



THE WINEMAKER'S VINTAGE NOTES

A dry, mild harvest that stayed with us until the end of April contributed to the success of the 2005 red wine vintage in the Maipo Valley. The slow incremental development of the fruit gave the Merlot excellent balance between sugar content and phenolic maturity. Lower yields resulted in Merlot flavours which produce intense yet elegantly structured red wines.

Matias Rivera

WINEMAKING

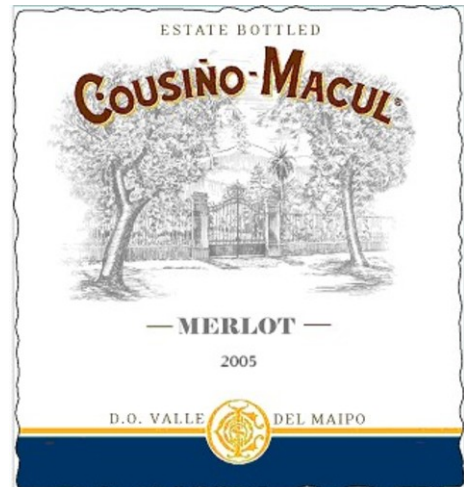
Early in the season, the winemaking team focused on a well-balanced Merlot vine for high quality fruit. They implemented rigorous programs of canopy management (removing excess leaves and shoots) and irrigation applications. Using new devices to monitor the moisture content of the soil and the leaves, the winemakers applied water only when the vine required it. Harvested from March 30 to April 5, the Merlot grapes were immediately crushed and given a cold soak of 6 days prior to fermentation. At an average temperature of 25C, the fermentation continued for 8-10 days before reaching total dryness. For complexity, the winemaker used both native and prise de mousse yeast, and the must was pumped over three times a day during the first several days. The new wine was given an extended maceration of 6-7 days before being pressed off its skins. The wine rested in the cellars for several months before being bottled.

THE ALTO MAIPO

Cousiño's vineyards are located in the Alto-Maipo, the area of the Maipo Valley closest to the Andes where certain sites benefit from the "Andes Effect". This refers to the cooling mountain air that descends during the evenings to create a wide range in daily temperature. Typically, during the growing season the daytime high of 90°C will see the evening temperature drop to 10°C. The Andes effect encourages slow, incremental sugar development which contributes to colour intensity, aroma profiles, excellent retention of natural fruit acidity and ripe tannin. Under these conditions, Merlot develops a deep ruby-magenta colour and displays a distinct blackberry character.

THE HISTORY

Cuttings from the Merlot vines at Cousiño-Macul's original estate in Macul were used to propagate the vines at their new Buin Estate vineyards. These vines are direct descendants of the vines brought from Bordeaux and planted at the Macul estate in 1863. By the method of "massal selection", the Cousiño's retain the unique and long heritage of their vineyards.



TASTING NOTES

Deep purple in colour, this Merlot showcases lively red currant, Bing cherry and plum aromas with notes of black tea and spice in the background. Medium-bodied and compact, it offers black plum and fresh crushed herb flavours. Supple in the middle palate, it has a mild tannin structure that gives it excellent balance. It can be enjoyed in its youth with a wide range of meats, pastas and cheeses. It can also be cellared for 4-5 years.

TECHNICAL DATA

Varietal Composition:

100% Merlot

Appellation: 100% Maipo Valley

100% Buin Estate

Total Acidity: 5.00 gr/L

pH: 3.67

Alcohol: 14.1 %

