



THE DIVERSITY OF WINE IN CHILE: Heritage Wines, Underrated Grapes, and Iconic Wines

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*Para Mario,
os vinhos que
combinamos tomar.*



I – OBJECTIVE OF THE TASTING

OBJECTIVE OF THE TASTING

- The main objective is to show the diversity of wines produced in Chile.
- The tasting will have one Orange wine and three Red wines.
- Grapes: Semillon, Cinsault, Carignan, and Cabernet Sauvignon (Bordeaux blend).
- Small producers with traditional techniques in Itata and a major winery in Aconcagua.

II. HISTORY OF CHILE WINE



EARLY PRODUCTION OF WINE

- Native communities had their own version of alcohol made from fermented maize and grains, but it was the Spanish who introduced winemaking and vine growing *circa* 1548.
- First documented vintage: 1551 (letter from Pedro de Valdivia to King Carlos V of Spain).
- Chile was second-largest wine country in South America until the late 18th century (Peru was first).
- Early wines were all from País (Listán Prieto) and Moscatel de Alejandria vinified in different styles. Historic wines still made today: sweet wines, often made from sun-dried grapes, called *asoleado* and *pipeño*.

19TH CENTURY EUROPEAN INFLUENCE

- Independence (1818): wine was already established with small-scale producers and the clergy.
- Wealthy elite emerge and developed a taste for European wines.
- From cottage industry to a lucrative commercial one with modern European viticultural and winemaking knowledge.
- 1842: Quinta Normal experimental vine nursery in Santiago (first of several important research institutions founded in this period).
- First new vines of *Vitis Vinifera* to arrive on the continent since the original Spanish vines arrived in the 1550s.
- Key players in Chile's wine industry today were founded: La Rosa (1824), Carmen (1850), Cousiño Macul (1856), San Pedro (1865), Errazuriz (1870), Santa Carolina (1875), Santa Rita (1880), Concha y Toro (1883), and Undurraga (1885).

19TH CENTURY: NO PHYLLOXERA

- The arrival of all these new varieties from Bordeaux and other European regions was before the spread of the of phylloxera across Europe.
- Chile`s natural isolation and formidable natural barriers of ice, mountains, desert, and water meant that phylloxera didn`t come to Chile. Additionally, laws were passed in 1874 and 1877 to prohibit the entrance of any foreign grapevines.
- Strict import and quarantine rules continue today. Only wine country in the world that has no record of this pest. Chile has today some of the world`s oldest ungrafted vines of these varieties.
- Increase availability of technical expertise with the arrival of European immigrants.
- Trains: major milestone in the mid-19th century enabling wine to be more easily shuttled around the country and to the ports.
- 1870s: Chile started to export wine to Europe.

20th CENTURY: OPEN AND CLOSED POLITICS

- Early 20th century: rising taxes on wine production and consumption began to take a toll on an industry that was still in its infancy.
- 1938: prohibition of planting new vineyards and limits to total wine production.
- World War II: prohibition of winemaking equipment imports.
- Frozen interaction between different wine regions in Chile or with wine regions elsewhere in the world.
- Wineries around Santiago (mainly Maipo and Aconcagua): Bordeaux varieties and industrialized production techniques.
- The modernization had never reached the historic wine regions of Maule and further south: dominated by small-scale growers and co-operatives with traditional vines and using artisanal techniques.

20TH CENTURY: OPEN AND CLOSED POLITICS

- 1960s and 1970s: land reform and reversion of parts of the agrarian reform.
- Despite land reforms, the wine industry returned to the hands of relatively few: a top-heavy concentration that remains to this day.
- 1970s: Subsidies to the lumber industry led to the rapid expansion of monoculture forests and the loss of many old vineyards, especially of País vines in Itata, Bio Bio, and Maule.
- Land under vine went from a stable 109,000 hectares in the 1970s to 67,100 in 1985.

THE MODERN ERA OF CHILEAN WINE

- The end of the 20th century saw a change of pace: even though production was shrinking, some international investors began to arrive, and Chile saw its first major technological updates.
- Modernization during the latter half of the 20th century meant industrialization and a focus on quantity over quality.
- Local traditional wines were eschewed in favor of international-style wines. But the period also brought some important leaps in quality.
- Key foreign players (Miguel Torres, William Fevre, Dm. Barons de Rothschild-Lafite), partnerships (Mondavi/Chadwick, Baron Philippe de Rotschild/Concha y Toro, Dm. Laroche/Valdivieso), “flying winemakers”, and young Chileans (Pablo Morandé).
- Coastal expansion: Casablanca boom, and San Antonio, Limarí, Huasco, and Aconcagua Costa.
- Expansion beyond traditional viticultural limits: new heights in the Andes, Atacama Desert, Patagonia, and even on Pacific islands.

