



DON MAXIMIANO

Founder's Reserve



VINTAGE:	1998
DENOMINATION OF ORIGIN:	Aconcagua Valley
COMPOSITION:	91% Cabernet Sauvignon and 9% Syrah
ALCOHOL:	14°
PH:	3.65
TOTAL ACIDITY:	5.25 g/L (in tartaric acid)
RESIDUAL SUGAR:	2.10 g/L
AGEING:	20 months in French oak, 50% new

VINEYARD

The Don Maximiano vineyards are located in the Valle de Aconcagua and the oldest among them are Max I, Max II and Max V. The region has a long dry season with moderately warm summer days cooled by the soft evening breezes that enter the valley from the Pacific Ocean. The Cabernet Sauvignon and Carmenère vines were planted in 1978.

Most of the vineyards are planted on north or north-eastern facing hillsides with 5–25° of slope. The three vineyards that contribute grapes for Don Maximiano Founder's Reserve are planted on north or northeast facing hillsides with 5°–25° of slope. The soils are volcanic, colluvial and piedmont (Max I and II) or alluvial (Max V) in origin, with good drainage conferring low to moderate vigour. The colluvial and volcanic rocky soils of Max I show high presence of mica with clay-silt texture. Max II has deep colluvial soils of volcanic origin, with loam to sandy-loam texture, and both have 30–40% stone content. Max V has deep gravelly alluvial soils with 50% stone content and excellent drainage.

Precision in farming allows us to identify homogenous sectors within each vineyard and harvest these individually according to the progress of the berries in each lot.

VINTAGE NOTES

The winter and spring of 1997 saw an end to the long drought in Chile, with record rainfall in most regions and a heavy snowpack in the Andes. Consequently, yields were 20% higher in 1998 than in 1997, reflecting heavier cluster and berry weights. El Niño brought a cool spell late in the growing season, which delayed ripening in all varieties. Although picking continued into the first week of May, we were lucky to receive very little rain during harvest, so all of our fruit came in very clean. The Cabernet Sauvignon achieved good ripeness despite the late harvest. Interestingly, the cooler vintage produced a different flavour profile than we often see in our Aconcagua fruit.

VINIFICATION

The hand-harvested grapes were gently crushed and then fermented at 28–30° Celsius, followed by an extended maceration of about three weeks. The wine was then aged for 20 months in French oak barrels, including about 50% new barrels to cultivate a clean yet integrated vanilla oak character. The wine was not fined in order to protect its elegant tannin balance. After a light filtration to ensure clarity, the wine was bottled in February 1999 and cellared until its release.

TASTING NOTES

Our 1998 Don Maximiano Founder's Reserve displays spicy blackberry aromas and deep earthy characters, while the oak aging contributes integrated notes of toasted almonds, vanilla and coffee. On the palate, the ripe berry fruit is reminiscent of blackberry pie, together with black cherry, coffee and vanilla. Rich cigar, leather and an intriguing note of ripe black olives add complexity. Supple tannins create a silky texture and long finish. As it ages in the bottle, the wine is developing a touch of mint, which is characteristic of the Don Maximiano Estate.

