley (\$NA) 93

The opaque ruby Altura is a beautiful wine meticulously handcrafted in much the same way as this estate's highly successful microterroir wines. This one is a blend of 50% Carmenere and 50% Cabernet Sauvignon and Petite Verdot from the estate's best lots and is aged in new French oak for 14-15 months. On the nose it exhibits flavorful blackberry and red berry fruit, liquid violets, and roasted meat. On the attack it is velvety smooth and offers highly concentrated fruit flavors with hints of coconut and chocolate. A wine that is drinkable now but will last a decade or more.



Casas del Bosque is a boutique family winery located in Casablanca Valley that produces a variety of premium wines from vineyards in the western Casablanca Valley and

Rapel. Established in 1993, its most noteworthy wines are a series of single variety limited production wines called Ppequeñas Producciones. Grant Phelps, formerly at Viu Manent recently took over as winemaker at this estate. (Importer: None at Present)

Casas del Bosque 2009 Sauvignon Blanc Gran Reserva Casablanca Valley (\$15) 88

This medium straw Sauvignon Blanc is made in the New Zealand style, showing a gorgeous nose of melon, citrus, and gooseberry. There's a crisp, fruity attack with an herbal edge and a palate of fresh grapefruit with green asparagus notes.

Casas del Bosque 2009 Sauvignon Blanc Pequeñas Producciones Casablanca Valley (\$25) 90

This is another example of a richly flavored Sauvignon Blanc reminiscent of New Zealand. Pale yellow straw in color, minerals and gooseberry show on the nose. The grapefruit and green bean palate is rich and ripe with good volume and depth of flavor. Sees a small amount of oak.

Casas del Bosque 2007 Pinot Noir Pequeñas Producciones Casablanca Valley (\$25) 90

Pequeñas Producciones are the top of the line wines at Casa del Bosque, and this one is no exception. It has a medium dark ruby hue with aromas of red fruit, earth, vanilla and cedar. It is soft and velvety on the palate showing more ripe dark cherry fruit with a hint of mocha. Aged for 14 months in oak, it is nicely layered with medium high acidity, ripe round tannins and a long finish.

Casas del Bosque 2007 Syrah Pequeñas Producciones Casablanca Valley (\$25) 89

The opaque ruby purple Syrah Pequeñas Producciones is done in a very ripe style. There are roasted meat, violets and berry aromas on the nose, and the palate is velvet-like with a layered mix of dark berries, cocoa, and toasted oak. Fills the mouth with pretty assertive tannins on the finish. Sees 14 months in oak.



VINA
CHOCALAN

Chocalán is a family winery owned and operated by businessman Guillermo Toro and his children. It sources red grapes from its 102 ha estate vineyard in the Maipo Valley and white grapes from the Malvilla vineyard, located on the Pacific Coast in the San Antonio Valley. It built a modern gravity fed winery in 2002 and bottled its first wines in 2003. The wines reviewed here from the Malvilla vineyard are of excellent quality. Fernando Espina is chief winemaker. Importer: Domaine Select, New York, NY

Chocalán 2009 Sauvignon Blanc Malvilla San Antonio Valley (\$20) 90

This medium yellow straw single vineyard Sauvignon Blanc is creamy and concentrated. On the nose one finds white pepper, saline and light grass aromas. It's crisp on the attack with excellent acidity, minerals, and light pear-citrus fruit. Finishes with chalky minerals and citrus notes. An exceptionally good and interesting wine. The Malvilla vineyard faces the sea, directly exposed to the cool maritime fog and winds.

Chocalán 2009 Chardonnay Malvilla San Antonio Valley (\$28) 91

This yellow straw, terroir driven Chardonnay comes from vineyards facing the sea near Malvilla. On the nose there's ripe apple and pear with a touch of smoke. The palate is medium weight with pear, smoke and vanilla cream notes. Has a nice, crisp finish, too. Quite lovely!



Concha y Toro is one of Chile's largest and most illustrious wineries. It was established in Pirque in the Maipo Valley in the late 19th century by Don Melchior Concha y Toro, who brought grapevines

from the Bordeaux region and French winemaking expertise to Chile. Over the decades, Concha y Toro has produced a wide range of top quality wines at all price levels from its highly successful Casillero del Diablo to mid-priced wines such as Marques de Casa Concha, and internationally acclaimed icon wines Terrunyo, and Don Melchor. Concha y Toro has several outstanding winemakers, most notably Ignacio Recabarren and Marcelo Papa. Importer: Banfi Vintners, Old Brookville, New York

Concha y Toro 2007 Sauvignon Blanc Terrunyo Casablanca Valley (\$25) 90+

The Terrunyo Sauvignon Blanc is beautifully balanced with a silky mouth feel. There's melon, citrus, and dried herbs on the nose and layered fruit flavors with a green bean note on the ripe, full palate. It exhibits good minerality with brisk acidity, too.

Concha y Toro 2007 Chardonnay Marques de Casa Concha Pirque (\$19) 90

The Marques de Casa Concha Chardonnay regularly receives plaudits from the press. We couldn't agree more. This medium gold Chardonnay shows beautifully integrated fruit and honeyed oak on the nose and palate with flavors of papaya and melon accented by hazelnut and orange tea notes. Very well made, and a real crowd pleaser!

Concha y Toro 2007 Carmenere Marques Casa Concha Peumo (\$21) 90

This and other Carmenere in Concha y Toro's portfolio are produced from grapes grown in the DO Peumo, Rapel Valley, which is one of the finest growing areas for this variety in Chile. In view of its origins, this Carmenere, not surprisingly, has a dark fruit character. It displays a rich opaque purple hue with a nose of ripe black fruit, cassis, black olive and charred oak. It is soft and delicate on the attack, with ripe blackberry fruit, beautiful balance and good natural acidity.

Concha y Toro 2006 Cabernet Sauvignon Marques de Casa Concha Puente Alto (\$20) 89

The opaque ruby Marques de Casa Concha Cabernet Sauvignon is a solid easy to drink bottling that offers attractive aromas of black fruit, lead pencil and violets. It is soft and lush on the attack with concentrated black fruit flavors, charred oak and forest floor notes. It has fine grained tannins and a firm finish.

Concha y Toro 2006 Carmenere Terrunyo Block 27 Peumo (\$28) 91

The Carmenere Terrunyo Block 27 is also sourced from Concha y Toro's best vineyards in the D.O. Peumo. The wine combines power and elegance displaying an opaque ruby purple color, dark and lush spicy fruit with tremendous depth of flavor. Aged in French oak for 17 months, (80% new) the wine has impressive structure and balance with soft round tannins and a long finish.

Concha y Toro 2006 Syrah Terrunyo Rapel Valley (\$28) 92

One of the better Chilean Syrahs we've tasted, the 2006 Syrah Terrunyo reveals meaty aromas of black and purple fruit and a unique palate of mineral-laden black fruit and violets. Elegant and floral on the attack and the mid-palate, firm tannins and purity of fruit show on the finish. Somewhat atypical of the Rapel, due in part to the southerly orientation of the hillside vineyard. Aged in 100% oak, 70% new.

Concha y Toro 2001 Don Melchor Maipo Valley (\$80) 92

The 2001 Don Melchor is a ripe opulent Cabernet Sauvignon sourced from Concha y Toro's top vineyard in Puente Alto. Aged in 70% new French oak for 14 months, it is rich and full bodied and offers aromas and flavors of black currants, cassis, cigar box and loam. This is a big dense wine which benefits from 5-6 years of cellaring. The 2001 vintage is tasting beautifully and has enough stuffing to last a good decade or more.



Located in the Colchagua Valley, **Cono Sur** is a modern and innovative winery which produces high quality premium wines. It has one of the oldest Pinot Noir Vineyards in Chile

and was the first Chilean winery to produce premium Pinot Noir. In 1999 it added a special annex to its winery specifically designed to produce Pinot Noir along Burgundian lines. The winery is committed to sustainable and organic viticulture. The use of bicycles by vineyard workers symbolizes its commitment. Adolfo Hurtado is Chief Winemaker and General Manager ably assisted by Matías Ríos, Winemaking Manager. Importer: Vineyard Brands, Inc. Birmingham, AL

Cono Sur 2009 Vision Sauvignon Blanc Casablanca Valley (\$15) 90

This is a beautiful, pale straw Sauvignon Blanc sourced from the single vineyard El Centinela, located just 11 km from the sea on the far western mountain side of Casablanca. Minerals and white flowers show on the nose, while the elegant, superbly balanced palate reveals minerals and understated fruit. Finishes very long.

Cono Sur 2008 Pinot Noir Vision Single Vineyard Colchagua Valley (\$15) 88

Here is a great value Pinot Noir. Sourced from a 41 year-old block of the Santa Elisa vineyard, it exhibits a floral character on the nose with spice and dark cherry aromas. On the palate it has nice intensity of flavors with dark cherry, plum, and spice. A well made wine ready to drink and enjoy.

Cono Sur 2007 Pinot Noir 20 Barrels Casablanca Valley (\$25) 89

The 20 Barrels Pinot Noir displays a medium dark ruby color and aromas of dark cherry, earth, and a touch of leather. On the palate this Pinot Noir offers ripe red berry fruit, minerals and violets but is a tad rustic with high acidity and a tart finish.

Cono Sur 2007 Ocio Casablanca Valley (\$50) 91+

This is an outstanding wine with considerable depth and complexity. It comes from the same vineyard as 20 Barrels but is produced from a special selection of the grapes which are grown on a high terraced slope of low yielding vines. It has a nose of dark fruit, smoke and loam followed by an attack of sweet black cherry and black raspberry fruit, minerals and toasted oak. Although it spends 14-16 months in new French oak, the oak is nicely integrated offering a rich velvety mouth feel, with excellent balance and soft round tannins. The wine is so packed with flavor it would benefit from cellaring for a few years. If consumed now, it should be decanted and allowed to breathe for at least 3-4 hours.



Cousiño Macul is one of Chile's oldest family wineries. Established in 1856 in the Alto Maipo, it has a distinguished history of producing some of Chile's finest premium wines. It owns two estates, the newest located in the town of Buin just south of Santiago. This winery's Antiguas Reservas wines, its ultra premium wines, such as Finis Terrae, and its icon wine, Lota, are all of excellent quality. Importer: Winebow, Inc Montvale, NJ

Cousiño Macul 2008 Chardonnay Antiguas Reservas Alto Maipo Valley (\$15) 89

The nicely balanced 2008 Chardonnay Antiguas Reservas is excellent quality for the price. It's aromatic with a buttery attack despite the fact that only part of the wine is aged in oak. It also sees about half malo.

Cousiño Macul 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon Antiguas Reservas Alto Maipo Valley (\$15-20) 90

This Cabernet Sauvignon exhibits fragrant black currant and blackberry fruit aromas and offers a velvety attack of pure and concentrated fruit flavors. The wine is also beautifully balanced with ripe tannins and has a long and flavorful finish. It is drinkable now, but will get better with aging as we learned from our vertical tasting of vintages going back to 1960. This Cabernet Sauvignon is also one of Chile's finest wine values.

Cousiño Macul 2007 Finis Terrae Alto Maipo Valley (\$38) 92

Finis Terrae is a delicious Bordeaux blend which should be called "Baby Lota" after Cousiño Macul's fabulous icon wine reviewed below. It is an elegant wine like Lota with pure red and black fruit flavors that are perfectly integrated with oak. It is also silky smooth on the palate with outstanding balance, ripe smooth tannins, and a long lasting finish. The real beauty is that Finis Terrae is widely distributed and is sold at half the price of Lota. Of course, it is not Lota, but it is a terrific bottling.

Cousiño Macul 2006 Lota Red Wine Maipo Valley (\$80) 95

Lota is Cousiño Macul's limited production icon wine started in 2003 to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the winery. This is the third vintage of this sumptuous wine, a Bordeaux blend of 85% Cabernet Sauvignon and 15% Merlot that is barrel fermented for 15 months in new French oak. It has a saturated ruby purple color and a fragrant bouquet of blackberry, violets, blackcurrants and plum. On the palate it exhibits remarkable purity and concentration of black fruit flavors without being over ripe, and it is soft and lush yet beautifully structured with round and silky tannins and a long persistent finish. Only 1,500 cases produced.



De Martino is a family-owned winery which gives top priority to producing terroir-oriented wines. Its Legado line includes wines of origin which are distinctive, reflecting their terroir. In 2001 Viña De Martino harvested its first organically grown wine grapes. Importer: Opici Import Company, Glen Rock NJ

De Martino 2008 Chardonnay Single Vineyard Quebrada Seca, Limarí Valley (\$30) 90

This is a beautiful wine offering lovely aromas of melon pear, honey, and pineapple. It has a silky smooth palate, creamy texture, richness and depth of flavor with mineral notes, and it has a pleasant finish with lingering acidity. A wine with a sense of place, reflecting the gravel and clay soils of the Quebrada Seca. A wine to linger over.

De Martino 2007 Chardonnay Legado Reserva Limarí Valley (\$18) 89

The 2007 Chardonnay Legado Reserva offers everything one has come to expect in a New World Chardonnay—tropical fruit, a rich, slightly honeyed palate, and a judicious amount of buttery oak. A vanilla, honey, and tropical fruit bouquet gives way to a rich, leesy palate of ripe pear with toast notes. Aged in French oak for 12 months. Overall, a well-balanced wine with a crisp finish.

