

WINE: **SHIRAZ LA CUMBRE**

YEAR: **2005**

VINEYARD:

The grapes for this wine were sourced from the finest lots of Shiraz from the Max I, II, and V sectors of our Don Maximiano Estate in the Aconcagua Valley. This region features an extended dry season with moderately warm summer days cooled by soft afternoon breezes that blow in from the Pacific Ocean. The high day-night temperature differential averages 19°C (65.3°F) in the weeks prior to harvest and triggers a high concentration of polyphenols (anthocyanins), resulting in wines with great colour intensity.

The Max I vineyard is located on a hilltop 590 metres above sea level and planted to a density of 10,000 vines per hectare. Vineyard management includes head pruning (as is Syrah in the Cotes du Rhone), which reduces the crop load and produces highly concentrated and well-structured wines.

The Max II vineyard was planted in 1992 on a north-facing slope with young loam soils of colluvial origin. The high concentration of stones reaches as much as 70% of the soil composition, which ensures excellent drainage and is extremely favourable for growing Shiraz.

The vertically-trained Max V vineyard has deep, rocky soils with excellent drainage that produce vines with medium vigour.

The variety of soil types in which the grapes are grown produces wines with varying structures, flavours, volume, and typicity, which provides diversity of character and complexity in the final blend.

ALTITUDE: Max I slope (590 m/1,934 f asl); Max II (580 m/1,902 f asl); Max V (600 m/1,968 f asl)

CLIMATE: Mediterranean with a long dry season and winter rainfall.

SOIL: Max I vineyard: Thin granitic soil. Max II Vineyard: Deep soil of colluvial origin with a loam to sandy-loam texture and 30-40% stone compound. Max V Vineyard: Deep alluvial soil with 50% stone compound.

VINTAGE NOTES:

PICKING DATES: 18th & 22nd of April.

HISTORIC AVERAGES:

HEAT SUMMATION (OCT-APR): 1,727 degree days (19°C/66.2°F cut-off).

MEAN TEMPERATURE (OCT-APR): 18.9°C (66°F)

TEMPERATURE OSCILLATION (OCT-APR): 18.5°C (65.3°F)

RAINFALL (YEAR ROUND): 250 mm/9.8 inches

The best proof of the Aconcagua Valley's potential for producing high quality red wines to date is the extraordinary quality of the wines from the 2004–2005 season.



APPELLATION:	Aconcagua Valley
COMPOSITION:	100% Shiraz
ALCOHOL:	14.5 % by vol.
PH:	3.65
TOTAL ACIDITY:	5.51 g/l (tartaric acid)
RESIDUAL SUGAR:	2.3 g/l

There was no significant rainfall during the ripening period, and despite a few temperature spikes in February, maximum temperatures in March and April remained moderate.

The average heat summation (October to April) in the Aconcagua Valley reached 1,717 degree days, which is slightly lower than the historical average of 1,727 degree days. These conditions resulted in a season of moderate temperatures that were responsible for an easy evolution of the successive phenological stages—flowering, fruit set, and veraison. Although the harvest date for each variety was delayed by a week, overall it was a season of satisfying temperatures that allowed the tannins to mature fully while preserving aromas and flavours. These characteristics were clearly reflected in the extremely concentrated fresh fruit characteristics of the wines in a season that will likely be considered the best harvest on record.

WINEMAKING:

The Shiraz harvest began with the Max II vineyard in mid-April and ended with the Max V vineyard on the 22 April. The fruit was hand-picked in small 15 kg bins. Once the fruit arrived at the winery, the grapes were rigorously hand-selected on sorting tables to eliminate all extraneous plant matter, leaves, and stems to protect the fruit character of the wine. The grapes were de-stemmed, gently crushed, and transferred to stainless steel tanks. Approximately 5% of the juice was bled off to increase the skin to juice ratio for higher tannin extraction and more concentrated colour and flavour. The fruit was cold macerated for five days before undergoing fermentation at 26–30°C (79°–86°F), followed by an extended post-fermentation maceration at 20°C (68°F), for a total of 22 to 25 of skin contact, depending on the development of the individual lots. All of the lots were aged for 18 months in predominantly new French oak (Nadalie, Vicard, Demptos, Seguin Moreau cooperages). Fining occurred naturally during this period of time.

WINEMAKER'S COMMENTS:

Our 2005 Shiraz La Cumbre is remarkable for its deep ruby-red colour with violet highlights, as well as its aromatic expression and concentrated palate.

Its ripe style features red and black fruits such as blackberry, accompanied by meaty notes of bacon, smoke, a light touch of caramel, and a bit of black pepper that lends a spicy note. This is a complex wine with dense concentration, soft tannins, and rich flavour that will evolve very nicely with proper ageing.