

Montes Alpha,
Colchagua Carmenère 2022
Colchagua Valley, Chile



Grape Varieties **90% Carménère**
10% Sauvignon Blanc

Winemaker **Aurelio Montes Jnr**

Closure **Stelvin Lux**

ABV **14.5%**

Residual Sugar **2.8g/L**

Acidity **3.7g/L**

Wine pH **3.5**

Bottle Sizes **75cl**

Notes **Vegetarian**

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. The Montes Alpha Cabernet Sauvignon, first produced in 1987, broke the mould for premium wines in Chile. Since then, Alpha has developed to become the core range in the Montes portfolio. The grapes and sites are carefully selected in order to ensure varietal integrity and complexity. Viticulture is hands on rather than mechanical or industrial.

VINEYARDS

The Carmenère for this wine comes from two key areas of the Colchagua Valley: Apalta and Marchigüe. In Apalta, vineyard soils vary from deep, river-influenced deposits on the valley floor to shallower, eroded hillside soils, with Carmenère performing best in the deeper parcels with moderate moisture retention. Marchigüe, by contrast, is flatter with gently rolling hills and shallow, clay-influenced soils that hold water well; here, the variety is planted in the deeper lower-lying blocks. Vines are planted at a density of 5,555 plants per hectare and trained on double Guyot, yielding around 9,000 kg/ha.

VINTAGE

The 2022 season was notably benign in both Marchigüe and Apalta, with a frost-free winter and timely spring rains that sustained healthy vine growth through to harvest. Budburst and fruit set were normal, though clusters were slightly lighter than the previous year. A dry summer followed, with a few hot days during veraison, yet conditions remained ideal for allowing Carmenère to reach full aromatic maturity. Harvest began 30 April and extended to 12 May.

VINIFICATION

The grapes were hand-harvested and brought to the winery in small 300-kg bins, where they underwent manual bunch selection before destemming. The fruit received a five-day pre-fermentation maceration in tank, followed by a controlled alcoholic fermentation with selected yeasts lasting 7–10 days. The wine was then transferred to stainless-steel or concrete tanks to complete malolactic fermentation, which typically finished within 20 days. Afterwards, a portion of the wine was aged for 12 months in French oak barrels, while the remainder matured in concrete, allowing the final blend to balance structure, freshness and varietal expression before bottling.

TASTING NOTES

Deep ruby in colour with violet hues, this wine opens with intense aromas of plum, cherry, and cassis mixed with sweet spice and dark chocolate. On the palate, the toasted flavours from the oak are balanced and well-integrated. The vibrant fruit core gives way to silky tannins and a well-structured body, without loss of elegance.