De Martino 2006 Carmenere Single Vineyard Alto de Piedras Maipo Valley (\$30) 90

De Martino winemaker Marcelo Retamal has produced an impressive Carmenere in this Alto de Piedras single vineyard bottling. Dark ruby purple in color, it shows pure concentrated fruit on both the nose and palate. There's dark berry, plum, and a little cedar in the nose, followed by dense fruit with coffee and caramel notes in the mouth and a sweet finish of assertive tannins. This one is for the real Carmenere fruit lover!

De Martino 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon-Malbec Organic Maipo Valley (\$15) 89

This enticing opaque ruby, 50/50 Cabernet Malbec blend is made of organically grown grapes. Aromas of tobacco, cassis and smoke lead to a full, sweet palate of dark red fruit (think chocolate covered cherries). Finishes with somewhat dry tannins. Very pleasant, but there's not a lot of Cabernet character here.

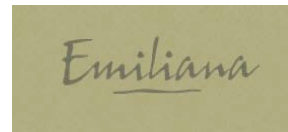
De Martino 2006 Las Cruces Old Bush Vines Cachapoal Valley (\$30) 91

The 2006 Las Cruces Old Bush Vines is richly flavored and superbly crafted. Juicy blackberry, vanilla, smoke and violets show on the nose, and these same traits carry over to the full-flavored, nicely concentrated palate with a touch of salinity and raisins on the finish. This is a wine that merits cellaring.

Domus Aurea 2005 Cabernet Sauvignon Maipo Valley (\$55) 92



This is a well made, classic Cabernet Sauvignon showing dark fruit and lots of expensive French oak. A blend of 86% Cabernet Sauvignon, 10% Merlot, and 4% Cabernet Franc, the Domus Aurea is aged for 18 months in French oak and another 18 months in bottle prior to release. Still the 2005 is firmly tannic and could benefit from further aging. Opaque purple ruby, it shows violet, herbal undergrowth, anise and oak on the nose and flavors of red and black berries, bitter chocolate, and green tobacco on the palate. Sourced from the famous 45 acre, very low yielding (1-1.5 tons/acre) Clos Quebrada de Macul vineyard. (Importer: Global Vineyard Wine Importers,, Berkeley, CA



This winery is a leader in sustainable, biodynamic and organic viticulture. Founded in 1986, **Viñedos Emiliana**

S.A. owns some 1,117 ha in Casablanca, Maipo and Rapel. Its concern for the environment earned it an ISO certification. In 1998, it launched a unique project integrating its various vineyards into a network of organic and biodynamic vineyards, which gave birth to Emiliana Organico. 830 ha are certified organic and 450 certified biodynamic. The wines reviewed here are biodynamic or organic and are produced under the guidance of master winemaker, Alvaro Espinosa. Importer: Banfi Vintners, Old Brookville, NY

Emiliana 2008 Chardonnay Novas Casablanca Valley (\$17) 87

This light gold, organically farmed Casablanca Valley Chardonnay shows almond, lychee, and ripe melon on the nose. These follow through to the well-balanced palate, along with some herbal and mint notes. The Novas range of organic wines is produced by Emiliana Organico under the guidance of consulting enologist Alvaro Espinoza and resident winemaker Antonio Bravo. The grapes come from 23 year old organically grown vines and is fermented half in stainless steel and half in barrique.

Emiliana 2007 Novas Carmenere Cabernet Sauvignon Colchagua Valley (\$15) 89

This Carmenere-Cabernet Sauvignon blend (54% Carmenere and 46% Cabernet Sauvignon) gives Carmenere a bigger structure and darker flavor profile. Opaque ruby in color, it exhibits vibrant blackberry and mocha aromas with a sweet attack of concentrated fruit and slightly astringent tannins. Overall, it is a fruit forward wine with lush blackberry, plum and violets on the palate, a velvety mouth feel, and good balance through to the finish. Excellent value.

Emiliana 2007 Coyam Colchagua Valley (\$29) 90

The 2007 Coyam, riper and richer in flavor than the previous vintage, is a blend of Syrah, Carmenere, Merlot, Petite Verdot and Mourvedre. Aged in oak for 13 months, it has an opaque purple ruby color and aromas of blackberry, plum, violets and roasted meat. It has a fruit rich attack of fresh blackberry and plum with notes of chocolate and raspberry. The tannins are ripe and the finish is long lasting with lovely berry liqueur like fruit. Coyam is the product of biodynamic agriculture and the second certified biodynamic wine of this estate.

Emiliana 2005 "G" Colchagua Valley (\$80) 93

"G" is a rich blend of mainly Syrah with small amounts of Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon and Carmenere. It displays a lovely ruby color and has a nose of red plum, black currants, violets and dark chocolate. Velvety smooth on the attack, it reveals complex and layered fruit flavors with earth and meaty notes. It also has beautifully integrated fruit and oak, soft round tannins and a long finish. The "G" is the first biodynamic certified wine in Latin America.



ERRAZURIZ

Errázuriz is one of Chile's most illustrious, family-owned wineries. It was founded in 1870 by Don Maximiano Errázuriz in the Aconcagua Valley and is today

operated by Don Maximiano's descendent, Eduardo Chadwick, who has overseen the modernization and growth of the winery. Errázuriz owns numerous vineyards in the Aconcagua Valley and Casablanca Valley and produces a large and diverse portfolio of world class wines. Francisco Baettig, pictured here, has been Chief Winemaker at Errázuriz since 2003 and is at the cutting edge of winemaking in Chile today. Importer: Vintus Pleasantville, NY



Errázuriz 2009 Sauvignon Blanc Estate Casablanca Valley (\$16) 88

There's lots going on in this richly flavored and well-balanced Sauvignon Blanc. Medium straw in color, there's a floral character to the lime and grapefruit citrus nose. The rich, creamy palate also shows ripe citrus, passion fruit, minerals and lees notes. Finishes long and ripe.

Errázuriz 2008 Chardonnay Wild Ferment Casablanca Valley (\$20) 88

The Chardonnay Wild Ferment displays a lovely straw gold color and aromas of tropical fruit, white flowers and lees. On the mid-palate it shows a creamy texture, good intensity of fruit flavors and brisk acidity on the finish.

Errázuriz 2008 Pinot Noir Wild Ferment Casablanca Valley (\$21) 91

The 2008 Pinot Nor Wild Ferment exhibits a medium ruby red color and displays a delicate, attractive nose of red cherry, raspberry, smoke, and toasty oak. It is soft and elegant on the attack with a notable feminine delicacy. It is alive with bright dark cherry fruit under brush and hints of earth and minerals. A very tasty wine with firm round tannins on the finish.

Errázuriz 2008 Carmenere Single Vineyard Aconcagua Valley (\$21) 90

This Carmenere Single Vineyard has an opaque ruby purple color and a very aromatic nose of flowers, black cherry and black pepper with a hint of coconut. On the mid-palate, it offers flavorful blueberries, cassis coconut, and loam with violets and spice. The wine is beautifully structured and finishes long.

Errázuriz 2007 Syrah Single Vineyard Aconcagua Valley (\$20) 89

The Syrah Single Vineyard displays a dark ruby color with meaty and savory aromas and notes of smoke and violets. It offers a sweet attack of pure red and black fruit and minerals with a touch of white pepper. Pure and concentrated, it has a long flavorful finish.

Errázuriz 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon Single Vineyard Aconcagua Valley (\$20) 89

This Cabernet Sauvignon offers aromas of black currant, scorched earth and notes of garrigue. It has a soft attack of sweet fruit of moderate intensity, firm tannins and a long finish.. Overall, nicely done.

Errázuriz 2007 The Blend Aconcagua Valley (\$21) 90

The Blend combines 45% Syrah, 20% Cabernet Franc, 20% Carmenere, and 5% Roussane. Aged for 18 months in French oak, it has an attractive nose of dark red fruit and toasty coconut and a flavorful palate of black and red currants, spice, sweet oak, and vanilla essence. It has a velvety smooth texture with ripe tannins and a long persistent finish.

Errázuriz 2007 Kai Aconcagua Valley (\$120) 95

Kai is a majestic wine. Produced from Carmenere, it has an opque ruby purple robe and amazingly fragrant aromas of black cherry, violets, blackberry liqueur, minerals, and bitter chocolate. Aged in French oak for 18 months, it is soft and lush, almost unctuous on the palate with concentrated fruit flavors, elegance and power. It has a very long finish of pure fruit and violets that lasts forever. Although pricey, this wine shows the truly great potential of Carmenere in Chile.

Viña Falernia Located in the Elqui Valley, Viña Falernia is Chile's northernmost wine estate. Founded in 1997 by Aldo Olivier and cousin/winemaker Giorgio Flessati, the winery possesses 320 ha across three vineyards, one of which (Huenete) is situated at 2000m. The wines are well made. Importer: Meadowbank Estates/Empson (U.S.A.) Alexandria, VA

Viña Falernia 2008 Sauvignon Blanc Elqui Valley (\$11-15) 90

The 2008 Sauvignon Blanc Reserva is a beautiful, palate cleansing wine made of grapes sourced from Chile's northernmost wine estate. Pale straw in color, it shows rich aromas of grapefruit and leeks and a substantial palate of honeydew melon and ripe citrus with good acidity and a very long finish. Matured on its lees for six months.

Viña Falernia 2006 Carménere Syrah Elqui Valley (\$13-15) 88

This is a tasty fruit forward blend of 60% Carmenere and 40% Syrah. It exhibits earth and blackberry fruit flavors on the nose followed by a soft attack and wild red and black fruit flavors on the palate. It has a rich texture, firm tannins, and a long finish.

Viña Falernia 2006 Syrah Elqui Valley (\$13-15) 90

The Falernia Syrah Reserva is a meaty, cool-climate Syrah of good complexity and outstanding value. Semi-opaque ruby in color, it offers aromas of bacon fat, animal and charred meat and a deep palate of black raspberry fruit with a smoky accent. Finishes with notes of black pepper and herbs.



Haras de Pirque

This winery is owned by entrepreneur Eduardo Matte who also operates a throughbred farm in the Alto Maipo Valley. This region is renowned for producing some of Chile's finest red wines. The estate consists of 600 hectares, of which 120 are planted to red and white varieties. Its vineyards are managed in an environmentally friendly way and its wines are of a high quality. (Importer: Ste. Michelle Wine Estates, Woodinville, WA)

Haras del Pirque 2008 Elegance Chardonnay Maipo Valley (\$12-15) 89

Dulce de leche, vanilla, toasted coconut and marzipan aromas and flavors are abundant in this rich, yellow straw colored wine. Finishes with very good acidity and a slight sweetness. Would be a great food wine for some Asian dishes.

Haras de Pirque 2007 Syrah Character Maipo Valley (\$12-15) 89

Only 1000 cases are produced of this opaque ruby beauty. The nose shows meat and blackberry, while there's tangy red and black fruit on the palate along with violet and licorice notes on the finish. Estate bottled from very low-yielding vineyards. Barrel aged for 14 months.

J & F Lurton Chile 2005 Gran Araucano Cabernet Sauvignon Colchagua Valley (\$30) 90



This attractive wine is produced by Jacques and Francois Lurton, the sons of the famed Bordeaux winemaker, Andre Lurton. Opaque ruby purple in color, it exhibits aromas of fresh black currants, herbs, and licorice. On

the palate it offers black and tangy red fruit with charred oak, bright fruit flavors, including a touch of framboise and spice. This is an elegant wine that clearly improves as it goes along. Give it time. Importer: Global Vineyard Importers Berkeley, CA and Winesellers, Ltd. Niles, IL

Kingston Family Vineyards



This family owned winery located in the Casablanca Valley occupies 200 acres farmed according to the best New World vineyard management practices. The winery produces handcrafted Pinot Noir, Syrah and Sauvignon Blanc

under consulting California winemaker Byron Kosuge. Kingston Family Vineyards is one of the most talented producers of Chilean Pinot Noir and makes equally fine Syrah and Sauvignon Blanc. Importer: Kingston Valley Vineyard Portola Valley, CA

Kingston Family 2007 Sauvignon Blanc Cariblanco Casablanca Valley (\$16) 88

The high-toned Cariblanco Sauvignon Blanc is fresh and clean with a sumptuous nose of lychees and passion fruit. It has a crisp attack and a delicious palate of lychees and citrus with notable acidity.

Kingston Family 2007 Pinot Noir Alazán Casablanca Valley (\$30) 90

This Pinot Noir from one of Chile's finest modern wineries, displays a dark ruby color with aromas of red and black fruit, herbs, earth charred oak and lavender. It offers a sweet attack with excellent texture on the palate of dark fruit with a touch of dark chocolate. It has a lovely overall balance and a long persistent finish.

Kingston Family 2006 Syrah Bayo Oscuro Casablanca Valley (\$28) 91

Winemaker Byron Kosuge has crafted a winner with the 2006 Bayo Oscuro Syrah made from cool-climate Casablanca Valley fruit. The nose is gamey with a bacon note, while the almost unctuous palate shows layers of fleshy black fruit, chocolate and roasted meats. Firmly tannic, it finishes sweet and very long with notes of dark chocolate and blackberry.