COMMODISATION AND CONCENTRATION

- The modern wine industry focused its efforts on exports: over three quarters of Chilean wine is exported today.
- Success came at the cost of a certain commodisation of Chilean wine and further concentration in the industry. The three biggest winery groups (Concha y Toro, Santa Rita, and Viña San Pedro Tarapacá) together produce 9 out of every 10 bottles sold in Chile.
- Mass production wines priced Chilean wines at the bottom of the market. Bulk wine accounts for a major part of Chile's wine export. The average export value for Chilean wine is under US\$2 a liter.
- Low price point is only possible because of huge economies of scale of the big players.

NEW FOCUS: PREMIUM WINE

- Producers shifted their focus to premium wines and a handful of Chilean `iconic` wines, most notably Cabernet Sauvignon blends, have got 100-point scores from renowned international wine critics.
- The `Berlin Tasting`: Events promoted by Vina Errazuriz owner Eduardo Chadwick to compare his family`s top Chilean wines with international icons.
- New wineries producing high-end premium wines. However, these wines are still relatively niche (e.g., VIK estate).

NEW FOCUS: RETURN TO TRADITION

- New development: return to tradition and appreciation for Chile`s old vines and wine heritage with small scale production
- Common old practices: skin contact, biological ageing, field blends, and minimal intervention techniques.
- The rediscovery of older technologies: *zarandas*, *tinajas*, old rauli barrels, and large foudres.

III. THE GRAPES IN CHILE



THE GRAPES IN CHILE

- Chile was the first in South America to plant modern `international` varieties in the mid-19th century following 300 year in which traditional varieties dominated.
- The new varieties began arriving in the 1830s. The 1990s saw big increase of Cabernet Sauvignon, Sauvignon Blanc, Merlot, and Chardonnay.
- Many of Chile`s vines had been wrongly identified (Carmenère identified and labelled as Merlot and Sauvignon Vert had been identified as Sauvignon Blanc). The true diversity of Chile's genetic pool of grapevines has been unfolding ever since.
- Cabernet Sauvignon the world`s most-planted wine grape variety is also Chile`s most planted variety. Chile ranks second in the world with 12% of all Cabernet Sauvignon.
- Today, Chile has a rich diversity of grape varieties but for Pedro Parra “We need more grape varieties in Chile, we have a great diversity of terroir, but we lack the same diversity of grapes”.

TOP 20 MOST-PLANTED VARIETIES IN CHILE*

- | | | | |
|-----|--------------------------------|-----|-------------------------------|
| 1. | Cabernet Sauvignon (40,053 ha) | 11. | Pinot Noir (4,179 ha) |
| 2. | Sauvignon Blanc (15,224 ha) | 12. | Malbec (2,362 ha) |
| 3. | Merlot (11,366 ha) | 13. | Moscatel de Austria (1703 ha) |
| 4. | Chardonnay (10,920 ha) | 14. | Cabernet Franc (1,692 ha) |
| 5. | Carmenère (10,837 ha) | 15. | Moscatel Rosado (1,611 ha) |
| 6. | Pais (10,443) | 16. | Cinsault (928 ha) |
| 7. | Tintoreras (7,771 ha) | 17. | Carignan (927 ha) |
| 8. | Syrah (7,400 ha) | 18. | Petit Verdot (905 ha) |
| 9. | Pedro Jimenez (4,892 ha) | 19. | Viognier (761 ha) |
| 10. | Moscatel Alejandria (4,298 ha) | 20. | Semillon (701 ha) |

* Table grapes are not included, but grapevines used for Pisco are included.

