



HARVEST REPORT 2019

INTRODUCTION

After waiting nearly a month to harvest the Noble Semillon, we can officially close Harvest 2019. Almost 3 and a half months passed since we started on February 21, until the last grape was harvested on June 4.

Since we've been working with international consultant Paul Hobbs for more than a year, it's important to mention that this was the first season that we incorporated his recommendations from the beginning, in this case, from pruning. Since his arrival, the principle focus has been on the fine tuning of the handling of the vineyard, with the objective of continuing to improve the quality and better express the character of the origin of our wines.

Even though the season began with a winter with lower precipitation levels than in a normal year (around 200 mm), the first irrigation began 1 month later than normal, thanks to a cooler spring and the presence of precipitation during September and October, which maintained good levels of moisture in the first phenological stages of the plants

The cool spring generated a delay in the first phenological stages, a full week behind the 2018 vintage. The temperatures at the end of spring and beginning of summer were ideal for red varieties, especially Cabernet Sauvignon, since they did not exceed 30°C, with partially cloudy days that allowed for slow, optimal, unstressed growth. These conditions changed during the last week of January and continued through February, with heat waves that elevated the high temperatures to extreme levels. After the beginning of autumn the high temperatures began to drop and the weather maintained excellent conditions, with a complete absence of precipitations, allowing us to wait for the best moment for harvesting.

The heat waves occurred at the exact moment of veraison (the changing of the color of the grapes). Until the first wave occurred during the last weekend of January, veraison had been occurring very evenly, lasting less than a week, which is excellent for the balance produced during ripening. Once the high temperatures began, they created a blocking effect in which the leaves closed their stomata and the plant stopped functioning and therefore stopped ripening for a time. This produced a delayed and uneven veraison, lasting almost a month in some cases.

Due to the heat waves during veraison, we saw 2 different situations in Viu Manent. First, the early varieties that changed color before the heat waves, ripened more quickly, in part making up for the delay produced in the early phenological stages, and were harvested relatively on time. In the second scenario, the varieties that changed color after the last week of January and, because of the blocking effect, required more time to ripen and smooth the tannins that were showing very tough at one point.

In terms of vinification, this year we were extremely careful, especially with the first red grapes that entered the winery, due to the high extraction levels of the tannins, which forced us to use fewer pump overs and much less maceration than what we are accustomed to. In terms of percentages, we reduced the extraction by about 40 50%, and we shortened the maceration times to 50% of the total, to avoid hard, drying tannins.



Casablanca Sauvignon Blanc 11 km from the sea.

With respect to the yields, we had a 9% drop with respect to our initial estimates. In general the reduction was about the same throughout the varieties, explained mostly by lighter bunches and smaller berries.

And lastly, in terms of quality, we are very happy with the solid quality of the wines in general, but especially the high-end wines, where the wines are presenting profiles that highlight their delicacy and elegance over concentration and structure.

To sum up, this vintage will be remembered for being a dry year with low yields, a cool spring, and a summer with heat waves and extreme temperatures that gave way to a benign, dry autumn that gave us fine, elegant, deep wines.



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EL OLIVAR

Just like in the last 2 seasons, the grapes from the El Olivar vineyard have maintained their consistent outstanding quality. The improvement in the handling of the vineyard and the climate conditions have translated into wines that are finer, more delicate, balanced, and deeper, compared to previous years.

This year the Syrah from the hill stands out for its quality, as well as the Carménère and Petit Verdot from the hill, plus the Malbecs and Grenache from the piedmont. Harvest began with the Syrah polygons from the shallow soils on greater incline on March 14, then Malbec on March 27, Petit Verdot on April 8, and Carménère on April 25. The dates coincide with harvest dates in a normal year.



Grenache of Vineyar El Olivar.

LA CAPILLA

This vineyard displays pronounced differences, principally in the depths of the soil, which force us to handle and harvest the polygons differently. Because of this, we began harvesting the polygon with the shallowest soils on April 17, then continued on to 2 other sectors with medium depth on April 23 and 24, and later, to the sectors with the greatest depth and therefore the last to ripen, on April 29.

This season the Cabernets are showing great balance, very rich texture, and good fruit expression that portends a Cabernet Sauvignon Single Vineyard 2019 with great potential.

With respect to the Carménère, which is the other variety planted in this vineyard, we are in the process of renovating the vineyard. The character of the wine produced from this origin is very particular, and we are very happy with the first harvest of the new vineyard, which maintains the typical character of La Capilla. We believe in the great potential for the future, as the genetic material used is much superior to that which was planted previously. The Carménère was harvested between April 30 and May 3. Just like last year, the quality of Carménère from La Capilla is exceptional.

The fine tuning of the vineyard handling is beginning to express itself in the wines, principally due to the precision irrigation and detailed handling.



Malbec San Carlos Vineyard.



Old Malbec plant.



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Cabernet Sauvignon New plantation in San Carlos vineyard.



Cabernet Sauvignon San Carlos Vineyard already harvested (destination Viu 8 Cuvée Infinito).

SAN CARLOS DE CUNACO

Just like the 2016 2017 season, we had very little precipitation during the winter (less than 200 mm), and the bud break was very uniform. At one point we were rather worried by the lack of water, but once the plants sprouted there was graduate, moderate rainfall during the months of September and October, helping to maintain good moisture levels in the soils, even leading us to delay the first irrigation by a month.

It's important to mention that beginning with this vintage in the San Carlos vineyard, all of the irrigation took place based on measurements of the water potential of the plant, using the Scholander pressure bomb, which gives us more certainty and therefore tells us if there's stress or not due to a lack of water.

San Carlos is the vineyard where we have most seen a jump in quality due to the new handling of the vineyards in the last 2 seasons, especially when we talk about Cabernet Sauvignon. The wines are expressing their fruit more clearly on the nose, and in the mouth they're lush, with rich texture and lots of balance.

With respect to the old Malbec vineyards, this year they produced wines with great character, very elegant, with fine tannins and good depth. Today, these wines are now aging, principally in untoasted French oak foudres, to respect that character of the origin that was intensified this year by the characteristics of the 2019 harvest.

Harvest began on February 21 with the Malbec destined for Rosé, followed by Sauvignon Blanc on February 27 (1 week later than normal), Chardonnay on March 3, Semillon on March 8, and Viognier on March 13.

In the red varieties, we began on March 18 with Merlot, Malbec on April 1, Cabernet Franc on March 29, and Cabernet Sauvignon on April 11.

Lastly, we want to add that, following worldwide tendencies of caring for the environment, a few years ago we proposed handling the vineyard in the most natural form possible, trying to avoid agrochemicals, principally herbicides, to generate and increase the microbiology of the soil. Today 20% of the vineyard is worked without herbicides, and the idea is to continue increasing this area in the short- and medium-term until the entire vineyard is handled this way.

Patricio Celedón
Chief Winemaker
July 2019.