Kingston Family 2007 Syrah Lucero Casablanca Valley (\$18) 90

The opaque purple ruby 2007 Lucero shows incredible purity of big, concentrated fruit. Roasted meat and blackberry compote aromas lead to a sweet, lush attack of black fruit, smoked meat, and violets and a long finish showing sweet, dried dark fruit notes. While not quite as complex as Kingston's Bayo Oscuro, it's likely to be more appealing to a wider audience.

Viña La Rosa



Founded in 1824, Viña La Rosa is one of the oldest wineries in Chile. It was established by the Ossa family which has owned and operated the winery for six generations. It is located in the Cachapoal Valley and owns three estates. Chief winemaker over the past 12 years has been José Ignacio Cancino. Importer: MJM Global Brands, Lutherville, MD

Viña La Rosa 2008 Carmenere La Capitana Barrel Reserve Cachapoal Valley (\$18) 90

This is an impressive, full-throated, 100% Carmenere with still assertive tannins but nicely integrated fruit and oak. Very dark ruby in color, it has a gorgeous nose of smoke, bitter chocolate and dark cherries and plums. In the mouth, it's round and full with a notable sweetness in the mid-palate. Still pretty tannic at this early stage of its development. It's made from 50 year old, own-rooted vines, and the wine is aged 9 months in new and used oak barrels.

Viña La Rosa 2008 Merlot La Capitana Cachapoal Valley (\$18) 88

The La Capitana Merlot is a flavorful dark ruby-colored wine offering aromas of fresh plum, red berry fruit and wood spice. Modern in style, it is soft on the attack, nicely concentrated, with good acidity, tannic grip and a firm finish.

Viña La Rosa 2008 Shiraz La Capitana Cachapoal Valley (\$18) 88

The fruit forward, internationally styled La Capitana Shiraz is a crowd pleaser with its black cherry and dark chocolate character. Dark ruby in color, it offers a velvety smooth mouthfeel and a very flavorful and long finish. It's a blend of 85% Syrah, 10% Cabernet Franc and 5% Merlot from estate grown fruit in the Cachapoal Valley.

Viña La Rosa 2007 Don Reca Cachapoal Valley (\$24) 89+

Don Reca is an opaque ruby fruit forward blend of Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon with notes of leather and game. It has nicely focused flavors with lavish oak undertones, and is beautifully balanced with round chewy tannins and a long finish. A lovely wine.

Viña La Rosa 2004 Ossa Sixth Generation Cachapoal Valley (\$100) 94

This is a superb blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Syrah and Carmenere. It is an opulent and savory wine, rich in black currant and wood spice, with an amazingly soft and velvety texture. From the first taste to the finish, the wine shows outstanding balance and structure. It has excellent acidity and balance, silky tannins and complex layers of fruit, spice, licorice and light mint. A complex and seductive wine.



LEYDA

Founded in 1997 in the Leyda Valley, this innovative winery produced its first wines (Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay and Pinot Noir) in 2001. It currently owns 242 ha of vines and also purchases fruit in Rapel, Colchagua and the Maipo Valley for its premium red varieties other than Pinot Noir. **Viña Leyda** is committed to the development of the Leyda Valley as a world class Pinot Noir producer. In 2007 Viña Leyda was acquired by Viña Tabali and both wineries are now owned by Viña Valles de Chile. Importer: Winebow Montvale, NJ

Viña Leyda 2009 Sauvignon Blanc Garuma Vineyard Leyda Valley (\$20) 89

This medium straw-colored, single vineyard Sauvignon Blanc shows a nice nose of asparagus and citrus that carry over to the chalky-textured palate, along with a wet stone note. The finish is nicely focused with minerals, acidity, and some green vegetal notes. Very good, but we found the 2008 vintage of this wine [still available in many retail stores] even better balanced with a slightly richer mouth feel.

Viña Leyda 2008 Pinot Noir Las Brisas Reserve Leyda Valley (\$21) 89

Leyda's Las Brisas Vineyard Pinot Noir is dark ruby in color and offers fresh flavors of dark cherry fruit with smoke, chocolate and minerals on the nose. It is soft and round on the palate with nicely integrated fruit, oak spices and earth notes. This is a ripe Pinot Noir benefiting from low yields, good exposure to ocean breezes (14 km from the Pacific Ocean) and good sunlight during a long growing season.

Viña Leyda 2008 Pinot Noir Lot 21 Leyda Valley (\$30) 89

Lot 21 is sourced from a parcel of 1.5 hectares that is farmed organically and yields a low 4 tons per hectare. It has a dark ruby hue and nose of black cherry and smoky oak. It is nicely concentrated on the palate with charred oak, purity of fruit, black pepper and earthiness on the finish.

Viña Leyda 2008 Pinot Noir Single Vineyard Cahuil Vineyard Leyda Valley (\$21) 87

The Cahuil Vineyard Pinot Noir exhibits a dark ruby color with aromas of dark cherry, loam and slate or minerals on the nose. Spending 10 months in French oak, it offers sweet oak on the attack with a dark cherry, earth, and a touch of cigar box. Yields from this vineyard are a low 4 tons per hectare.

Loma Larga Vineyards.



Established in Casablanca in 1999 by Felipe Díaz, this family-owned boutique winery is producing excellent cool climate premium wines from a 700 ha estate in Casablanca Valley.

Winemaker is Emeric Genevière-Montignac. BMC Imports, Stamford, CT

Loma Larga 2007 Cabernet Franc Casablanca Valley (\$20) 89+

The opaque ruby purple Cabernet Franc boasts fragrant aromas of dark plum, black cherry and chocolate. It is soft and feminine on the attack with ripe fruit flavors, notes of violets, herbs and tobacco and soft round tannins on the finish.

Loma Larga 2008 Malbec Casablanca Valley (\$20) 91

This is a fine Malbec, one of the better ones tasted in the mid-priced range and from a coastal area. It is opaque purple ruby and offers aromas of blueberry, blackberry, liquid violets, licorice and loam. On the palate it is nicely focused with layers of ripe concentrated dark cherry fruit and uplifting flavors which carry over to the long finish with firm ripe tannins. Very nicely balanced and mouthfilling.

Loma Larga 2007 Syrah Casablanca Valley (\$25) 89

The 2007 Syrah is dark ruby in color and reveals aromas of blackberry, roasted meat, loam, and underbrush. It has a lush and juicy fruit-rich palate, with good balance, and a nice spicy note on the finish.

Loma Larga 2008 Pinot Noir Casablanca Valley (\$25) 87

This Pinot Noir exhibits a medium ruby hue and aromas of cherry and smoky oak. It is soft and feminine on the attack with attractive mouth filling red cherry fruit and a touch of underbrush. Feminine in style, it has a soft velvety palate, round tannins and a short finish.



Viña Los Vascos is a project of Domaines Baron de Rothschild that was launched in 1988. It was established in Colchagua on a vineyard that was first planted in the 19th century when the French

brought their vines and expertise to Chile. Los Vascos is the first French viticultural investment in Chile in modern times. The wines are generally of excellent quality and value. Importer: Pasternak Wine Imports Harrison, New York

Los Vascos 2007 Grande Réserve Colchagua Valley (\$15) 89

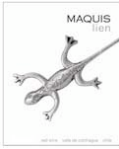
The Los Vascos Cabernet Sauvignon blend is one of Chile's best Cabernet values. Medium ruby in color it has dark cherry, cassis, and spicy cedar notes on the nose with nice purity of black currant and cassis fruit on the palate. It has fine grained tannins and a long persistent finish. It is 75% Cabernet Sauvignon blended with Carmenere, Malbec, and Syrah.

Los Vascos 2006 Le Dix de Los Vascos Colchagua Valley (\$48) 91

Le Dix de Los Vascos is this winery's top of the line blend of Cabernet Sauvignon that also includes touches of Carmenere, Malbec and Syrah. Dark ruby to the rim, it has a nose of light cassis fruit, mint and sage reminiscent of a young Pauillac. Medium weight on the palate, it offers nicely integrated dark fruit, toasted oak, minerals, and earth notes. The wine is beautifully structured with layers of flavor and finishes long. It is sourced from 70-year-old vines from the "El Fraile" parcel and is aged in new French oak barrels for 18 months.

Luis Felipe Edwards 2005 Doña Bernarda Colchagua Valley (\$29) 89

Dark garnet. A traditional and rustic styled wine exhibiting aromas of black fruit, leather, mushroom, and charred oak. On the palate, it reveals more concentrated black fruit, leather, heavy toast, roasted almond, and earth notes. Finishes long and dry. Importer: Admiral Imports Cedar Grove, NJ



Viña Maquis is a boutique family winery located in the Colchagua Valley produces two excellent estate bottled red blends in a state of the art gravity flow winery. Winemaking is in the hands of two enologists: Ricardo Rivadeneira and

Alejandro Jofré. Importer: Global Vineyard Importers Berkeley, CA

Viña Maquis 2006 Maquis Lien Colchagua Valley (\$18) 90

The 2006 Maquis Lien is an estate bottled fruit forward blend of Syrah (42%), Carmenere (30%), Cabernet Franc (12%), Petit Verdot (8%), and Malbec (7%). The nose reveals aromas of ripe black fruit and cassis that are mirrored on the palate with violet notes and black pepper. The wine shows good body, round tannins and a long and persistent finish.

Viña Maquis 2007 Calcu Colchagua Valley (\$12) 87

The Calcu is a blend of 50% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Carmenere, 15% Cabernet Franc and 5% Petite Verdot. It has a medium ruby robe and a nose of red fruit with hints of roasted meat and leather. It is soft on the attack, light bodied with rustic flavors on the palate. Importer: Global Vineyard Importers Berkeley, CA



Matetic was launched in 1999 by the Matetic family in the San Antonio Valley. The wines are produced from grapes grown on 120 ha of vineyards, which are part of a 16,000 ha agricultural estate. The Matetic vineyards are

located some 20 km from the sea and are worked organically. Their vineyards are also one of the few (not so few really! More like "a growing number of") Chilean estates that practice biodynamic viticulture and are soon to be certified. The Matetic wines are produced under two labels—EQ and Corralillo. The EQ wines are of especially good quality. Importer: FPD, Inc., Carson, CA

Matetic 2007 Pinot Noir EQ San Antonio Valley (\$35) 90

The Pinot Noir EQ has a dark ruby robe with aromas of ripe red berries, plum and smoke. On the palate it is harmonious with dark fruit, forest floor and kirsch notes. Touches of charred oak and vanilla notes appear on the finish.

Matetic 2007 Syrah Corralillo San Antonio Valley (\$24) 89

The Corralillo Syrah is a fruit forward wine with a very nicely balanced palate showing minerals, loam and a nicely concentrated boysenberry and blackberry compote with cassis notes. Finishes rich and long.

Matetic 2007 Syrah EQ San Antonio Valley (\$36) 90

The Syrah EQ is lush and round on the palate and offers aromas of smoky black fruit, minerals, herbs and savory spices. On the palate it reveals lively and complex flavors of blackberry fruit, braised meat and spice. The wine has round tannins and a persistent finish



Maycas del Limari is an exciting new project in the Limari Valley launched by Concha y Toro. The Limari Valley benefits from strong coastal influences owing to its more direct exposure to the Pacific Ocean breezes, luminosity, and minerality

of the soils. The Limari area also has a long growing season. Maycas del Limari wines are of a very high quality and produced under the direction of the young and talented winemaker, Marcelo Papa. Importer: Banfi Vintners, Old Brookville, New York

Maycas del Limari 2009 Sauvignon Blanc Reserva Especial Limari Valley (\$23) 91

The medium straw 2009 Sauvignon Blanc Reserva Especial is Pouilly-Fume like with its flinty mineral nose. The palate shows lovely, focused citrus fruit with notes of oyster shells, reflecting the exceptional soils of Limari. We prefer this to the 2008 vintage.

Maycas del Limari 2007 Chardonnay Quebrada Seca Limari Valley (\$40) 92

This is an exceptional, medium yellow straw Chardonnay from one of Chile's most unique vineyards. There are rich aromas of smoked hazelnuts and beautifully integrated flavors of understated fruit and oak on the palate. Extended time on lees and 12 months in 50% new oak contributes to a lovely, creamy texture. Grown on selected blocks of the Quebrada Seca where there is a concentration of limestone.

Maycas del Limari 2008 Chardonnay Reserva Limari Valley (\$15) 89

This is an unoaked, medium yellow straw Chardonnay that also sees no malo. It shows ripe tropical fruit aromas and has a crisp, mineral like attack with nicely concentrated lemon citrus, ripe melon, and light mango flavors. Reveals the unadulterated Limari terroir.

Maycas del Limari 2008 Chardonnay Reserva Especial Limari Valley (\$22) 91

This is a beautifully balanced Chardonnay with a nose of light tropical fruit, smoke, and flinty minerality. The palate shows good minerality, smoky oak, and tropical fruit on a velvet palate. It's Burgundian in style with superb integration of fruit and wood. Spends 12 months in 40% new oak with no malo. Sourced from the Quebrada Seca vineyard. We slightly prefer this to the 2007 vintage of the same wine.

Maycas del Limarí Syrah Reserva Limarí Valley (\$15) 89

This is a lighter style Syrah with moderated fruit, which makes it especially easy to pair with food. Aged in used oak. There are notes of violets and smoked meat on the nose with nice purity of black fruit with black olive notes on the palate. Finishes with sweet, assertive tannins. Very good value.