IV – WINE REGIONS AND APPELLATIONS

CHILE

NORTH & ATACAMA

1. Arica
2. Tarapacá
3. Antofagasta
4. Atacama

COQUIMBO

1. Elqui
2. Limari
3. Choapa

PACIFIC & ACONCAGUA

1. Aconcagua
2. Casablanca
3. San Antonio

CENTRAL VALLEY

1. Maipo
2. Cachapoal
3. Colchagua
4. Curicó
5. Maule

SOUTH & AUSTRAL

1. Itata
2. Bio Bio
3. Malleco & Cautín
4. Austral Chile

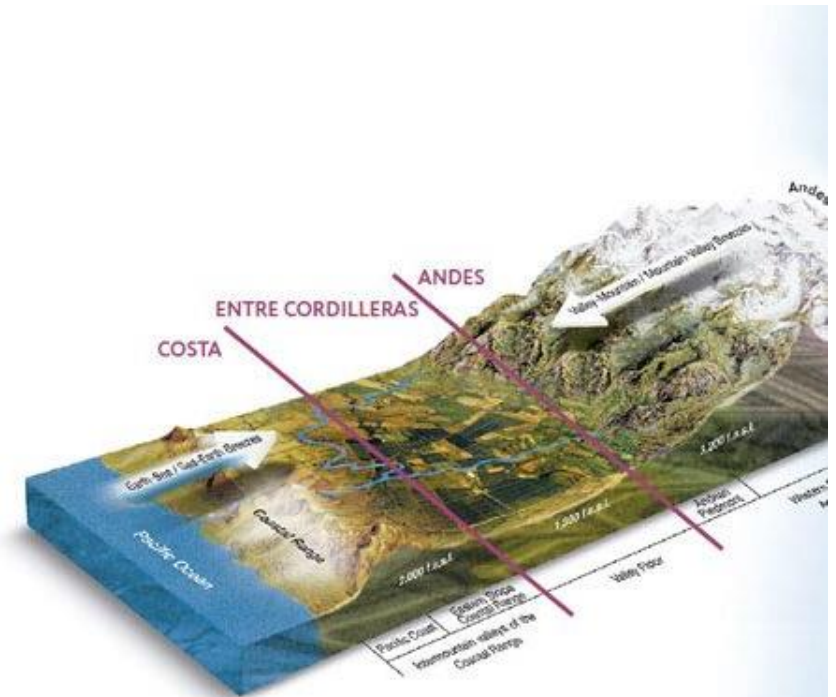


CHILE`S APPELLATIONS.....it is complicated

- Chile has several appellation frameworks.
- 1995: First appellation laws stating that for wines to be labeled with a single regional appellation or the grape variety at least 75% must be from that region or variety.
- Regional Appellations: Wine regions are organized by geopolitical regions (16 regions, 56 provinces, and 346 municipalities/*comunas*).
- Climate/Topographical Designations: introduced in 2012 to define an area by its proximity to and influence from the coast or mountains, not designed to replace previous classifications but rather to complement them.
- Denominations of Origin: most are simply the region or province. New smaller DOs have been created in recent years. There are other DOs too, which can reflect wine styles or climate references.
- D.O. Secano Interior is a special designation for Pais and Cinsault wines made from dry-farmed vineyards in a specific area in Maule, Itata, and Bio-Bio.

THE CLIMATE DESIGNATIONS

- **Costa (Coast):** Close to the Pacific Ocean, usually to the west of or on the slopes of the Coastal Mountain Range. Coolest-climate regions with lower average temperature, marine fog and sea breezes.
- **Entre Cordilleras (between mountain ranges):** Valley floor closed in by the Andes to the east and the Coastal Mountains to the west. Mediterranean climate, great solar radiation and cool nights.
- **Andes:** Continental Climate with a mountain influence. Cooler than the Entre Cordilleras regions.



V – THE SELECTION OF WINES: REGIONS AND GRAPES



SELECTION OF THE WINES

- The selection of wines was made in order to represent different wines of Chile in terms of regions, grapes, production methods, and styles.
- Small producers with traditional techniques in Itata and a major winery from Aconcagua.
- Three underrated grapes in Chile (Semillon, Cinsault, and Carignan) and a Bordeaux blend (mostly Cabernet Sauvignon, the most planted grape).
- Three natural wines and one `iconic` wine.
- Two price points.

THE REGIONS: ITATA (1)

- Situated 500 km South of Santiago. The Itata Valley is in the Ñuble Region.
- The first vineyards were planted in the 16th century.
- Topography: Coastal Mountain range with river terraces inland.
- Soil: Granitic soils in the coastal mountain range and mainly aluvial river terraces further inland.
- Climate: Humid Mediterranean climate.
- Lost its fame in the 1800s to more central regions in Chile (high production and new varieties). Itata was left behind and has the constantly threat replacing vineyards with the planting of pine and eucalyptus trees.

THE REGIONS: ITATA (2)

- Itata still has one of the lowest average vineyard sizes in all South America at less than two hectares.
- These small vineyards and wine families are a complete contrast to the manicured vineyard rows, industrialized estates, and big wineries further north.
- The majority of Itata`s grapes are still sold cheaply for bulk wine production. However, there is also growing appreciation for the old vines in the region and wineries of all sizes are now participating in Itata`s revival.
- Most planted varieties: Moscatel de Alejandria, País, Cinsault, Cabernet Sauvignon, and Corinto.

