

HARVEST re po rt 2012



The 2011–2012 season was warm and dry with moderate yields. Compared to last season, this year had higher minimum and maximum average temperatures in February and March and less precipitation between October and April, which led to very healthy grapes but made water management difficult by generating stress in the vines and dehydration of the grapes in some cases.



The low yields for some varieties were mainly due to poor induction of the buds that emerged in spring 2011, caused by low temperatures in November 2010 and throughout the 2010–2011 season. Spring temperatures in 2011 were low during budbreak and flowering, although minimum temperatures rose faster than high temperatures in December and afterward, creating very favourable conditions for optimum fruit set. Average minimum temperatures rose in January while average highs dropped, which led to optimal veraison at approximately 28°C/82°F. Although January is usually the warmest month, this season the highest temperatures were recorded in February (the warmest month in all localities) and March, which accelerated sugar accumulation, especially in the northern zone.

At Viña Errázuriz, yields were down overall by an average of 3% in relation to the Agricultural Plan. The varieties affected most by lower yields were Cabernet Sauvignon (-20.1%) Cabernet Franc (-15.4%), Sauvignon Blanc (-5.3%), and Carmenere (-6.3%). Meanwhile, yields of Petit Verdot, Syrah, and Chardonnay rose by 12%, 4.5%, and 4.3%, respectively.

Data collected from our 7 meteorological stations this season show that the 2011–2012 season had a heat summation in all zones that was higher than last season and the historic average. The increase in temperatures was a major factor in ensuring proper phenolic ripening in late red varieties such as Carmenere, but the biggest challenges were to keep water levels up in the plants (proper irrigation), to prevent solar exposure of the fruit (no leaf pulling), and harvesting early to prevent dehydration of the fruit while maintaining acidity and fruit intensity.

In regard to the season's effect on the quality of the wines, the whites displayed proper fruit intensity, moderate alcohol, and a lush palate with no phenolic notes. The quality of the Chardonnay is especially outstanding this year.

The reds display vibrant colour, optimum acidity, and good fruit intensity, leading to fruity, well-rounded wines with smooth tannins.

CLIMATE REPORT AND DESCRIPTION OF WINE QUALITY BY ZONE



CLIMATE AND PHENOLOGICAL STAGES

Spring began with lower average temperatures than last year. The average high temperature rose in November, increasing the heat summation, which began to rise in December and by February had reached its highest monthly level in the last three years (251.6 DD). That month also had the highest average temperature of the season (27.4°C/81.3°F), although January was also warm, with an average high of 26°C (78.8°F). March and April had a heat summation similar to the previous season, reaching a total of 1,276 DD, 5% more than last season (1,215 DD) and higher than the historic average (1,216 DD).

With spring conditions that were colder than last year, budbreak was delayed in all varieties and finally occurred between August 26th and September 26th, which was 10 days later than last season for the Sauvignon Blanc and 15 days later for the Chardonnay, although for the Pinot Noir it was around the same time as last year. Flowering occurred

between October 26th and November 10th in the different varieties, which was 18 days later for the Sauvignon Blanc, 13 days later for Pinot Noir, and 8 days later for the Chardonnay and Merlot. Veraison occurred primarily in the second half of January on similar dates as the previous year for the Pinot Noir, Chardonnay, and Merlot. In the Syrah, Sauvignon Blanc, and Viognier, however, it occurred 13, 10, and 5 days later than last year, respectively.

Precipitation was concentrated in October 2011 (23.4 mm/0.92 in) with a single rainfall of 5.6 mm (0.22 in) in January 2012 and a total of just 32.3 mm (1.27 in) from October to April, which led to a harvest that was healthy but dry, with irrigation water coming mainly from the estate's reserve pond.

QUALITY

Due to the warm summer the grapes loaded sugar quickly, which prompted an earlier harvest (10–12 days) than in previous years to preserve good acidity and fruit freshness and prevent high levels of alcohol. These conditions produced a Sauvignon Blanc with a good balance of fruit and herbaceous notes and with an optimum, well-rounded acidity on the palate without phenolic qualities. The Chardonnay displays fresh fruit qualities on both the nose and the palate, which offers lively acidity and a lush, round mouthfeel. As for the Pinot Noir, the early harvest to obtain better alcohol levels and preserve freshness also helped provide fresh fruit notes and very good colour. The Syrah has a beautiful deep purplish-red colour and a fresh, fruity, spiced sensation, with good acidity and smooth tannins on the palate. This year's most outstanding varieties were: Chardonnay, Syrah, and Pinot Noir.