Maycas del Limarí 2007 Syrah Reserva Especial Limarí Valley (\$25) 93

The elegant Syrah Reserva Especial is nicely balanced with impressive richness and purity of flavor. It possesses very nice weight on the palate, avoiding the overly sweet, unctuous character of many Syrahs. It reveals ripe and concentrated black fruit and spice on the nose and palate and finishes with firm, round tannins. Aged in 100% oak, 50% of which is new. A terrific wine showing great refinement of flavor and balance.



Miguel Torres established his family's winery in Chile in 1979. Curicó was selected as the site for the new winery and the first wines were released in 1980. Torres has had considerable impact

on the local wine scene. His use of temperature-controlled stainless steel tanks and reductive winemaking, clonal selection programs, and imports of vine materials are among his innovations. His winery produces good quality and highly affordable wines under the Santa Digna label, organic wines under the Tormenta label and noteworthy terroir-driven premium wines such as the Manso de Velasco, Cordillera, and Conde de Superunda. Miguel Torres is pictured above between Executive Editor, Don Winkler (l) and Publisher, Mike Potashnik (r) Importer: Dreyfus Ashby & Co. New York, NY

Miguel Torres 2007 Chardonnay Cordillera Curicó Valley (\$20) 88

The 2007 Chardonnay offers ripe tropical fruit and rich oak aromas on the nose. Fermented in 75% Nevers oak, it exhibits a rich creamy mouth feel with good citrus-like acidity and balance, and a long lovely finish.

Miguel Torres 2006 Cabernet Sauvignon Manso de Velasco Viejas Viñas Curicó (\$30) 91

The 100% old vines Manso de Velasco Cabernet Sauvignon displays an opaque ruby robe and ripe black currant fruit on the palate. Aged for 18 months in 50% new French oak, this lovely wine offers aromas of black fruit and cigar box and great depth of flavor. It has ripe tannins beautiful integration of fruit and oak on the mid-palate and a long finish. The grapes are sourced from densely planted 114 year-old vines.

Miguel Torres 2007 Carmenere Cordillera Curicó Valley (\$20) 88

The 2007 Carmenere is a blend of 50% Carmenere 35% Merlot and 15% Petit Verdot. Semi-opaque ruby in color, it offers dark cherry and cedar aromas with a slight herbal note. Aged for 9 months in French oak, (30% new) it reveals rich dark red fruit and herbal flavors on the palate with somewhat aggressive tannins on the finish.

Miguel Torres 2006 Cariñena Cordillera Central Valley (\$27) 90

The Cariñena Cordillera is a blend of 54% Cariñena, (sourced from 50+ year old bush vines), 22% Shiraz, and 24% Merlot. It displays a dark ruby color and aromas of ripe blue and blackberry fruit with notes of leather and earth. It is soft on the attack and shows berry and plum fruit on the palate with ripe tannins and persistent dark red fruit notes on the finish

Miguel Torres 2002 Conde de Superunda Curicó Valley (\$55) 91

This is a unique blend of 63% Tempranillo, 26% Cabernet Sauvignon, 7% Carmenere, and 4% Monastrell. It is aged for 24 months in 100% new Nevers oak. Opaque ruby garnet in hue, it reveals a spicy dark fruit and cedar nose. Soft on the attack it is super concentrated on the mid-palate with flavors of black fruit, oak, licorice, minerals, earth and leather. The finish is ripe and long lasting.



Montes

Owner Aurelio Montes and his partners established the winery in the late 1980s and over the years Viña Montes has become one of Chile's most highly respected producers of premium wine.

Beautifully situated in the Apalta region of the Colchagua Valley, Montes produces mid-priced wines of outstanding quality, especially in the Alpha series. Aurelio Montes del Campo, son of the founder, serves as enologist. Importer: TGIC, Woodland Hills, CA

Montes 2007 Chardonnay Alpha Casablanca Valley (\$24) 89

This Casablanca Chardonnay is classic New World in style—a complete wine with a rich, creamy mouth feel and smoky oak framing lychee and green mango fruit on the palate. Medium gold in color, it has a ripe nose of smoke, mango and pineapple and a lush attack. The wine is fermented both in 1/3 new barrels (60%) for 12 months and in stainless steel (30%), and 30% undergoes malolactic fermentation.

Montes 2009 Rosé of Syrah Cherub Colchagua Valley (\$18) 88

Produced from the cool climate grapes of the Archangel Estate in Marchigüe, this lovely rosé exhibits a deep rose color and aromas of raspberry and ripe strawberry. It offers fresh lively fruit on the palate in a slightly off-dry style. The grapes for this wine are picked about 3 weeks earlier than the Montes Alpha Syrah to maintain acidity; the fruit is kept on skins for 8-12 hours for color and is blended with 5% Sauvignon Blanc.

Montes 2008 Cabernet/Carmenere, Limited Selection Colchagua Valley (\$15) 88

This fruit forward blend of 70% Cabernet Sauvignon and 30% Carmenere has a dark ruby hue and aromas of ripe plum and toast. The spicy fruit and oak on the palate are nicely integrated and the tannins are round and soft on the finish. This wine is easy to drink and is Montes' most popular blend, especially in countries that have spicy cuisines.

Montes 2007 Pinot Noir Alpha Leyda Valley (\$25) 91

The Montes Alpha Pinot Noir is a delicious fruit forward wine exhibiting a medium ruby color and aromas of red cherry fruit and smoky oak. On the palate it reveals pure black cherry fruit and brambly smoky oak with some candied fruit flavors with perhaps a touch of cinnamon. Finishes long. This is only the second release of this terrific wine. The grapes, sourced from independent growers, include the Valdivieso clone and Dijon clones 116 and 777.

Montes 2007 Carmenere Alpha Colchagua Valley (\$24) 91

The Montes Alpha Carmenere is an internationally styled wine with expansive dark plum fruit framed in sweet French oak. Dark ruby purple in color, there's smoke, cocoa and purple fruit on the nose and dark plum fruit, bitter chocolate, and ripe, assertive tannins on the palate. The fruit [90% Carmenere, 10% Cabernet Sauvignon] comes from the Marchigüe Vineyard located in the Western Colchagua, some 6 kms from the Pacific.

Montes 2007 Merlot Alpha Colchagua Valley (\$25) 89

One of Chile's finer Merlots, this one is a blend of 90% Merlot and 10% Carmenere and is aged for one year in French oak, 1/3 new. It offers spicy plum and cherry fruit on the nose with an herbal-eucalyptus note. It boasts a sweet fruit forward attack of vanilla and red plum with nice purity, minerality, high acidity, and a touch of stems. It is an elegant wine with good depth of flavor and length.

Montes 2007 Syrah Alpha Colchagua Valley (\$25) 91

The Alpha Syrah is a gorgeous wine with great purity of flavor and with a fragrant bouquet of violets, spice, and dark berry fruit. The velvet-textured palate is layered and ripe showing blackberry and blueberry in a fruit basket of flavors. One of the best examples of the variety. Superb!

Montes 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon Alpha Colchagua Valley (\$24) 91

The Montes Cabernet Sauvignon displays a semi-opaque ruby purple color with aromas of lead pencil, violets, and dark fruit. It has a soft sweet attack of opulent cassis fruit, a touch of tobacco and black tea. The tannins are ripe and wine is beautifully balanced overall with a long persistent finish. It shows the elegance of Colchagua Cabernet Sauvignon in contrast to the power of Cabernet Sauvignon from Maipo.

Montes 2006 Purple Angel Colchagua Valley (\$55) 94

Purple Angel is one of the top Carmeneres produced in Chile today. A blend of 92% Carmenere and 8% Petite Verdot, it displays a gorgeous dark ruby robe and fragrant black cherry fruit and smoky aromas on the nose. On the palate it offers remarkable purity and intensity of fruit flavors, spice and smoky oak. This is a beautifully textured and elegant wine with soft ripe tannins and a long lasting finish. A true Carmenere masterpiece.

Montes 2006 Folly Santa Cruz (\$100) 93

This is an extraordinary, fruit forward 100% Syrah showing incredible intensity on a multi-layered and integrated palate, yet it also has real elegance. The nose is a beautifully perfume of violets, smoky oak and berry fruit. Perhaps the best Chilean Syrah we've tasted!

Montes 2006 "M" Colchagua Valley (\$100) 92

The Montes "M" is an opulent Bordeaux blend of 80% Cabernet Sauvignon, 10% Cabernet Franc and 10% Merlot and Petite Verdot. Sourced from low-yielding hillside slopes of Apalta, it exhibits a dark ruby robe with aroma of black currants and cassis. Aged in French oak for 18 months, it combines elegance and power and is beautifully balanced through to the long and persistent finish. Approachable now, it will last a decade at least. The first vintage of "M" was in 1996.



Viña MontGras & Ninquén

Established in 1992 in the Colchagua Valley by brothers Hernán and Eduardo Gras, this winery produces excellent estate grown premium wine focused on the international market. Its two labels are Viña Montgras and Ninquén, the latter of which is crafted in partnership with California winemaker Paul Hobbs, who is also consulting enologist. Santiago Margonzzini is winemaker for MontGras and produces Ninquén jointly with Hernán Gras. Importer: Palm Bay International, Port Washington, NY

MontGras 2008 Carmenere Reserva Valley (\$15) 88

Winemaker Santiago Margozzini's Carmenere Reserva offers fragrant red and black spicy fruit on the nose followed by a velvety smooth palate of delicious ripe concentrated fruit flavors, soft round tannins and a good finish.

MontGras 2008 Quatro Reserva Colchagua Valley (\$18) 89

This wine is a tasty blend of 45% Cabernet Sauvignon, 20% Malbec, 20% Carmenere and 15% Syrah. It has an opaque ruby purple color and reveals a good deal of charred oak and spicy red and black fruit aromas. Soft and velvety on the palate it offers up nicely concentrated smoky red and black berry with good concentration, firm tannins and a long finish.

MontGras Antu Ninquén 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon Carmenere Colchagua Valley (\$20) 90

The dark ruby Ninquén Antu Cabernet Sauvignon (70%) Carmenere (30%) blend is one beautiful wine. Its perfumed nose is Port-like with notes of vanilla, toasty oak, plum and black currants. The attack is of sweet oak, dark red fruit, and cocoa. And there's a flavorful, long finish with sweet tannins. Fruit is sourced from MontGras' estate atop the Ninquén mountain in the Colchagua Valley. The wine is aged 18 months in new French oak.

MontGras Antu Ninquén 2007 Syrah Colchagua Valley (\$20) 92

The polished and very pleasant 2007 Mountain Vineyard Syrah shows the high potential of Syrah in the Colchagua Valley. Its bouquet is a mélange of plum, blueberry, and smoked meat with violet notes and a velvety smooth palate of sweet dark fruit, roasted fig, and meaty roasted flavors. The black fruit and dark chocolate finish on this opaque ruby colored wine is very, very long. An exceptionally good wine!

Viña Morandé



Founded in 1996 by Pablo Morandé, one of Chile's finest and most experienced winemakers, Viña Morandé sources fruit from five different valleys in Chile, with

a focus on Casablanca for white wines and Pinot Noir and Maipo for its red wines. The wines under the Edición Limitada label are of exceptional quality. Pablo Morandé (pictured) currently shares winemaking responsibilities with daughter Macarena. Importer: Morandé USA, Atlanta, GA



Morandé 2008 Sauvignon Blanc Edición Limitada Casablanca Valley (\$21) 91

This is a wine of very limited production [just sixteen barrels in 2008] from a special block of vines in the Casablanca Valley. Fermented in large oak Cuvées, the wine shows aromas of guava, mango and honey that carry over to the nicely weighted palate. The finish is long and crisp. Somewhat atypical of Chilean Sauvignon Blanc, but delicious nonetheless!

Morandé 2006 Chardonnay Gran Reserva Casablanca Valley (\$16) 88

The medium gold Chardonnay Gran Reserva shows off the tropical aromas and flavors of the Mendoza clone. Fermented in oak and aged on its lees for 9+ months, this wine has a rich, ripe nose of tropical fruit and honeyed oak. Shows good volume on the palate with flavors of honeyed, rich ripe tropical fruit. Sees no malo.

Morandé 2007 Pinot Noir Edición Limitada Casablanca Valley (\$21) 90

Pablo Morandé's Pinot Noir Edición Limitada is a complete wine. It has a lovely medium ruby color, good intensity of cherry fruit and loamy aromas and flavors and a velvety mouth feel with a persistent finish. Although it spends 14 months in barrel, it has a freshness and a fruit forward character from whole berry fermentation and the use of indigenous yeast.

Morandé 2007 Carmenere Edición Limitada Maipo Valley (\$21) 90

The Carmenere Edición Limitada exhibits the more traditional herbal character of Carmenere. It has a dark ruby color with aromas of dark red fruit, herbs, toast and vanilla. The attack offers concentrated dark red plum fruit with light astringency and a firmly tannic finish with good acidity and freshness.

Morandé 2007 Syrah/Cabernet Sauvignon Central Valley (\$21) 89

This wine is still very young with a wild note, but it is beautifully fruit rich on both the nose and the palate. The Syrah comes from a dry-farmed vineyard in Maule and is aged in Missouri oak, while the Cabernet comes from Maipo and is aged in French oak. Vanilla and mocha notes reflect 16 months oak aging.