THE REGIONS: ACONCAGUA (1)

- Stretches from the coast to the Andes. Vineyards planted in all three geographical designations (Costa, Entre Cordilleras, and Andes).
- Topography: Ranging from the Andean foothills to the banks of the River Aconcagua and the Coastal hills.
- Climate: most of the vineyards are in the warm inland areas of the valley floor in what is one of Chile`s hottest and driest wine regions.
- Mediterranean climate with some mountain influence. Warm, dry summers and cold, rainy winters.
- Since the 1990s, Aconcagua`s wine regions have also expanded further west towards the coast in search of cooler climate terroirs where they can make fresher wine styles.

THE REGIONS: ACONCAGUA (2)

- Stable climate makes it one of Chile`s most reliable regions.
- Directly downhill from Aconcagua on the Argentine side lie Mendoza and San Juan where over 90% of Argentina`s wine industry is concentrated.
- It is a region that produces powerful red wines and a handful of producers in the region all specialize in Bordeaux- or Mediterranean-style blends and varieties
- Most planted varieties: Cabernet Sauvignon, Carmenère, Syrah, Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, Sauvignon Blanc, Merlot, and Petit Verdot.

THE GRAPES: SEMILLON

- First arrived in Chile in the 19th century. Was the most planted white variety by the 1960 with some 35,000 ha. The grape was responsible for Chile's best white wines of the time. It has been in decline ever since. Often found in mixed old-vine plantings with Riesling and Corinto (Chasselas) and other white varieties.
- A high proportion of those vines are very old and are dry-farmed. A vital part of the viticultural history of Chile.
- It is produced with some skin contact and occasionally produced as an orange wine, vinified in *tinajas* (large earthenware jar), concrete eggs or old foudres (large wooden vat), or even with some biological ageing under a veil of flor.
- These wines can be very textured, structured, and waxy

THE GRAPES: CINSAULT

- Native to southern France. First planted in Chile in the 1930s.
- Vigorous variety that produces an abundant crop. Known locally as *cargadora* (`heavy load bearer`). Young vines produces `rather uninteresting grapes`.
- Old vines: yield drops, concentration increases, and wines are more interesting. Old Cinsault vines (mainly in Itata and Bio Bio): some well over 60 and some close to 90 years.
- Requires high temperatures to ripen.
- Old-vine and traditional winemaking renaissance and adoption of traditional techniques using native rauli vats, ageing in clay *tinajas* and working on a very small scale using artisanal methods.
- Moderate to low pigment, low acidity, light tannins and expressive red fruit aromas.

THE GRAPES: CARIGNAN

- Believed to be native to Aragon, Spain. Main synonyms in Europe: Mazuelo and Carineña.
- Vigorous and productive (abundant crop), needs a long, hot growing season.
- Planted in Chile in the early 20th century. After the 1939 earthquake, the Government supported the wine industry in Itata and Maule by giving them Carignan plants. But susceptibility to powdery mildew: largely abandoned within a decade of being planted.
- High acid and deeply pigmented tannic wines. Carignan color, acidity, and structure could be blended into pale País wines. Tannic management is key to avoid coarse and rustic wines
- One of the rising star of Chilean wines helped build the modern reputation of Maule.
- The new Carignan: Tamed tannins, refreshing acidity, and red fruit aromas prioritizing elegance over power.

