

CASAS DEL BOSQUE

RESERVA CARMENERE 2019

Rapel Valley, Chile



Technical Notes

While Carménère is certainly well known for its Pyrazine component, this Reserva from Casas del Bosque tames it and balances it pretty well thanks in great part to the way malolactic fermentation is managed during ageing. Also, the fruit is sourced from loamy alluvial soils with excellent drainage, very close to the Cachapoal river.

Upon arrival at the winery, all grapes were destemmed and crushed into stainless steel tanks and inoculated with selected yeasts. Fermentation occurred quickly; temperatures reached peaks of 90°F. After that, the wine was left to macerate for an additional 7 days for added structure and longevity. Half of the resulting wine underwent malo in barrels, where it was left to age for about 6 months. The other half was kept in tanks to complete malolactic fermentation. The wine was finally assembled, filtered and bottled, and total production reached 12,200 cases.

UPC CODE: 697412000591

About this Wine

The story of Carménère is often presented as that of a grape with a personality conflict. It is much akin to Cabernet Franc, and was once widespread in the Médoc region of Bordeaux. Today, it's impossible to find Carménère in France since starting in 1867 the Phylloxera plague destroyed most of the original Carménère vines. Fast-forward about a century to the early 1990's, and we find that somehow it made it to Chilean vineyards before disappearing in France (That said – most of the people in Chile believed it was Merlot at the time!).

Luckily, there is no personality conflict with Casas del Bosque Reserva Carménère. It took a while for Chile to get it right since its rediscovery, but today it is a well-established variety that shines on its own. The winery's approach is quite simple and straightforward: grow the grapes in Rapel Valley, where the best Carménère in Chile comes from, and let them ripen until what stands out are the sweeter notes of plums, raspberry and tobacco as opposed to the greenish, more peppery side of it. Give it some oak ageing to round it off and Voilà, you have an excellent, friendly and easy to drink "blast from the past" kind of wine.

Wine Analysis

Alcohol: 14.1%
Total Acidity: 6.2 g/L
Residual Sugar: 3.87 g/L
pH: 3.70
Free SO₂: 37 ppm
at bottling

- ✓ VEGAN FRIENDLY
- ✓ SUSTAINABLE
- ✗ ORGANIC
- ✗ BIODYNAMIC

Climate/Terroir Conditions

Most of the fruit is from an area called Almahue, long recognized for the quality of its Carménère, and part of the famed Peumo sub-appellation. Crop yields were less than 10 tons per hectare (4.5 tons per acre). Warm days and cool nights characterized the season. Average temperatures in summer were 71°F, and in winter 52°F. Mean diurnal shifts in March are 63°F. Yearly rainfall is 315 mm on average, falling mostly between May and September; however, this particular season was exceptionally dry.

Tasting Notes/Reviews

90pt James Suckling
90pt Wine Enthusiast - Best Buy

Deep red with a garnet hue. Aromas reminiscent of black cherries, plums and dry leaves with a hint of green bell pepper are complemented with tertiary notes of chocolate and spice. This Carménère is soft and plump, with supple tannins and good length. A perfect match with Peruvian "seco de cordero," or other lamb dishes such as minced lamb kebabs with "salsa verde", mint or coriander. Smoky bacon, peppers, zucchini and eggplant too. Fresh chilies, as used in Mexican or even certain types of Thai food.