Neyen 2005 Colchagua (\$65) 92



This is a lovely blend of half Carmenere and half Cabernet Sauvignon sourced from 30 ha of the low-yielding vines of the Apalta Vineyard in Colchagua Valley. A beautifully crafted wine by winemaker Patrick Vallete, it exhibits a

dark ruby purple hue with perfumy aromas of spicy black cherry and a soft and lush palate of ripe and concentrated fruit. Elegant yet somewhat earthy in character, it exhibits excellent balance, ripe tannins and a long firm finish. Importer: T. Edward Ltd. New York, NY.



The **O. Fournier** project in Chile is owned by Bodegas y Viñedos O. Fournier, an investment group led by entrepreneur-winemaker, José Manuel Ortega. The group was founded in 2000 with the goal of producing

high quality premium wines in different regions of the world. The project in Chile is relatively new and follows highly successful projects in Argentina and Ribera del Duero. The O. Fournier project is based in the Maule Valley and is producing tasty wines of good value, including some old vine Carignan. Importer: Tempranillo, Inc., New Rochelle, NY

O. Fournier 2008 Sauvignon Blanc Centauri Leyda Valley (\$16) 88

This is a pale straw wine with effusive aromas of lychee and citrus and a grassy note. The palate shows similar fruit and finishes crisp and refreshing. Delicious. Just 1300 cases produced.

O. Fournier 2008 Urban Maule Valley (\$15) 89

The Urban is another blend of Carignan (80 year-old vines) with Merlot, Cabernet Franc, and Cabernet Sauvignon and Carignan. Its aromas of blueberry pie and toasted oak are followed by flavors of fresh dark plum and berry fruit, cigar box, and black pepper. Young and flavorful, it still has gripping tannins on the finish that need time to soften and hopefully will.

O. Fournier 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon Merlot Carignan Centauri Maule Valley (\$20) 91

This blend of 40% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot, and 30% Carignan has nicely integrated aromas of cassis and dark plum with a dark chocolate note. On the palate it shows opulent dark red and blackberry fruit with notes of cedar and chocolate. Aged for 12 months in new French oak, it is velvety smooth and layered, and has a long persistent finish. Excellent juice.



Odfjell

Dan Odfjell, a Norwegian ship owner, created Odfjell Vineyards some two decades ago. Today he has 85 ha. of vineyards in Maipo in addition to parcels of old vine Carignan and

Malbec in Cauquenes and Curicó. Paul Hobbs of California and Arnaud Heru of Bordeaux are part of the winemaking team. Importer: Select Fine Wine, Traverse City, MI

Also Reviewed:

- 2006 Carmenere Orzada Maule Valley (86)
- 2005 Carignan Orzada Maule Valley (85)
- 2006 Malbec Orzada Lontué Valley (87)

Odfjell 2006 Aliara Central Valley (\$35) 88

The Aliara is a blend of 45% Carignan, 22% Malbec, 22% Syrah and 10% Cabernet Sauvignon. It has a sweet attack of black fruit with prominent toasted oak and vanilla highlights on the nose. On the palate it reveals more oak than fruit at this stage with hints of chocolate, vanilla and roasted nuts on the finish.

Odfjell 2005 Cabernet Franc Orzada Maule Valley (\$20) 88

This Cabernet Franc, one of the few produced in Chile, has a dark ruby garnet robe and a perfumed nose of dark cherry fruit and herbs. It is soft and lush on the palate with flavors of grilled sausage, sweet dark berry fruit, and notes of underbrush. It finishes long with sweet, round tannins that show some astringency at the very end.

Odfjell 2006 Carignan Orzada Maule Valley (\$20) 88

The dark ruby Carignan offers dark spicy plum and licorice on the nose. It has a sweet attack of coconut, chocolate, and compote-like dark plum. It finishes with sweet tannins, well-toasted oak and dark red fruit notes.

Peñalolen 2008 Sauvignon Blanc Casablanca Valley (\$12) 88



This pale yellow straw Sauvignon Blanc shows floral-like aromas of cantaloupe melon and a brisk attack of ripe apple and pear. The palate has a creamy mouthfeel and a lingering dry finish with crème caramel notes. Lovely. Importer: Global Vineyard Importers Berkeley, CA

Viña Peñalolan 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon Maipo Valley (\$21) 89

This Cabernet Sauvignon offers aromas of black fruit, smoke and tea. It has a lush attack and ripe flavors of black currant fruit, espresso, scorched earth, green olives and minerals. Its tannins are well managed and it finishes long. Importer: Global Vineyard Importers Berkeley, CA



Quintay is a young Casablanca winery started by twelve partners and growers from the Casablanca Valley. The partners sell their fruit from the Casablanca and Leyda valleys to produce Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc and Pinot Noir.

Altogether, the partners of Quintay control 800 ha. of vineyards, or 20 percent of the total production of Casablanca and Leyda. Total production has been increasing very rapidly with total output in 2009 of 30 thousand cases, 2/3 of which was exported. Importer: North Berkeley Imports, Berkeley CA for some wines.

Also Reviewed:

- 2008 Sauvignon Blanc Clava Casablanca Valley (87)
- 2008 Clava Chardonnay Casablanca Valley (87)
- 2008 Pinot Noir Clava Casablanca Valley (87)

Quintay 2009 Sauvignon Blanc Leyda Valley (\$15) 90

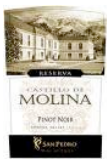
This is a gorgeous, pale yellow straw wine revealing minerals and salinity on the nose with citrus and green bean notes. In the mouth it shows excellent acidity, minerality, and citrus lime and melon flavors. A wine of exceptional value that is mainly sold in the Swedish market.

Quintay 2008 Sauvignon Blanc Casablanca Valley (\$15) 89

Another charming and superbly balanced Sauvignon Blanc from Quintay! Pale yellow straw in color, this wine shows grapefruit on the nose with a light grassy accent. On the palate there's a full-flavored attack of grapefruit and guava with minerals and excellent acidity. Finishes long and clean.

Quintay 2008 Pinot Noir Casablanca Valley (\$20) 90

The 2008 Pinot Noir reveals dark cherry fruit and toasty oak aromas with a note of chocolate. On the palate it is soft and lush with dark cherry flavors combined with toasted oak and herbal flavors. A nicely concentrated Pinot Noir in the ripe dark fruit style. Made with some whole clusters and aged for 9 months in barrel.



San Pedro produces 3 million cases annually of the highly successful basic wine, Gato Cabernet Sauvignon. In total the winery owns over 4000 hectares of vineyards. San Pedro offers three lines of wines in the mid-price range: 35 South, Castillo de Molina and 1865 and an ultra premium line, Cabo de Hornos. The quality of the wines overall is excellent. Marco Puyo is Chief Winemaker of premium and reserve wines, and Californian Paul Hobbs is consulting winemaker. San Pedro is today owned by the San Pedro Tarapacá Group. (VSPT)

Also Reviewed:

2008 Castillo de Molina Pinot Noir Curicó Valley (87)
2008 35 South Reserve Carmenere Maule Valley (87)

San Pedro 2009 Castillo de Molina Sauvignon Blanc Elqui Valley (\$12-15) 90

Marino Ruiz's vineyard, the source of fruit for this super wine, is open to the sea, just 25 km to the west. The wine reflects this special terroir. There are special aromas of asparagus, grass and lime and on the palate, nice minerality and good flavor concentration with minerals, lime and grass notes dominating. Great value.

San Pedro 2008 Castillo de Molina Chardonnay Casablanca Valley (\$12-\$15) 89

The Castillo de Molina reflects deft winemaking, resulting in a delicious, internationally styled Chardonnay. Medium straw color, it has a ripe nose of vanilla and hazelnut. On the palate it's creamy and velvet-like with flavors of rich melon fruit, hazelnut, and vanilla. Fermented 55% in used oak, 45% in stainless steel.

San Pedro 2007 1865 Cabernet Sauvignon Maipo Valley (\$12-15) 88

This Cabernet Sauvignon reveals spicy red and black fruit aromas with some savory notes. It is soft on the attack with red and black fruit, violets, and tobacco notes. It finishes with nice depth of fruit and firm tannins.

San Pedro 2007 1865 Limited Edition Syrah Elqui Valley (\$40) 91

The 1865 Limited Edition Syrah has big savory aromas of smoked meat, but on the palate there is an abundance of blackberry fruit with violet notes. It's velvet like in the mouth with just a touch of cigar box and finishes long and flavorful with smoked meat notes once again. From the Marino Ruiz vineyard. Spends 15 months in 70% new French oak. A lovely and very appealing wine.

San Pedro 2007 1865 Syrah Cachapoal Valley (\$16) 90

This single vineyard, fruit rich Syrah shows nicely concentrated spicy black raspberry and boysenberry fruit with savory notes. Finishes clean with nice depth of fruit and firm tannins with a slight astringent note. From Lot 1205 of Quillayes vineyard (named after the Quillay tree), which has mostly clay soil with good drainage. Spends 12 months in 50% new oak.

San Pedro 2007 Cabo de Hornos Cabernet Sauvignon Cúrico (\$45) 89

Cabo de Hornos is a blend of 67% Cabernet Sauvignon, 22% Syrah and 11% Malbec. It has a dark ruby hue and aromas of red and black fruit, spice, and grilled meat. On the palate it shows prominent red fruit notes, cigar box, great purity of fruit flavor and sweet tannins on the finish.



Until quite recently, **Santa Carolina**, one of Chile's oldest wineries, was producing rather uninspired wines. However, beginning in 2004 under new management, and with new investments, this winery and its subsidiary, Viña Casablanca, have been making noteworthy improvements in the quality of their wines, especially the Reserva de Familia line, cool climate whites, and specialty wines. Importer: Carolina Wine Brands USA

Also Reviewed:

2009 Sauvignon Blanc Reserva Leyda (87+)

Viña Casablanca 2009 Nimbus Sauvignon Blanc Single Vineyard Casablanca Valley (\$10-\$15) 89

The brilliant pale straw Nimbus Sauvignon Blanc is a wine of considerable complexity, reflecting in part the winery's policy to pass through the same vineyard multiple times to obtain fruit of different ripeness and fruit character. The results is a nose of minerals, green beans and citrus and a fresh attack of good acidity and abundant flavors of citrus with just a touch of grassiness. Finishes with a chalky note. Spends 2-3 months on the lees.

Santa Carolina 2008 Carmenere Reserva Rapel Valley (\$15) 88

The Reserva is a well crafted wine consisting of a dark ruby purple color and aromas of red and black berry fruit with a touch of herbs. While not as concentrated as the Reserva de Familia, it is very soft and fruity on the attack with an almost lanolin like texture, soft tannins and notes of vanilla, pepper and spice. Great value.

Santa Carolina 2007 Carmenere Reserva de Familia Rapel Valley (\$20) 90

This is Santa Carolina's top Carmenere, and it shows good concentration and flavor. Semi opaque ruby in color with a nose of black fruit pepper and spices. It has a full-flavored palate interwoven with black fruit, pepper, spices and minerals. It has a good level of ripeness as well as good acidity and firmness in the tannins and nice spice on the aftertaste.

Santa Carolina 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon Reserva de Familia Rapel Valley (\$20) 90

The fruit for the Reserva de Familia Cabernet comes from Alto Maipo. This elegant, nicely structured wine has perfumed red and black fruit and cassis in the nose. Lovely flavors with cassis, touch of earth, nice highlights, and great balance. Has a lovely finish with cassis and violet notes.

Santa Rita

Established in 1880 at its present site in Alto Jahuel, **Santa Rita** was acquired by entrepreneur Ricardo Claro a century later. Today, it is one of Chile's largest producers as well as one of its finest. The Medalla Real and Pehuén wines reviewed here are high quality and excellent value. Importer: Palm Bay International, Port Washington, NY

Santa Rita 2008 Sauvignon Blanc Floresta Leyda Valley (\$26) 91

The Sauvignon Blanc Floresta Leyda Valley is made from selected blocks of the Floresta vineyard located about five miles from the Pacific Ocean. Melon, lees and pear notes show on the nose and carry through to the palate along with minerals and green asparagus notes. Shows the complexity and minerality one would expect from a first class Loire Valley Sauvignon Blanc.

Santa Rita 2008 Sauvignon Blanc Medalla Real Leyda Valley (\$18) 88

The medium-straw Medalla Real Sauvignon Blanc from the Leyda Valley shows a complex nose of citrus and melon with an unusual wet earth element. The palate is clean with good acidity and a slight herbal note.

Santa Rita 2008 Chardonnay Medalla Real Limarí Valley (\$20) 89

The nicely balanced Medalla Real Chardonnay is California in style with aromas and flavors of tropical fruit accompanied by notes of dulce de leche, hazelnut, and dried peaches. Fruit comes from the Limarí (85%) and San Antonio (15%) valleys. 100% fermented in oak, 15% new.