THE GRAPES: CABERNET SAUVIGNON

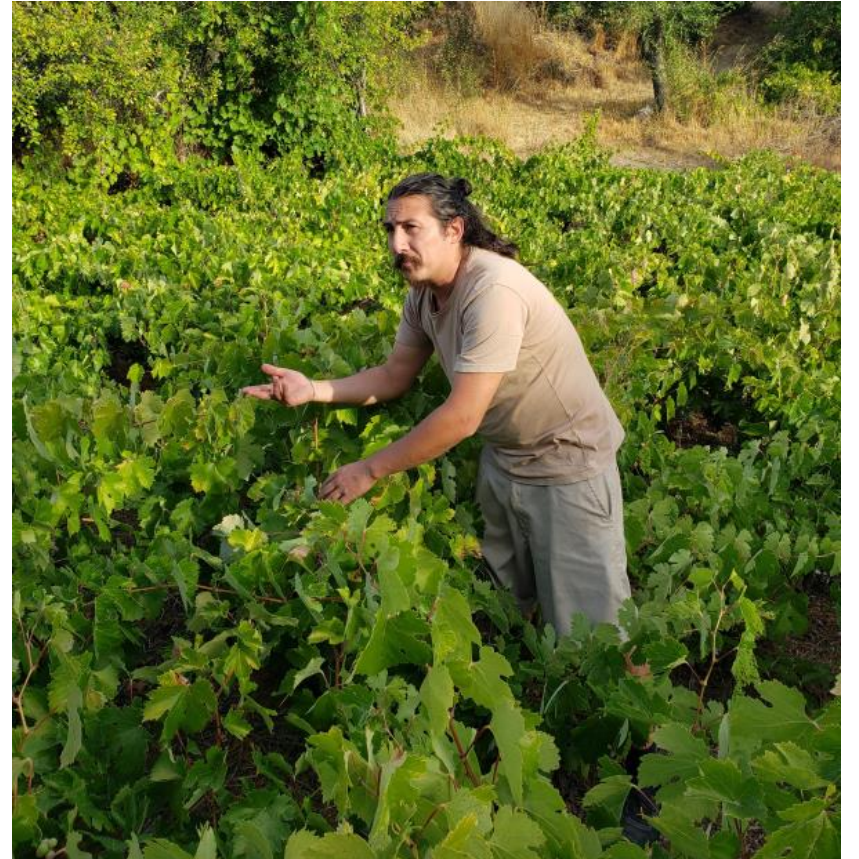
- Cabernet Sauvignon was brought with many other grapes (mainly Bordeaux varieties) in the mid-19th century.
- Chile has some of the world's oldest Cabernet Sauvignon vines and pre-phylloxera genetic material. However, most of the Cabernet vines are relatively new, planted from the 1990s onward.
- Between 1997 and 2002, Cabernet plantings more than doubled, shooting up from some 15,000 to 39,000 hectares. Cabernet Sauvignon is the most planted grape and Chile ranks second in the world with 12% of all Cabernet Sauvignon.
- An extraordinary amount of everyday bulk wine is still produced and there are world-class examples at the top end of the scale. The best examples of Chilean Cabernet rank among the best in the world.
- It is very common to find Cabernet blended with the other major Bordeaux varieties, particularly Merlot and Carmenère.

VI – THE WINES

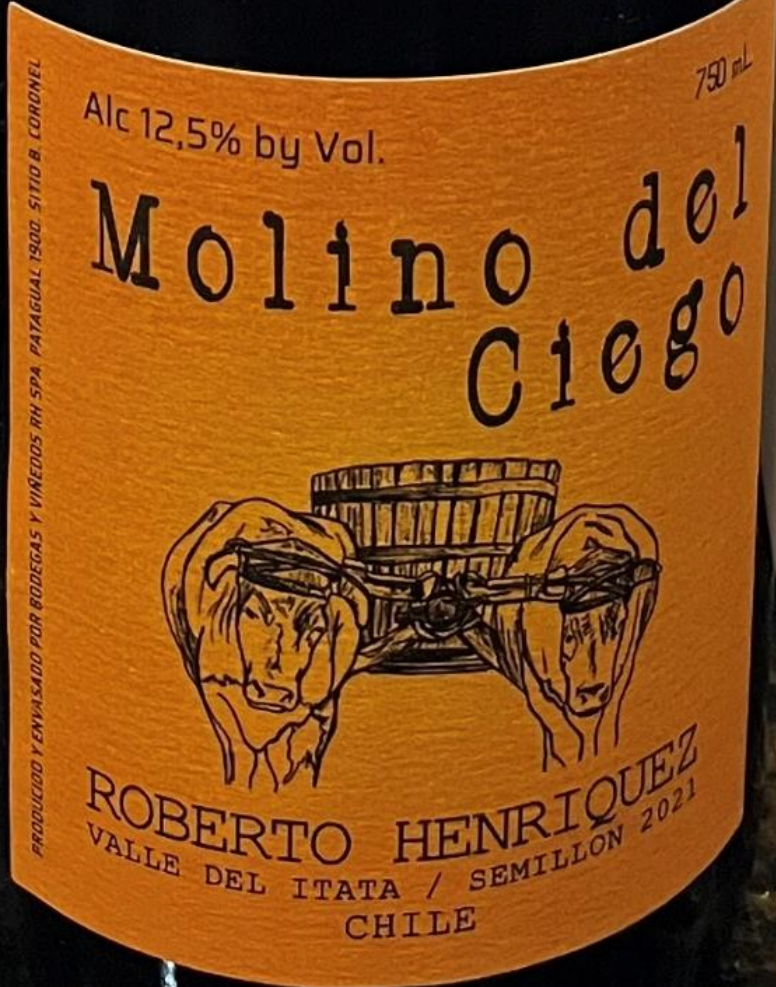


THE PRODUCER: ROBERTO HENRIQUEZ

- Roberto Henriques, a leading winemaker in Bio Bio and Itata, has a small winery focusing on making natural wine of an artisanal scale.
- Produces distinctive natural wines from old vines and often helps resuscitate abandoned vineyards.
- Wines are produced in the *pipeño* tradition: an old technique where grapes (white or red) are destemmed but left on their skins for fermentation before ageing in a rauli barrel.



