BODEGA Y VIÑEDOS CATENA

Fundada en 1902

Bodega y Viñedos Catena

Mendoza, Mendoza

2017 Catena Alta Cabernet Sauvignon

CABERNET SAUVIGNON, CABERNET FRANC

SCAN TO VIEW ONLINE

this.wine/v/VT-OPBFSLXCN

VARIETIES

- **93%** Cabernet Sauvignon
- **7%** Cabernet Franc

ABOUT THIS WINE

Before the world recognized Catena's Argentina as "malbec country", the winery was known for its old-world style Cabernet Sauvignon born in the clay-soils of Agrelo. The family cherishes its historic Cabernet Sauvignon vineyards in Agrelo and Tupungato, particularly for their ageability and classic flavors. Catena Alta Cabernet Sauvignon is sourced from Lot 3 of the La Pirámide vineyard, Lot 2 of the Domingo vineyard and Lot 2 of the Nicasia Vineyard.

Catena Alta is an assemblage of historic rows within the Catena family Estate vineyards. The blend of these historic rows, like the marriage of sounds that create a symphony, yields a highly aromatic and elegant wine that speaks for the earth and the vines that have been tended by the Catenas for four generations. The Catena Alta wines can usually be drunk starting at three years after harvest and into the following one to two decades.

TECHNICAL

ABV	PH
13.7%	**3.63**

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WINEMAKING

VINEYARD

Lot 3, La Piramide Vineyard, Agrelo, Luján de Cuyo (950m/3116ft). Aluvial origin. Clay topsoil with rounded rocks on the bottom. Plant selection: Selección Mendoza. Lot 2, Domingo Vineyard, Villa Bastías, Tupungato, Valle de Uco (1120m/3674ft). Aluvial origin. Silt loamy soil with limestone on the bottom. Lot 2, Nicasia Vineyard, Altamira, Valle de Uco (1095m/3592ft). Aluvial origin. Loamy soil, with rounded rocks on the bottom.

Winter (June, July, August 2016)

Following a cool and rainy 2016 El Niño year, the rains stopped in June, and over the winter, precipitations were lower than usual. Mountain snow in the Andes, however, was abundant, and we noted increased levels in the Andean Glaciers that feed our vineyards. The winter was moderate, with temperatures ever so slightly warmer than usual.

Spring (September, October, November 2016)

A dry, cool spring created the environment for a series of frosts (frost is more common when there is low humidity) that reduced yields overall in Mendoza by about 25% but had an even stronger effect on the UCO Valley and especially on Malbec, which was down by about 40% to 60%. The rain did come in late November, and it was a little more humid than usual over the early summer (December and January.) At that point, yields were already significantly reduced, and the slightly increased humidity was good for the vines, lowering the need for irrigation.

Summer (December 2016, January and February 2017) and Autumn (March, April, May 2017)

The lower yields in the UCO Valley and resulting earlier harvest (by two weeks) gave us a much shorter harvest season overall—everybody was very, very tired by the end of March. There was less rain than usual throughout the harvest months of January and February, and by the time the heavy rains started in late March and April most of the picking was, thankfully, over. A mild summer allowed us to relax after the frosts were over, and the rain stayed away throughout the crucial picking months.

HARVEST

Low yields due to moderate frosts in the UCO Valley, an early harvest, and perfect balance. Laura Catena's favorite vintage since 1995. After Harvest 2016, the smallest and coldest in three decades thanks to El Niño, Mendoza's wine producers were mourning their empty wineries and hoping for a big crop.

But only Mother Nature gets to decide, and in 2017 we had another year of small yields—especially in the UCO Valley where most of our family's vineyards are located. Spring frosts brought on by dryer and slightly cooler weather resulted in lower yields, and the UCO Valley Malbec was down 55%. Our delicate Malbec responds to changes in the weather by dramatically reducing yields. We could easily understand why late-19th-century Bordelais decided to replace the Malbec in their Grand Cru vineyards with hardier Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot.

But oh, were we delighted by the glorious, glorious concentration, heightened cool-climate acidity and explosive aromatics! After tasting the juice at the winery this month of April 2017, I can honestly say that this is possibly our best vintage since I started formally working with my father in 1995. And if anybody ever said that yields don't matter, this year proves otherwise: Low yields result in greater concentration as long as the weather is dry and mild following a yield-reducing, yet not decimating, frost.

WINEMAKING

Vineyard lots are harvested at different times to ensure optimal natural acidity and moderate alcohol levels. Whole berries are hand loaded into small format fermentation bins and 225-500 L barrels; lots are treated individually; fermentation and maceration last for 28-30 days. Wild yeasts. Alcoholic and malolactic fermentation in barrel.

- Total Acidity: 5.87 grams/liter
- Unfined and unfiltered

AGING

Aged for 18 months. French oak.

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