Santa Rita 2008 Carmenere Medalla Real Colchagua Valley (\$20) 90

Santa Rita's Carmenere Medalla Real exhibits an attractive dark ruby color combined with aromas of red and black berry fruit, spice and oak. It is nicely delineated with ripe fruit on the palate along with notes of vanilla and cedar. Velvety smooth with good fruit concentration, it finishes with notes of chocolate and mocha. The grapes for this wine are sourced from vineyards in Apalta and Marchihue which are among the cooler growing sites in Colchagua Valley.

Santa Rita 2005 Carmenere Pehuén Apalta Valley (\$60) 92

Santa Rita's Carmenere Pehuén is a relatively new and stylish wine rich in fruit and oak and is a step up from the Medalla Real (I believe this is a step above Floresta, so 2 steps up from Medalla (see: <http://www.santarita.com/VentaNet/asp/pagDefault.asp>)). Blended with 15% Cabernet Sauvignon, it exhibits a rich dark ruby color and offers fresh aromas of black and blue berry fruit, herbal spice and cedar notes. Its sweet concentrated fruit (dry farmed at a low yielding 4 tons/ha) spends 17 months in new French oak giving the wine prominent flavors of vanilla and coconut. The palate is velvety smooth and the tannins are silky; the finish is long and persistent.

Santa Rita 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon Medalla Real Maipo Valley (\$20) 90

The dark ruby Cabernet Sauvignon is a well crafted wine with aromas of black and red berry fruit, spice and smokey oak notes on the nose. It shows nice depth of fruit on the palate with fresh modern flavors, soft round tannins and good integration of fruit and oak. It is well balanced and has a long satisfying finish. Great value.

Santa Rita 2005 Cabernet Sauvignon Casa Real Maipo Valley (\$75) 94

This is the 20th vintage of this outstanding hallmark of Chilean Cabernet Sauvignon. Young and dark ruby in appearance it offers chocolate, cedar, and dark red fruit on the nose and a richly textured palate of ripe cassis fruit flavors, spices and earth notes. It is a velvety smooth and elegant wine with soft ripe tannins and a long and persistent finish. Great stuff.

Seña 2006 Seña Aconcagua Valley (\$65) 95

Seña is a Bordeaux blend originally produced by Robert Mondavi and Eduardo Chadwick, but is now wholly under the direction of Eduardo Chadwick. It is a superb blend of 55% Cabernet Sauvignon, 16% Merlot, 13% Petit Verdot and the rest of Carmenere, Cabernet Franc and (55% Cabernet Sauvignon, 16% Merlot, 13% Petit Verdot, 10% Carmenere, 6% Cabernet Franc. The 2006 Seña reveals an aromatic nose of red and blackberry/black currant fruit and a complex array of dark fruit and wood spice flavors on the palate. It is lush and generous on the attack and silky smooth in the mouth, ending with beautifully sculptured tannins and a long and persistent finish.

Importer: Frederick Wildman and Sons, New York, NY

Tabalí 2008 Pinot Noir Reserva Especial Limarí Valley 90

The Tabalí Pinot Noir offers lots of red cherry fruit with hints of blueberry and underbrush. It is soft on the attack with flavors of dark cherry and toasty oak. A good effort that is quite tasty and refined in the mouth. Importer: Southern Wine Group, Bend, OR



Casa Tamaya is a small winery owned by businessman René Merino, who also serves as President of Vinos de Chile. Casa Tamaya's vineyards (160 ha planted) and winery are located in the Limarí Valley, 20 kms from the

Pacific Ocean. Constructed in 2001, the modern winery produces five different lines of well crafted wines. José Pablo Martín serves as Chief Winemaker. Importer: National Refrescos Import Company, Fiorham Park, NJ

Tamaya 2008 Carmenere Reserva Limarí Valley (\$15) 88

The Carmenere Reserva is medium ruby in color and displays aromas of fresh spicy plum, violets and rich blueberry. It has a velvety smooth palate, good structure and pleasant lingering finish.

Tamaya 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon Reserva Limarí Valley (\$15) 88

This is an easy drinking, inexpensive, lighter style Cabernet Sauvignon offering black currant fruit and sweet oak aromas and flavors. The wine is nicely structured with round firm tannins on the finish.

Tamaya 2008 Syrah Reserva Limarí Valley (\$15) 87

The dark ruby purple Syrah Reserva shows huckleberry and loam aromas. It has a soft attack laden with dark berry fruit and a carbonic fruit note. Finishes clean with ripe tannins.

Terranoble

Founded in 1993 in the Maule Valley, Terranoble is a large scale producer of attractively priced good quality wines sourced from vineyards in Maule, Colchagua and Casablanca. The wines are all fermented in stainless steel and are generally young, fresh, and fruit forward. The wines reviewed here are high quality red Gran Reservas. Importer: Winebow Montvale, NJ

Terranoble 2007 Merlot Gran Reserva Maule Valley (\$15) 87

The 2007 Merlot Gran Reserva displays an opaque ruby hue and boasts a ripe fruit forward character, with plum, blueberry, and licorice. It is soft and round on the palate and has a firm long lasting finish.

Terranoble 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon Gran Reserva Maule Valley (\$15) 88

The Cabernet Sauvignon offers fragrant blackcurrant and cassis fruit on the nose and ripe and concentrated black fruit flavors on the palate. A delicious wine with soft round tannins and good balance. It offers a lot for the price.

Terranoble 2008 Carmenere Gran Reserva Maule Valley (\$15) 89

Terranoble's lovely Carmenere is sourced from estate vineyards in the Maule Valley, fermented in stainless steel and aged in French oak for 12 months. It displays an intense dark ruby color and has rich aromas of red and blue fruit with peppery notes. The palate is nicely concentrated and balanced, ripe and full-bodied with soft round tannins. A great buy.

Tres Palacios is a family-winery founded in 1997 in the Maipo Valley by patriarch Patricio Palacios. The top label wine is called Cholqui; the wines reviewed here are of the mid-priced "Family Vintage" series. The wine maker is Camilo Rahmer. Importer: Michael Skurnik Wines Syosset, NY

Tres Palacios 2007 Carmenere Family Vintage Maipo Valley (\$15) 86

This Carmenere has a dark ruby opaque hue and aromas of black cherry with notes of cedar and herbs. On the palate, it reveals more earthy black fruit flavors with spicy notes and tannic grip.

Tres Palacios 2007 Merlot Family Vintage Maipo Valley (\$15) 87

The dark ruby colored Merlot reveals spicy dark plum and herbal aromas that are mirrored on the palate. The attack is tart and slightly dry with good flavor concentration through to the finish.

Tres Palacios 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon Family Vintage Maipo Valley (\$15)87+

The Cabernet Sauvignon offers ripe black currant, cassis and graphite aromas on the nose with moderately concentrated fruit flavors on the palate. It has firm round tannins, good balance, and a long finish. It is the best effort of the trio reviewed here.



Undurraga. Its founder, Francisco Undurraga, established the winery in the Maipo Valley in the 19th century with plants brought directly from France and Germany. Today, under

new ownership, the winery owns over 1,200 ha of vineyards, including some recently acquired steep hillside vineyards, in Maipo, Colchagua and San Antonio (Leyda) and produces a wide diversity of entry level (Aliwen) (there are several lines lower than Aliwen), mid-price premium wines (TH), and specialty/iconic wines. The TH (for Terroir Hunter) wines, produced by winemaker, Rafael Urrejola, are a relatively new label, and are of high quality. Alvaro Espinoza is consulting wine maker. Importer: Unduruga Wines, USA

Undurraga 2008 Sauvignon Blanc Casablanca Valley (\$20) 90

This lovely Sauvignon Blanc is sourced from a single parcel in Tapihue in northern Casablanca valley. It displays a silver gold straw color and has a rich floral aroma. It is creamy on the palate, almost lush, and has brisk acidity with melon and white peach flavors.

Undurraga 2008 TH Sauvignon Blanc Leyda Valley (\$17) 88

The pale straw TH Sauvignon Blanc displays notes of citrus and green bean on the nose and a somewhat chalky palate of modest citrus flavors. The finish is impressive—long, brisk, and fresh.

Undurraga 2008 TH Chardonnay Limari Valley (\$17) 88

The internationally styled TH Chardonnay is well-oaked, fermented in mainly (85%) French barrels. It shows aromas and flavors of melon and sweet oak and vanilla.

Undurraga 2008 TH Pinot Noir Leyda Valley (\$20) 91+

This Pinot Noir is sourced from vineyards planted in Leyda 14 km from the Pacific coast. It reveals a coastal influence with its fragrant red cherry and earthy spice aromas. On the nicely balanced palate it has a long and pleasant attack of ripe cherry fruit with layered earth and herbal notes. It is a beautifully balanced wine with good acidity and freshness.

Undurraga 2008 TH Pinot Noir Casablanca Valley (\$17) 91

The Casablanca Pinot Noir is also fresh, crisp and delicious. Medium ruby red in color, it offers fragrant red cherry and earthy spice on the nose. Very pleasant attack of good depth of cherry fruit with good complexity. Layered with fruit, earth, and spice. Beautiful, long attack of pure fruit. cherry nose, light bodied, and more delicate than the one from Leyda, even a little white pepper. Fresh, crisp and delicious.

Undurraga 2008 Sibaris Carmenere Colchagua Valley (\$15) 88

This is a pleasant tasting dark ruby Carmenere with dark cherry and pepper aromas with herbal notes and vanilla highlights. Soft on the palate with ripe flavors, round tannins and a firm finish. Excellent value.

Undurraga 2008 TH Carignan Maule Valley (\$20) 90

Undurraga's TH Carignan is sourced from 50 year-old vines from dry farmed vineyards in the Cauquenes region. It is a tasty wine, pure and fruity, with an opaque ruby color and a rich concentrated palate of juicy plum, and blackberry. Aged for 18 months in new oak, the wine offers soft round tannins, and a long and firm finish. Not yet imported.



Valdivieso

Since the early 1990s Valdivieso (long recognized as a sparkling wine producer) has been transforming itself into a modern export-oriented winery with increasing emphasis on the production of high quality premium still wines. Its Single Vineyard wines, which are of excellent quality, are sourced from individual sites and other high quality premium reserve wines are sourced from their "Primavera Estate Vineyard" in Sagrada Familia, Leyda, and central valley vineyards. Unfortunately, several high quality wines tasted in Chile are currently not imported. (Importer: Laird and Company, Scobeyville, NJ)

Also Reviewed:

- 2009 Sauvignon Blanc Reserve Casablanca Valley (87)
- 2009 Chardonnay Reserva Leyda Valley (87)
- 2008 Pinot Noir Reserva Sagrada Familia (87)
- 2008 Merlot Reserva Rapel (87)
- 2006 Cabernet Sauvignon Reserva Central Valley (87)

Valdivieso 2008 Chardonnay Single Vineyard Wild Fermented Leyda Valley 90

The superbly balanced, medium gold Single Vineyard Chardonnay from the Vina Leyda is exceptionally attractive. Ripe tropical fruit and smoke show on the nose and palate. Although the wine spend 9 months in French oak (25% new), it's hardly noticeable on the nicely integrated palate. Excellent!

Valdivieso 2009 Viognier Reserva Sagrada Familia, Curicó Valley 89+

This is a lovely Viognier with a medium gold hue and fragrant aromas of white and yellow peaches. It is ripe and lush on the palate, full-bodied, with tasty peach and passion fruit flavors, finishing with a lightly honeyed note....but not at all sweet. Not yet imported.

Valdivieso 2006 Carmenere Reserva Sagrada Familia, Curicó Valley (\$18) 88

This Carmenere sourced from Valdivieso's estate vineyard "La Primavera" reveals superb concentration and depth. Opaque ruby purple in color, it shows ripe fruit, smoke and earth with a lush soft attack of black raspberry and sweet toasty oak. On the finish there are black raspberry liqueur and light amaretto notes. Nicely done.

Valdivieso 2007 Malbec Single Vineyard Sagrada Familia, Curicó Valley (\$18) 88

Valdivieso's Malbec exhibits an opaque ruby-violet hue and offers aromas of blackberry syrup and toasted oak. On the palate it reveals savory black and red fruit flavors with smoky notes, beautiful structure, ripe tannins and a long finish.

Valdivieso 2007 Merlot Single Vineyard Sagrada Familia, Curicó Valley (\$22) 90

This Merlot is a step up from the Merlot Reserva and may well be among the finest Chilean Merlots tasted for this report. It boasts an opaque ruby robe and aromas of blueberry, violets and smoke. On the palate it shows real purity of flavor and concentration with a sweet, lush attack and lovely texture in the mouth. It also has a remarkably long finish.

Valdivieso 2007 Cabernet Franc Single Vineyard Colchagua Valley (\$22) 88

This is one of the few Cabernet Franc's produced in Chile and it is a worthy effort. It is opaque ruby in color and has a nose of dark cherry, savory herbs and vanilla. The palate has pure black and smoky ripe fruit with notes of loam, milk chocolate and black olive. The tannins are a bit gritty, while the finish is satisfying.

Valdivieso NV Caballo Loco No 11 Central Valley (\$49) 91

Caballo Loco is a super premium wine composed of Cabernet Sauvignon, Malbec, Cabernet Franc and Malbec, half of which is from the 2006 vintage and half from the previous Caballo Loco No 10. Dark garnet ruby in color, it offers rich and spicy aromas of red and black fruit followed by sweet lush layers of ripe fruit with spicy and savory notes on the palate. Balanced and evolved with sweet ripe tannins, it is drinkable now but has great aging potential for the next 5 to 7 years.