ROBERTO HENRIQUEZ, MOLINO DEL CIEGO, SEMILLON, VALLE DEL ITATA, 2021



- Grape: Semillon with some Corinto (Chasselas) and Moscatel (field blend).
- Vineyards: 90 years-old vines planted on granite soils very close to the Pacific Ocean in the Itata Valley. Dry-farmed with sustainable viticulture.
- Fermentation: Fermented with its skins *“con orujos”* for three weeks
- Ageing: Old barricas and concrete vessels for five months to one year.
- Unfined and unfiltered.
- “A Paradigmatic wine for semillon in South America” (P. Tapias).
- Alcohol: 12.5%

THE PRODUCER: PEDRO PARRA

- Winery: Pedro Parra y Family is the boutique, family winery of renowned terroir expert Pedro Parra, focusing on an artisanal production of natural wines made from old vines of País and Cinsault in Itata and Bio Bio.
- Pedro Parra produces a series of Cinsault wines to show his interpretation of the granitic soils of Itata.





PEDRO PARRA, TRANE, CINSAULT, ITATA VALLEY, 2019

- Cinsault 100%
- D. O. Secano Interior Itata
- Vineyard: 70-year-old at 300 metres on shallow granite soil with silt and stones.
- Fermentation: 30% whole bunches and native yeast and low intervention.
- Ageing: 11 months in 1,50 liters oak vats.
- Alcohol: 13%

THE PRODUCER: ROGUE VINE

- Rogue Vine, two people, Leonardo Erazo and Justin Decker, started Rogue Vine in 2011 in a one-car garage in Concepcion.
- The project is to make natural wines from “the forgotten old bush vines almost falling out of steep granitic hills in Itata.”





ROGUE VINE, EL INSOLENTE, CARIGNAN, ITATA VALLEY, 2016

- Carignan 100%
- Single Vineyard granite soil at 270 m in Nipas, Itata Valley.
- Old Bush vines of more than 60 years old. Dry, organic farmed, and hand harvested.
- Winemaking: Whole berry fermentation with native yeast and little to no sulfur added prior to bottling.
- Ageing: Cement globes and used oak barrels.
- Unfiltered and Unfined.
- Alcohol: 14.0%

THE PRODUCER: SEÑA

- Viña Seña: Single-estate, single-wine operation joint venture in the Aconcagua Valley founded by Robert Mondavi and Eduardo Chadwick of Errazuriz in 1995.
- Their aim was to make a wine that would demonstrate the full potential of Chile and that would be welcomed among the world's First Growth.
- Tim Mondavi insisted that they seek out a cooler site in order to make a fresher, more elegant wine than was the norm in the mid-1990s.
- They also agreed that the use of sustainable practices was a key element from the beginning.





SEÑAL, ACONCAGUA VALLEY, 2019.

- Bordeaux blend: Cabernet Sauvignon (60%), Malbec (21%), Carmenère (15%), and Petit Verdot (4%).
- Vineyard: Close to the sea, on the Eastern side of the Coastal Mountains, with the benefit of coastal winds and long hanging period. 42 ha hillside vineyard.
- Farming: Biodynamic and hand harvested.
- Ageing: 22 months in 90% French oak barrels (80% new) and 10% foudres.
- Alcohol: 13.5%