CLIMATE AND PHENOLOGICAL STAGES

Spring began with lower than average minimum temperatures in October and November, compared to last year. The average mean temperature in December was higher than the historic average, whereas in January it was slightly lower. February and March saw the highest average temperatures of the season, which were 29.9°C (85.8°F) and 29.6°C (85.3°F), respectively.

In general, the heat summation curve was different from last year, beginning in spring with a slightly higher heat summation than last year and reaching peaks of 281 DD in January and 290 DD in February. The season's total heat summation was 1,517 DD, 137 DD more than last

season and 93 more than the historic average.

In regard to phenological stages, budbreak came earlier than it did last season, beginning on September 11th with the Cabernet Franc and Grenache. Viognier, Malbec, Mourvèdre, Roussanne, and Merlot budded 10 to 15 days earlier than last season, while the Cabernet Sauvignon was 10 to 13 days early and the Carmenere, 20 to 25 days early. The only exception was Syrah, which budded on similar dates as last year. Flowering also came early for all varieties, occurring in the first two weeks of November, unlike in 2010–2011, when it occurred in the last two weeks of that month. Veraison took place primarily between January 15th and 25th, beginning with the Malbec and Cabernet Sauvignon and followed by the Grenache, Syrah, Petit Verdot, Cabernet Franc, and Carmenere. The previous year, in contrast, budbreak occurred between January 20th and February 11th.

Precipitation was low this year, with just 4.8 mm (0.19 in) of rain, and none whatsoever between November and March, in contrast to the 2010–2011 season, which had 36 mm (1.4 in). On the one hand the lack of rain encouraged healthy grapes, but it also made it difficult to manage water reserves in the soil. Fortunately, there was little dehydration, with problems mainly affecting new plantations that lack sufficient foliage to protect the clusters. By harvest time most blocks had adequate canopy coverage. However, the warm conditions did foster ripening of late varieties such as Carmenere.

QUALITY

The grapes reached harvest in good condition. Although some varieties achieved optimum ripeness early because of the warm season, these were harvested at the right time and produced red wines with exceptional deep, vivid colour, aromatic expression, and tannins that were friendlier and more rounded than in previous seasons. With moderate acidity and

alcohol, these wines are complex and refined with fresh fruit and ripe fruit profiles that promise interesting potential for barrel ageing. This season's most outstanding varieties are Cabernet Sauvignon, for its texture and elegance, Syrah for its spicy aromas and smooth tannins, Petit Verdot for its intense, fruity nose, and Carmenere, which displays ripe fruit and spiced notes.



CLIMATE AND PHENOLOGICAL STAGES

In October these vineyards recorded average temperatures that were lower than the historic average, largely due to a drop in minimum temperatures. Minimum temperatures rose significantly between November and January, however, reaching 4°C (7.2°F) higher than the average for the past five years in November. In contrast, average maximum temperatures dropped slightly. It was not until February and March that the warm season truly began, with a rise in average minimum and maximum temperatures. The latter reached 30.8°C (87.4°F) in March, the highest average maximum temperature recorded all season, even higher than the average of 30.2°C (86.4°F) in February. By April, average high temperatures had dropped.

The above conditions were closely reflected in the heat summation for this period. October's heat summation was similar to that of the two previous years, while November accumulated slightly less. It exceeded 270 DD in December, peaked in January at 292 DD, remained constant until March, and then dropped to more normal levels in April. Compared to the 230 degree days reached in February and March of the 2010–2011 season, the heat summation in February and March this season was clearly unusual. Total heat summation was 1,621 DD—128

DD higher than in the previous season and 200 higher than the average of the past three seasons.

As a result of the season's temperature conditions, budbreak occurred in the second half of September, similar to the previous season for varieties such as Merlot, Petit Verdot, Syrah, and Cabernet Sauvignon, but 4 days earlier for Carmenere and 8 days earlier for Malbec. Flowering occurred 7 to 15 days earlier than in the previous season, in the second half of October for Cabernet Sauvignon and Syrah (in Max I, Max II and Max III), and the second half of November for the Max V Carmenere. Veraison occurred in the first half of January for all varieties, 5 days later than last season for Merlot, Syrah, and Cabernet Sauvignon, 4 days earlier for Petit Verdot, and 6 days earlier for Carmenere.