Valdivieso 2006 Eclat Maule Valley (\$27) 90

Eclat is another super premium blend of Mourvedre (50%) Carignan (38%) and Syrah (12%). Sourced from old head pruned Carignan vines of the Cauquenes region of the

Maulé Valley, and younger vines of Mourvedre and Syrah, it reveals a ruby garnet hue and a savory nose of dark red fruit, meat, violets, and smoke. Aged for 12 months in 70% French and 30% American oak (1 to 5 years old) it exhibits a sweet, lush palate with earth, leather, fruit and herbal notes and finishes with sweet oak notes.

Valdivieso 2005 La Primavera Lontué Valley (\$NA) 89

The 2005 La Primavera is another high quality red blend consisting of Cabernet Sauvignon, Malbec, and Carmenere. It has an opaque ruby garnet robe and aromas of black and red fruit, earth, cedar and vanilla bean. It boasts a ripe attack of sweet red and black fruit with earth, light leather, and vanilla-cedar notes, soft round tannins and a long spicy finish. This vintage is slightly stronger than the 2004 La Primavera. Not yet imported.



Ventisquero is a relatively young winery, established in 1998 by Agrosuper, a large Chilean company specializing in food production. Since its founding, Ventisquero has grown rapidly and today has five vineyards across Chile and several labels at different price levels. It has also launched several ultra premium specialty wines such as Vertice, Grey and Pangea. Importer: Nice Leggs, Sterling, VA

Also Reviewed:

2008 Cabernet Sauvignon Reserva (86)
Carmenere Gran Reserva (86)

Ventisquero 2007 Chardonnay Reserva Casablanca Valley (\$15) 88

This is a very attractive, modern Chilean styled Chardonnay with firm lees notes complementing pear fruit and a judicious amount of smoky oak with very good acidity. It all comes together nicely into a well-integrated and flavorful package.

Ventisquero 2006 Merlot Queulat Gran Reserva Maipo Valley (\$18) 88

The Queulat Gran Reserva Merlot has a good concentration of dark red fruit and is nicely structured with firm, ripe tannins and a long finish. This is a well-balanced, flavorful wine.

Ventisquero 2006 Grey Carmenere Maipo Valley (\$29) 91

The Grey is a top quality Carmenere. It has an inky opaque ruby hue and a nose of minerals, white pepper, leather, earth, and cassis. It reveals a sweet attack of black fruit with violet notes and minerals and has good acidity, lovely balance, soft round tannins and a lingering finish.



Ventolera is a relatively new winery that began operations in 2005. It produces attractive cool climate Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay and Pinot Noir from vineyards in the Leyda Valley.

Winemaking consultant is the renowned Chilean winemaker, Ignacio Recabarren. Importer: North Berkeley Imports, Berkeley, CA

Ventolera 2008 Sauvignon Blanc Leyda Valley (\$16) 88

The Sauvignon Blanc has a fragrant nose of tropical fruit and lemon lime citrus. It is creamy on the palate, slightly herbaceous showing good acidity and a crisp tart finish.

Ventolera 2008 Chardonnay Leyda Valley (\$22) 88

This cool climate Chardonnay displays a light straw hue and aromas of green apples and toast. It offers a soft and creamy palate with more apple, pear and banana. It has a tangy quality with good acidity and conveys an unoaked Chardonnay personality.

Ventolera 2008 Pinot Noir Leyda Valley (\$33) 89

The medium ruby Pinot Noir offers fragrant black cherry and blackberry aromas with a touch sweet oak. It is soft on the attack, with black cherry flavors, velvety texture, polished tannins and a firm finish.



Veranda is a project of the VC Family Estates which produces excellent premium wines from organic vineyards in the Bío Bío Valley, Colchagua Valley and other regions. It produces Pinot

Noir in the Bío Bío Valley formerly in collaboration with the Burgundian producer, Boisset, and makes first-class Carmenere in Colchagua. Winemaking was originally overseen by Burgundy-based Pascal Marchand. Importer: Schneider Selections, NY.

Veranda 2008 Pinot Noir Bío Bío Valley (\$20) 87

This Pinot Noir is medium ruby red and exhibits restrained raspberry, black cherry and earthy aromas. It is soft on the attack with dark cherry, plum and toasty oak flavors on a velvety smooth light palate with high acidity and mineral notes.

Veranda 2007 Pinot Noir Oda Miraflores Vineyard Bío Bío Valley (\$27) 90

The Veranda Oda Miraflores Vineyard Pinot Noir is a big step up from the basic Pinot Noir. It reveals dried cherry fruit and earthy aromas and is light-bodied on the palate with cherry fruit flavors, charred barrel notes and a lingering finish.

Veranda 2007 Carmenere Oda Apalta Colchagua Valley (\$27) 90

Ripe and elegant black fruit is featured in this big shouldered Oda Apalata Carmenere. It displays an inky ruby color followed by concentrated black fruit flavors, pepper and toasted oak. The palate also offers layers of minerals, olive, bitter chocolate, and black pepper with notes of coconut on the finish.

Veranda 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon/Carmenere Apalta Colchagua Valley (\$20) 90

This is a lovely 50/50 blend offering spicy red berry and blackberry fruit with additions of charred oak, grilled meat, mineral and smoke. Layered and complex with cassis and high alcohol (14.5 alc.) it also offers charred barrel notes, firm ripe tannins and bitter chocolate on the finish.



Viu Manent is a large and highly successful family winery founded by Miguel Viu in 1935 in the Colchagua Valley. The winery sources its grapes from three estate-owned vineyards: San

Carlos, La Capilla, and El Olivar. Until recently, the wines were made under the direction of the affable and talented New Zealand enologist Grant Phelps. The Secreto series of premium wines are noteworthy for quality and value. The single vineyard wines reviewed here are excellent, and the Viu 1 is outstanding. Viu Manent is the top Malbec producer in Chile today. Importer: Atlanta Improvement Co, Atlanta, GA

Viu Manent 2007 Malbec El Olivar Colchagua Valley (\$25) 88

El Olivar has an opaque ruby hue and aromas of forest floor, dark berry fruit and toasted oak. Aged for 14 months in barrel, it reveals a dense and focused fruit rich palate of black and red berries and notes of tar. It is nicely blanced and finishes with ripe firm tannins.

Viu Manent 2007 Malbec Single Vineyard San Carlos Estate Colchagua Valley (\$25) 90

The Viu Manent San Carlos Estate is a bigger wine than the El Olivar. It is a rich and highly extracted Malbec sourced from 60-year old vines. It exhibits ripe blackberry, minerals, and black pepper aromas and is elegant on the palate with flavors of dark berry fruit, smoke, spice and earth. This magnificent wine is approachable now, but has great aging potential. Only 1,500 cases produced.

Viu Manent 2007 Malbec Viu 1 Colchagua Valley (\$75) 91+

Viu Manent's top of the line Malbec is the superb Viu 1 which is sourced from old low yielding vines with an average age of 70 years of the San Carlos Estate vineyard. On the palate it offers aromas of ripe black fruit, game, black pepper, violets and licorice. The attack is velvety smooth followed by rich concentrated black fruit

flavors, with blue notes, sweet ripe tannins and persistent flavors on the finish. A superb wine.

Viu Manent 2007 Syrah El Olivar Alto Colchagua Valley (\$25) 88

The Syrah El Olivar offers big concentrated flavors of very ripe blackberry fruit with black pepper notes. This is a ripe-styled wine showing a lot of oak influence with round tannins and good grip on the finish.

Viu Manent 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon La Capilla Colchagua Valley (\$25) 89+

The Cabernet Sauvignon La Capilla is a beautifully crafted single vineyard wine with powerful red and blackberry fruit aromas and a touch of spice and cedar. On the palate it exhibits concentrated blackberry fruit, good structure with fine tannins and balance and a rich finish. The wine is sourced from a 20-year old vineyard of volcanic ash planted in 1989.

Viña Von Siebenthal

This boutique winery is owned by Swiss lawyer, Mauro von Siebenthal. Situated in the Aconcagua Valley, it produces high quality hand crafted wines from three low-yielding estate vineyards in Panquehue. Help in winemaking has been provided by the talented winemaker Stefano Guandolini. Importer: JC Import Co., Portsmouth, RI

Viña Von Siebenthal 2006 Carmenere Reserva Single Vineyard Aconcagua Valley (\$25) 87

The 2006 Carmenere Reserva displays very ripe and spicy red and blackberry fruit with herbal aromas. These aromas are mirrored on the mid-palate accompanied by some astringency on the finish.

Viña Von Siebenthal 2007 Syrah Carabantes, Aconcagua Valley (\$20) 88

This Syrah is a highly concentrated fruit forward wine offering ripe black fruit aromas and flavors. It is soft and lush on the palate but the fruit and alcohol define the character of the wine. A difficult match for food.

Viña Von Siebenthal 2006 Parcel #7 Reserva Aconcagua Valley (\$25) 91

This is a savory blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Cabernet Franc offering aromas of black cherry, plum, earth, cocoa, and bitter chocolate. Aged for 10 months in French and American oak, it reveals nicely concentrated black fruit, herbs and asian spices on the palate with ripe tannins and a long lasting finish.

Annex 1

Chile's Search for Terroir: From North to South

In recent years the growers and winemakers of Chile have begun an aggressive search to locate the best terroir in which to grow the major varietals produced in and exported from the country. This search included both new regions and new areas within existing regions. In the cases of some new wine producing regions—e.g., Elqui, Bío Bío—this was more a rediscovery than a discovery, as grapes for wine had been planted hundred of years ago when the Spanish first colonized these regions. In other traditional wine producing areas—e.g., Colchagua, Aconcagua—wine grapes are now being planted in new areas, usually either close to the sea or high in the precordillera. And in other areas—e.g., Casablanca, San Antonio—grapes are now being grown where they never before existed.

In what follows, we briefly explore each of the major wine-growing appellations of Chile, from north to south, and identify some of the key winemaking ventures underway as part of Chile's Wine Revolution.

Elqui. This is the northernmost wine producing region in Chile. With its population of star-gazing scientists, documented magnetic energy, and reputation for extraterrestrial sightings it also attracts a special type of tourist. While grapes have been grown here for over 400 years for the production of pisco, it is only recently that it has drawn the attention of fine wine makers. Elqui's reputation was firmly established when a Viña Falernia Syrah from the region won the annual Wines of Chile competition's top award in 2005.

The Elqui river flows from its tributaries in the Andes to the Pacific. Since the valley is open to the sea, there is a strong maritime influence near the Pacific, but daytime temperatures and diurnal temperature variations increase as one proceeds east. Other defining characteristics of the valley are its afternoon winds, its aridity, and its luminosity, averaging over 300 days per year of sunshine. The soils are varied with alluvial silts and clay on the flat benches near the river to decomposed granite on the steep slopes. One even finds measurable limestone in the soils located near the river's mouth.

The only two wineries located in Elqui are Viña Falernia and Casa del Valle, but Tabalí, Casa Tamaya, and Concha y Toro source fruit from vineyards here, as does De Martino winemaker Marcelo Retamal, who is planting Chile's highest vineyard (2000m) at Alcohuas in the eastern Elqui Valley. Sauvignon Blanc is grown nearer the coast, whereas Syrah is found further inland on the steep, granitic slopes above the river.

Limarí. Located 250 miles northwest of Santiago close to the Atacama Desert, Limarí's first winery was established

in 1993 (and purchased by Concha y Toro in 2005). The Limarí river flows through the valley, below a flat bench where vineyards are found, and through a low-lying coastal range to the Pacific. The gap in the hills created by the river provides an opening for the influence of the sea. In addition, a bit further north, at the popular beach town of Tongoy Bay, the absence of coastal hills allows the unobstructed flow of fog and ocean breezes inland.

As is true with the other transversal valleys of Chile, the climate of Limarí varies with distance from the sea. The westernmost portion of the valley, about 10 km inland, has the strongest maritime influence, while farther inland temperatures rise significantly. The moderate climate of the coastal side of the valley allows for a very long growing season with early bud-break and flowering and fruit set unimpeded by rain and frost. Mild summer temperatures combined with long, slow maturation provides the conditions for grapes to develop complete phenolic ripeness. On the other hand, the morning mist carries with it the risk of powdery mildew.

The soils of the valley are alluvial terraces with red clay and a good concentration of limestone, the only place in Chile aside from Elqui where limestone is found in significant amounts. The heavy clay of the region creates a bedpan that neither vine roots nor water can penetrate. This requires careful irrigation and cultivation.

Tamaya and Tabalí are the pioneers in establishing vineyards in Limarí. De Martino and Concha y Toro's Maycas del Limarí share the Quebrada Seca vineyard, the source of some of Chile's most special Chardonnays. Recently, others have joined the rush to Limarí, including the large wineries of San Pedro (which effectively owns Tabalí) and Santa Rita. The stars here are Chardonnay and Syrah.

Choapa Valley This valley lies between the Limarí and Aconcagua valleys. This is the narrowest part of Chile where rolling hills run from the Andes to the sea. De Martino's Syrah Legado comes from a 325 m. vineyard planted near Salamanca, Chile's fabled center of witchcraft. It's the only wine produced in Chile with this D.O.