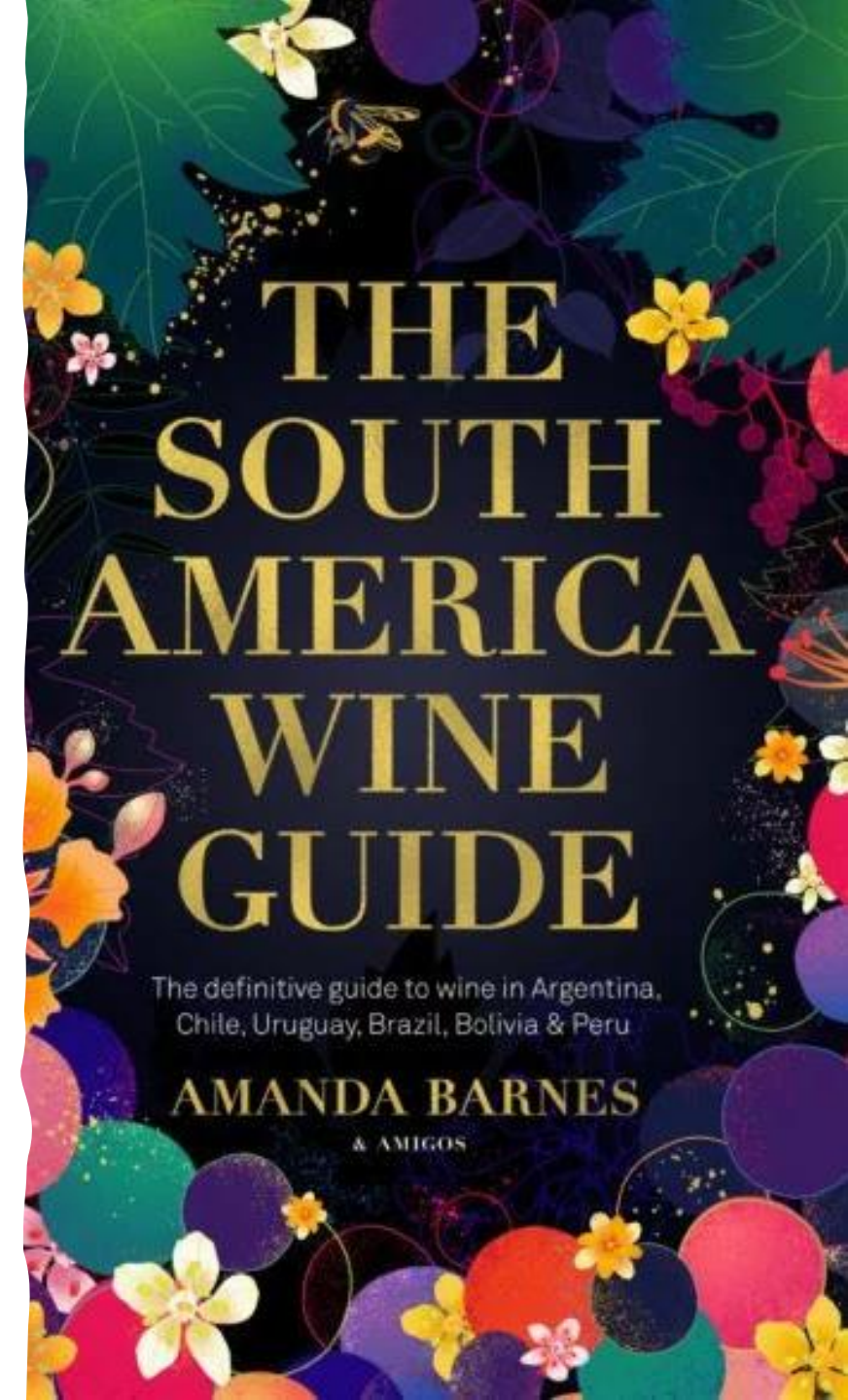
VII - MENU



MENU: RESTAURANT CAPRI

1. CALAMARI FRITTI
2. SPAGHETTI CON POLPETTE
3. VITELLO ALLA PARMIGIANA
4. DESSERT
5. COFFEE

VIII - REFERENCES



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ANNEXES



1. Heritage Wines
2. *Pipeño* Wines
3. Orange Wine
4. The Berlin Tasting

HERITAGE WINES

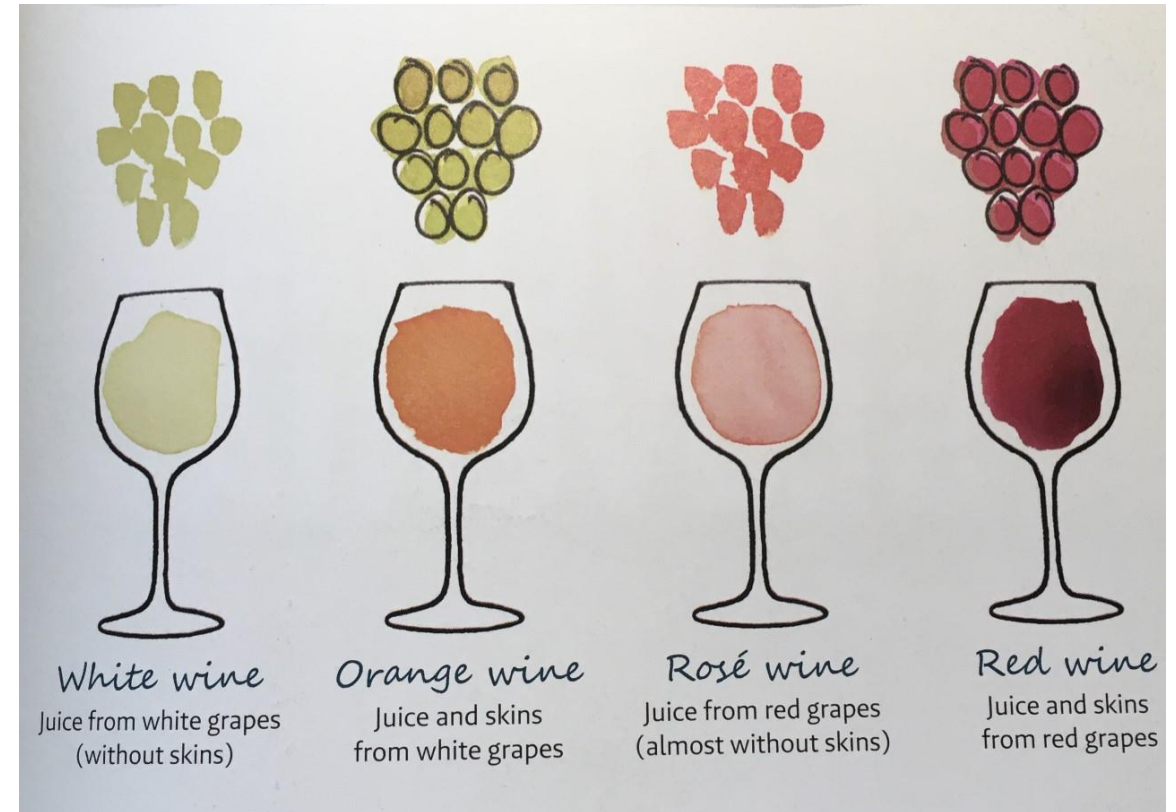
- Agricultural Heritage: “All those products and/or processes that have a social and symbolic significance and that are also part of the history and particular development of an associated community in a specific territory.”
- Grapes and winemaking processes are included in this definition.
- The crucial element of “heritage grapes” is the traditions they represent—and the recovery of this history, over many previous generations.
- “The “*uvas patrimoniales*” are Semillón, Carignan, Cinsault, País, Moscatel de Alejandría, and Malbec, planted in Valles Secano Interior in Maule and in Itata (Ñuble y Biobío).” (ProChile)

PIPEÑO: `A Quintessentially Chilean Wine`

- Generic term for wines made in traditional techniques fermented on skins with no ageing and to be drunk young. Rustic and simple artisanal wine made in the countryside, and a tradition of home winemaking that has existed in Chile for close to 500 years.
- Typically, *pipeño* is made from either just País grapes or more often a field blend of both white and red grapes from old vines. The grapes are destemmed by hand using a homemade local bamboo destemmer, called a *zaranda* (see picture in the slide – History of Chile Wine).
- The fermentation vats are usually open-topped and made of the native rauli beechwood. The wine is often aged in old *pipas* (large vats) for just a short time .
- Grapes and method of production vary. It is ultimately a table wine made to be drunk within a few months of the harvest. Each wine reflects the family who makes it and their variation on the winemaking tradition and the old vines they have in their vineyard.
