BODEGA Y VIÑEDOS CATENA

Fundada en 1902

Bodega y Viñedos Catena

Mendoza, Mendoza

2011 Catena Alta Cabernet Sauvignon

CABERNET SAUVIGNON, CABERNET FRANC

SCAN TO VIEW ONLINE

this.wine/v/VT-UGOHIVDAT

VARIETIES

- **88%** Cabernet Sauvignon
- **12%** 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
14.0%	**3.74**

BODEGA Y VIÑEDOS CATENA

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WINEMAKING

VINEYARD

The soul of the viñatero (vigneron) is tested every year in our high mountain desert vineyard region of Mendoza, and the 2010-11 season was no different. After a small but very good quality harvest in 2010 (there was low set related to cold spring temperatures and Zonda winds) we were all hoping for a plentiful and uneventful 2011. As you may know, the viñatero quickly forgets the ravages of hail, frost and El Niño rains, every year hoping for a plentiful and healthy crop. The 2010 winter was quite dry and cold – not a good skiing season at Las Leñas! – but we somehow managed to get by through a combination of mountain stream water and underground aquifer wells. And our hearts rested easy, knowing that the probability of hail was lower in this dry climate – in fact, this was one of the lowest hail years that we have ever seen.

However, on the dreadful day of November 9th, a fierce frost hit Mendoza, cold air travelling fast along the low valleys of Lujan de Cuyo and the Uco Valley. The lack of humidity made things even worse: frost-cans were lit all night and prayers recited by all. We could not believe our luck the next day to see that our La Piramide vineyard in Agrelo (Agrelo and nearby Ugarteche were the worse affected) had been mostly spared. Our Angelica Sur Vineyard, a newer vineyard in El Cepillo, in the Southernmost part of the Uco Valley, was not as lucky – out of 150 Hectares we only harvested 30.

In February, the water situation became critical because the vines were in full photosynthesis mode and harvest was approaching. Towards the end of February, the rains arrived with noisy thunderstorms. The mountains became so white from the snow that it looked like winter. The initial elation at the arrival of water turned into fear towards beginning of March. The harvest of Chardonnay and Pinot Noir was coming about 2 weeks later than usual so we had almost no juice in the winery. But just when we started seeing some pockets of botrytis in the whites, the weather calmed down, the rain virtually stopped and we saw 2 more months of cooler-than-usual temperatures with a perfect mix of scattered clouds and sunny skies. The later ripening reds, such as Malbec and Cabernet Sauvignon were harvested 2-3 weeks later than usual in perfect condition with good concentration and perhaps due to the cooler climate, heightened aromas. Natural acidity was optimal, even in some of the lower altitude areas.

2011 will be a year of perfectly balanced wines with a rich expression of individual vineyard terroir and site.

HARVEST

DOMINGO VINEYARD: Chardonnay and Cabernet Sauvignon - Villa Bastías, Tupungato, Uco Valley, Mendoza, 3675 ft elevation “A hailstorm hit this vineyard in November, killing some of the flowers before they opened up. Hail reduced the yields by 50% in those lots that were not covered with anti-hail nets. Due to the cooler temperatures that characterized this growing season, we were able to harvest Chardonnay two weeks later than usual. This resulted in a slower and more complete maturation process, thereby maintaining excellent levels of acidity and allowing for the development of abundant aromatics. The Cabernet Sauvignon yields were lower than usual, and thanks to scarce rainfall during the growing season, the canopy allowed for more exposed grapes, resulting in lower levels of pyrazines, good levels of sugar and acids, and sweet-tasting tannins”.

NICASIA VINEYARD: Malbec and Cabernet Sauvignon - Altamira, Uco Valley, Mendoza, 3593 ft elevation “The quality of the Nicasia grapes this year is exceptional: high concentration of ripe tannins, good structure and remarkable elegance”. Belen Iacono, Viticultural Engineer.

LA PIRÁMIDE VINEYARD: Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Malbec, Cabernet Franc, Petit Verdot y Chardonnay - Agrelo, Luján de Cuyo, Mendoza, 3117 ft elevation This is the vineyard that surrounds the Catena Zapata Pyramid. This year we have been quite lucky regarding the frost of November 9th. In spite of the fact that La Pirámide vineyard is located in one of the districts that was gravely affected by frost, only a small area was affected in the lowest sector of the vineyard.

In general terms, the growing season at La Pirámide was very good, without excessive rain during February, which provided for healthy conditions in the grapes. The clay soils accentuated the cool climate during the months of March and April this year and I was very pleased by the natural acidity and freshness of the grapes.” Diana Marczuk, Viticultural Engineer.

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 from each vineyard are treated individually; fermentation and maceration last for 10 – 35 days; 30% cold maceration. Wild yeasts. Alcoholic and malolactic fermentation in barrel; wine undergoes active battonage to protect it and drastically reduce the amount of SO2 needed.

Total Acidity: 5.5 grams/liter

Unfined and unfiltered

AGING

Aged for 18 months in French oak.