

Colchagua Merlot 2017

Colchagua Valley, Chile



Grape Varieties	85% Merlot 15% Carménère
Winemaker	Aurelio Montes Jnr
Closure	Screwcap
ABV	14.5%
Residual Sugar	3.57g/L
Acidity	4.99g/L
Wine pH	3.6
Bottle Sizes	75cl
Notes	Sustainable, Vegetarian, Vegan

PRODUCER

Montes was established in 1988 by Aurelio Montes, Douglas Murray, Alfredo Vidaurre and Pedro Grand, with the aim of producing the best wines in Chile from the best regions. Montes wines are consistently good because they are meticulous throughout the entire production process. Montes own 800 hectares of vineyards in Apalta and Marchigüe located in Colchagua Valley as well a single vineyard Zapallar, in the coastal Aconcagua Valley. In this way, they are able to retain full control of everything that is planted, cultivated and picked. The 'Classic Series' wines are all sourced from different regions, chosen to produce the best examples of each variety.

VINEYARDS

The grapes came mainly from the most coastal part of the Colchagua Valley. Soil depth is predominantly moderate, with extremely variable amounts of granite, red clay, and little organic matter overall. The Merlot grows no more than 120 metres above sea level, with a north-northwest orientation. The vines are vertically positioned and double Guyot pruned.

VINTAGE

The 2017 vintage began with a dry winter with higher than usual temperatures, resulting in a decrease in fruit set and a subsequent 22% decrease in yields. The summer was very hot - temperatures reached 40°C in January in some sectors of the valley, which accelerated ripening in some varieties. Night-time temperatures dropped significantly in early March, which enabled the grapes to develop more aromas, ripen their tannins, and obtain tremendous colour in their skins. The smaller yields meant the berries had very good concentration, which is reflected in the wines' quality and expression.

VINIFICATION

The grapes were cold soaked at 10°C for five days to extract aroma and colour before being fermented in temperature-controlled stainless steel tanks for 12 days, remaining on skins for additional structure and colour. After malolactic fermentation, 45% of the final blend was aged in first-use French oak barrels for eight months to add complexity and roundness to the wine.

TASTING NOTES

Bright ruby red in colour, intense aromas of fresh black fruits (blackberries, plums and figs) are complemented by nutmeg and black pepper, dark chocolate, tobacco and toast on the nose. The palate is smooth and well balanced with good levels of natural acidity and soft, round tannins that lend a pleasing sweet sensation to the mid-palate, before a long, fruity finish.