- Today, commercial producers use grapes from old vines and some of the old techniques to produce *pipeño* wines.

ORANGE WINE, AMBER WINE OR SKIN-FERMENTED WHITE WINES

- Definition: “White wines made **with extended grape skin contact** during fermentation or maceration, imparting an orange hue to the finished wine, along with tannins.”
- Technical Definition: “Skin-fermented white wines” or “Skin-contact white wines” (not always orange)
- Official Definition: “White wine with maceration” (International Organization of Vine and Wine -OIV)
- Origin: Common in old traditional wine regions but mostly associated with Georgia (Caucasus) thousands of years ago.
- Styles: Huge range of styles – color (light orange to amber gold) and tannins



THE BERLIN TASTING

- Eduardo Chadwick: “The challenge to gain international recognition for our wines gave rise to the idea of organizing blind tastings to benchmark top world class wines. These events truly opened the eyes of the world critics who were able to judge our wines for themselves in an unbiased format.”
- Steven Spurrier: “The 1976 Paris Tasting ...was a template with only highly qualified palates, by ‘unknown’ wines to be compared to their ‘known’ counterparts. This was the model for the Berlin Tasting.”
- Berlin 2004 First Tasting: Compared Chadwick’s wines with First Growths from Bordeaux and a top super Tuscan.
- Berlin 2004 : Seña 2000 tied for fourth place with Chateau Margaux 2001. Chateau Lafite-Rothschild 2000 was third, Seña 2001 was ranked second and Viñedo Chadwick 2000 was first.
- The Chilean wines achieved instant recognition, which continued to be maintained over subsequent tastings.
- After a series of 21 similar blinding tastings around the world with remarkably consistent results, the message is crystal clear: ‘top Chilean red wines can and should join the ranks of the best wines from around the world.’



KEEP ON TASTING