Aconcagua Valley. Located north of Santiago, the Aconcagua Valley is large and has a relatively small but growing area (1098 ha) of wine-producing vineyards. While the climate is conducive to wine production, it is also favorable for growing many other crops, and as a result land prices are high. The valley extends from the Andes almost to the sea near Viña del Mar. With 75 percent of all vineyards planted in the region, Viña Errázuriz is almost synonymous with Aconcagua. Its vineyards include Seña, which it now fully controls after its split with Robert Mondavi.

At its western end close to the sea, the conditions for growing vines are cooler than those of Casablanca further south. However, to the east one finds one of Chile's

warmest wine-growing areas. At its far eastern, high altitude end the heat of the summer day is moderated by cool, evening winds from the Andes. The warm climate there has been conducive to producing ripe red wines with soft tannins. Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah, Petit Verdot, and Carmenere all do well there.

The growers of the region are increasingly fine-tuning their plantings to better match terroir and varietal. Von Siebenthal plants Cabernet and Syrah on the well-drained, infertile slopes and Merlot and Carmenere on the flats where clay soils retain moisture. Viña Errázuriz is undertaking new plantings at its Chilhué/Manzanares vineyard in coastal Aconcagua, with emphasis on Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay, and Pinot Noir. Viña Montes has planted Sauvignon Blanc and Pinot Noir at its coastal project at Zapallar. And Viña San Esteban has plantings at its high altitude (800 m) La Florida and Paidahuen vineyards in the eastern Aconcagua; its vineyards are also home to petroglyphs created by an earlier civilization.

Casablanca. Located just 18 km from the sea, Casablanca was the first of Chile's cooler climate regions to be planted to *Vitis vinifera*, thanks in large part to Pablo Morandé who in 1982 planted the first vines in the valley. His success attracted new investors to the region, including Emiliana and Santa Rita in 1989, and today there are over 4100 hectares planted to wine grapes. Since there is no river and water must be pumped from artesian wells, total production of grapes in Casablanca is constrained by its water supply. Compared to regions further inland, Casablanca is cool, with an average summer temperature of 25° C. Temperatures are significantly (3° C) higher in the westernmost meteorological station (Las Petras) of the valley near the Zapata tunnel compared to the easternmost station (Mina del Agua).

Unlike some other coastal areas, Casablanca is not a river valley, and it is not directly exposed to the sea. Instead, it is partially protected from the worst winds and storms by the low-lying coastal mountain range on its eastern edge. As with many coastal viticultural areas, mornings are often foggy, followed by sunny skies and moderate temperatures and cooling winds in the afternoon. The wind dries the vines and reduces the risk of botrytis and mildew. In the evening, cool, dense ocean air and fog settle in the Casablanca basin, while the hillsides remain clear. Frost is a risk, especially for wineries located on the cooler, western side of the valley, like Casas del Bosque. High winds can also interfere with fruit set in some areas.

The soils of Casablanca are decomposed granite and sand, with heavier clays on the flats. The sandy soils are hospitable to root-sucking nematodes, which can be a serious problem in the valley, especially with susceptible varieties like Chardonnay. Many varieties grow in Casablanca, with Sauvignon Blanc and Pinot Noir doing especially well in the western side of the valley. In addition to Morandé and Casas del Bosque, leading wineries in Casablanca include Kingston Family Estates, William Cole, Veramonte, Indómita, Viñamar,

Casablanca, and Quintay. Numerous wineries from outside Casablanca source fruit there.

San Antonio. This is a small region (not really a valley) located southwest of Casablanca on the western slopes of coastal hills located between 5 and 20 km. from the ocean. The famous sub-region Leyda is located within San Antonio. The lack of water deterred development of the Leyda sub-region until an 8 km pipeline to the Maipo River was constructed in 1997, and the first vines were then planted in 1998. The first wines appeared in 2001 and immediately won the approval of wine critics and consumers alike. In 2002 San Antonio acquired its own appellation.

San Antonio has the coolest coastal climate of Chile's winegrowing regions, but it also has varied microclimates. The most extreme is that of Lo Abarca, the site of Casa Marín, located just 4 km from the ocean and subject to morning mists and strong afternoon winds. Nearby Malvilla, home of Chocolan's vineyards, also directly faces the sea. Leyda, home of Viña Leyda, Garces Silva's Amayna, and Cono Sur's new vineyards, lies further inland with somewhat warmer daytime temperatures. And Rosario, where Matetic is located, is relatively sheltered and similar in its weather pattern to the nearby eastern portion of Casablanca. Diurnal variations are higher and night-time temperatures are lower in Rosario and Leyda than those of areas (like Lo Abarca) with more direct exposure to the sea.

Compared to most other wine-growing regions in central Chile, San Antonio suffers large vintage variations due to changeable weather. The ocean mist and humidity of the region also presents problems of botrytis and powdery mildew. But in general the moderate climate and long growing season creates the potential for phenolically ripe grapes of high acidity. In particular, San Antonio produces some of the most elegant, nuanced and terroir-driven Sauvignon Blanc wines outside the eastern Loire. Syrah and Pinot Noir also show great potential. The unique character of San Antonio grapes and the wines they produce is attracting new wineries either purchasing fruit or developing new vineyards.

Maipo Valley. Surrounding Santiago and extending westward almost to the sea, Maipo is Chile's most classic, established wine region where Cabernet Sauvignon reigns high. Over half the vineyards in this region are planted to Cabernet, which thrives on the well-drained soils and long growing season. The location of almost all the old family wineries established in the 19th century, the Maipo is the heart of the Chilean wine industry. The list of famous traditional wineries is long—Concha y Toro, Santa Carolina, Santa Rita, Undurraga, Tarapacá, Carmen, Cousiño Macul, etc.

With hills and mountains on all sides, Maipo is a growing area of warm days and cool nights, although towards the southwest where Chocalán and Ventisquero have their wineries there is also a significant maritime influence.

Traditionally, the Maipo has been best known for its Cabernet Sauvignon. Some of the best comes from the area known as Alto Maipo at the foot of the Andes. Here one finds some of Chile's most famous Cabernet producing areas—Puente Alto (home of Almaviva and Concha y Toro's Don Melchor), Pirque (home of Haras de Pirque), and Buin and Paine (home of Santa Rita's Casa Real and Alvaro Espinoza's Antiyal, respectively). Further west, in Central Maipo, one can find special terroirs with unique micro-climates and well-drained soils, such as in Isla de Maipo where De Martino makes its superb Carmenere. Finally, there is Coastal Maipo, which has some coastal influence and where one finds wineries like Chocalán and Ventisquero.

Cachapoal. The northern part of the larger Rapel Valley, Cachapoal is a relatively small, landlocked area of warm summer days and nights that get cooler as one proceeds east towards the Andes. The area called the Alto Cachapoal around Requínoa benefits from the cool winds of the nearby Andes. Its well-drained soils are often alluvial with clay and gravel and well-suited to producing good wine grapes.

Cachapoal is not traditionally known as a fine wine region. However, recent developments are encouraging, especially in terms of red grapes like Carmenere, Cabernet Sauvignon, and Syrah. Both Concha y Toro's Terrunyo Carmenere and Anakena's Carmenere, for example, are sourced from the Cachapoal. The Altair project developed by San Pedro and Chateau Dassault of St. Emilion is also a sign of changing times. Other important wineries in the region include La Rosa and Chateau Los Boldos.

Colchagua Valley. Colchagua shares the Rapel Valley with Cachapoal to its north. As with most Chilean appellations, this one makes little geographic sense, running from the pre-cordillera northwest towards the Pacific, never quite reaching the sea. The Tinguiririca River flows through and defines much of the valley.

This is one of Chile's most important new red wine regions with a long list of illustrious wineries and vineyards that extend from the eastern foothills of the Andes through the central plain around the town of Santa Cruz to the cooler grape-growing areas of Marchigüe and Lolol in the west. The attraction of the region shows in the rapid growth of plantings from 8 thousand hectares in the late 90s to 23 thousand today. While most the wineries are located in the broad middle of the valley, they source their grapes from throughout the region and beyond. The wineries read like a who's who of Chilean wine: Casa Silva, Cono Sur, Viu Manent, Montes, Lapostolle, Caliterra, Los Vascos, Neyen, etc.

This is the land of the big reds—Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah, and, Carmenere, as well as the old vine Malbec farmed at Viu Manent. It is also a land with outcroppings of big hills, and many of the best vineyards are planted on the hillsides instead of the flats. The soils are highly

varied, ranging from fertile alluvial soils on the flats to decomposed granite and sand on the hillsides to the volcanic sands, schist and even slate found to the west.

Curicó. Curicó lies to the south of Colchagua. This is an old established area previously famed for making bulk wine but also becoming known for its old-vine wines, especially Cabernet. It has almost 19 thousand hectares of vineyard, mostly (68%) planted to red varieties. Most vineyards are located on the flat, fertile plain at the eastern end of the appellation. Wineries like Alta Cima, Miguel Torres, Valdivieso, Echeverría and Aresti are working to improve the vines and wines of Curicó with some success. Miguel Torres' highly rated Manso de Velasco Cabernet Sauvignon and Valdivieso's Single Vineyard Merlot from Sagrada Familia illustrate the potential quality of this region.

Maule. With over 31 thousand ha under vine, this is Chile's largest wine region with many diverse microclimates. The appellation is split north-south by the Maule River which runs from the Laguna del Maule near the Argentine border in the east to the Pacific in the west. Many of the region's vineyards lie adjacent to the river. The soils tend to be rich and of volcanic origin, and the combination of rich soils and abundant land lead to prolific vines and high yields, which contribute to Chile's capacity to produce and export mass market wines around the world.

Maule used to have a reputation for producing only undistinguished, inexpensive wine. However, today, quality-oriented producers like Viña Calina, Gillmore, J. Bouchon, Casa Donoso, VIA Wine, Botalcura, Reserva de Caliboro, O. Fournier, Carta Vieja, Santa Rita, San Pedro, and Concha y Toro, are succeeding in efforts to raise the quality of Maule fruit. Maule is also the home of dry-farmed, old vines. While many of these vines are the feeble País variety, one can also find old vine Carignan, Malbec, and Cabernet Sauvignon. Maule is the source of Miguel Torres old vine Carignan (Cordillera Cariñena) as well as Valdivieso's Eclat blend.

Experimentation in Maule, catalyzed in part by Talca University's CTW (Centro Tecnológico de la Vid y el Vino) gives cause for optimism about the future of Maule wine. Individual wineries are also doing their part. Of special interest is Torres' new hillside vineyard in cool, rainy Empedrado planted on slate soils, the first in Chile.

Itata Valley. Itata is Chile's vineyard backwater. It has abundant vineyards, almost 11 thousand ha, more than Maipo or Cachapoal. But they are mostly small, dry-farmed, and untrained, with a high proportion planted to traditional varieties like Moscatel de Alejandría and País. Kendall-Jackson's Chilean winery Calina sources fruit here and has developed a cool-climate vineyard at Quirihue, just 20 km from the sea. However, at present it is a lonely pioneer of quality wines.

Bío Bío Valley. With 3,528 ha in vines, the Bío Bío appellation is small in terms of plantings, although its geographic expanse is large. It is split into north and south sections by the Bío Bío River, which runs from the Andes all the way northwest to the sea, just south of Concepción. Two of Chile's largest wine groups have vineyards on the Bío Bío River. Córpora is located near the town of Negrete, while Concha y Toro sources fruit from Quitalman, which is located southwest of Mulchén, further upstream. In addition, after purchasing the Canata winery, Córpora now has extensive (600 ha) vineyards near Yumbel in the north.

Bío Bío is located in the wet, cool south of Chile. The prominent Coastal Mountain range shields it from any maritime influence. While annual rainfall is close to 1300 mm., summers are usually dry and warm, with the capital Los Angeles having warmer summer temperatures (as high as 35°C) than Santiago. Perhaps its most distinctive feature is long hours of daylight during the summer months due to its latitude. The risk of frost, rain, cool temperatures, and a relatively short season pose viticultural challenges.

At the 140 ha vineyard amidst the pine and eucalyptus forests on the Quitalman estate, Concha y Toro is sourcing mainly white grapes—Riesling, Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay and Gewürztraminer. Meanwhile, the Córpora group is putting a focus on Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay, and Pinot Noir. It's producing first class Chardonnay and Pinot Noir from its El Carmen estate at Yumbel as well as superb Sauvignon Blanc and Pinot Noir from the Huinganal block of its Miraflores estate near Negrete.

Malleco Valley. If the Bío Bío is small, Malleco is tiny, with just 13 ha planted to vines. Malleco's only commercial vineyard, SoldeSol, is located in Traiguén, 650 km south of Santiago, in the foothills of the coastal range at about 38° Latitude, about the same as Marlborough, New Zealand. SoldeSol is a project of the Aquitania winery, product of a French-Chilean partnership. While at the southern end of Chilean wine country, Traiguén is actually warmer than Marlborough or Beaune. While bud break in this southern growing region comes about 45 days after Casablanca, there are 45 additional minutes of sunlight in summer. The soil is granite and clay. Managing partner and winemaker Felipe de Solminihac has planted both Chardonnay and Pinot Noir. The SoldeSol Chardonnay is an outstanding, terroir-driven wine that vividly shows Malleco's future potential.



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