Precipitation was nearly non-existent, with a total of just 2.4 mm (0.09 in), compared to 20.2 mm (0.8 in) in the 2010–2011 season.

QUALITY

This season's wines display good colour, smooth tannins, intense aromas, and profiles of fresh and ripe fruit, accompanied by moderate acidity. The Syrah has outstanding spicy notes, a smooth palate, and pleasing tannins. The Cabernet Sauvignon shows its characteristic aromas of ripe fruit such as cherries, blackberries, and blueberries, with good structure, a juicy sensation, and sweet tannins on the palate. The Merlot, which experienced no dehydration problems, is notable for its liveliness and medium body. The Carmenere has spicy aromas, with good structure and juicy tannins on the palate. The Malbec looks very good this season, with complex aromas, a structured but refreshing palate, and round tannins. The Petit Verdot displays somewhat less aromatic intensity than in other seasons, but as always it has remarkable colour, tannic structure, and acidity, accompanied by notes of ripe red fruit and spices.



CLIMATE AND PHENOLOGICAL STAGES

The Valle del Maipo had a warm year and accumulated 1,553 DD in total, 56 DD more than last year and 33.2 more than the last three years' average. In each month, average minimum and maximum temperatures

were higher than last year's average and that of the past five years (except for January, when minimums and maximums were slightly lower). These warm conditions lead to budbreak in the Cabernet Sauvignon coming 8 days earlier than last year, full flowering around the same date, and veraison 6 days earlier than last year. January is normally the warmest month of the season but unusually this year February and March were the warmest months this season, reaching 29.7°C (85.5°F).

Total precipitation for the season (October to April) was 18.2 mm (0.72 in), with 1.4 mm (0.06 in) of rainfall in February and the bulk in April, which did not affect the health of the grapes.

QUALITY

The wines from this harvest, which took place 10 days earlier than the average historic date, are notable for their pleasingly intense red fruit notes, good concentration and structure, and round, elegant tannins, but are less nervy than in previous seasons owing to the slightly lower acidity.



Casablanca

CLIMATE AND PHENOLOGICAL STAGES

In October the valley recorded average minimum temperatures that were lower than the average of the past five years, and somewhat higher average maximum temperatures. This cause budbreak in the Chardonnay and Sauvignon Blanc to occur 10 to 15 days earlier than the average historic date and the Pinot Noir at a similar time. Total heat summation was 1,387 DD, 120 DD more than in the 2010–2011 season.

In November, December, and January, both minimum and maximum average temperatures were higher than the average for the preceding

seasons. February was the warmest month of the season and reached 32.1°C (89.8°F). Average low temperatures began to drop in February and continued to do so during March and April, although the average maximum temperatures remained slightly high until April.

Flowering occurred 7 days earlier than last season in the Chardonnay and Pinot Noir, and 10 to 12 days earlier in the Sauvignon Blanc. Fruit set occurred 6 days earlier in the Chardonnay, 24 days before in the Sauvignon Blanc, and on a similar date in the Pinot Noir. Veraison took place 10 days earlier for the Chardonnay and 15 days earlier for the Sauvignon Blanc and Pinot Noir.

No precipitation was recorded in the valley (0 mm/in), compared to 34.5 mm (1.4 in) recorded in the 2010–2011 season.

QUALITY

Due to the warm season, the harvest began 10 to 12 days earlier than in previous seasons. The whites are very fresh and fruity on the nose, with a sweet, well-rounded palate that is refreshed by the acidity in the wines. Most outstanding varieties this season: Chardonnay and Pinot Noir

SUMMARY:

Generally speaking, the 2011-2012 season can be summarized by the following characteristics:

- Warm year with early ripening
- Scant precipitation
- Very healthy grapes, including the late-ripening varieties in the southern and coastal zones
- Low availability of water for irrigation
- Low yields of Cabernet Sauvignon
- No significant problems related to spring and autumn frosts
- The warm year and absence of precipitation translated into an early-ripening season, the main challenges of which were keeping the canopies functional to protect the fruit, maintaining good water levels in the plants through increased irrigation, and harvesting early to prevent dehydration and maintain freshness and moderate alcohol levels.
- Despite being a challenging season, by taking the proper precautions (irrigation and early harvesting) the resulting quality far surpassed expectations, and we can now say it was a good year, especially for Chardonnay, Syrah, Pinot Noir, Merlot and Carmenere.

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