

MALBEC 2008



The winemaking

The winter 2007/08 arrived very late, it appeared in mid June instead of end of May. It was then cold, very dry with not one drop of rain and quite short.

The Spring was warm, without wind and this favoured a good early flowering. Still no rain but we were plagued with serious frosts. The earlier ones were in October, 3 of them quite strong and then the "coups de grace" arrived very late in November, the first the 11th and the second the 14th. The temperatures dropped at 5 below zero. This left the Valley quite badly damaged. Between the province of Neuquen and ours, the Rio-Negro, the damage was estimated at 50%. Luckily our old vines were not hit but our new ones in Valle Azul (from which we make part of A Lisa) were damaged by 10%. The summer began in January with strong winds, hot days and cold nights. The patagonian winds tend to dry up a lot but at the same time guaranty us cold nights as the skies are absolutely clear. Still no rain. This gave us berries with very thick skins, meaning big polyphenols or tannins and very ripe. One can characterise the year as almost perfect and dry with good fruit and acidity and superbe tannins because of the thermic amplitude.

We began Harvest earlier this year, we began picking the 29th, 30th of March and finally on the 15th of April (all fruit days), dividing the 3,7 acres or 1,5 hectares into 4 plots (as usual), meaning that we picked the same vineyard at different times until the 15th of April, just like in Sauternes!

All the grapes were picked in the morning by hand into 10 Kgs crates, then transported in a cool truck to the winery. The grapes were then destemmed by hand, berry by berry! Imagine, that in one day with 12 people destemming by hand, we manage to turn out what a machine can in only 10 minutes! The grapes are fermented in small 2,500 litres cement vats, and are let to cold soak for about 10 days. They then start up with their natural yeasts as they slowly warm up in the vats. We are very keen for our own natural yeast to deal with all the fermentation, as the yeast really does give Noemia's unique character. The fermentation lasted 3 weeks, extracting color and tannins with the old fashioned "pigeage" or "plunging" method once or twice a day. This is the most gentle way of extraction in winemaking, at Bodega Noemia, we look for elegante and finesse, not over extraction.

Once the fermentation terminated, we run off the wine by gravity into a little tank and then with the help of a forklift, we elevate the tank so we can feed the wine by gravity into their 100% new french barrels made by the finest coopers in France. The wine proceeded with its indigeneous Malo-Lactic fermentation for about 3 months at about 18 degrees Celsius. No batonnage. The wine then remained 18 months in their respective barrels for the second time (last time was time was in 2006 and 2007), normally Noemia stays up to 24 months, but as the wine was showing extremely well, we decided to blend before. We blended the wine the Sunday 27th of December 2009, a fruit day following the Bio-Dynamic calendar. Out of 18 barrels, we blended only 13,5 barrels to reach only 3112 bottles and 30 magnums!

On January the 4th of 2010, again a fruit day, the wine was bottled unfiltered and unfiltered. The vines are a 100% Malbec, pre-phelloxera, Pied-Franco of 78 years of age.

Note:

Bodega Noemia and myself are proud members of the exclusive YOUNG LIONS – WINEMAKING LEGENDS OF THE FUTURE led by Serena Sutcliff with only 17 members world wide, we are also the Only South American winery present, please have a look at these sites:

www.geoffgreen.com/young_lions/

www.geoffgreen.com/downloads/young_lions_wine_seminar.zip

The area

The estate is situated in the Rio Negro Valley, which is 620 miles South of Buenos Aires, 280 miles East of the Andes, 310 miles West of the Atlantic and a further 1240 miles from Tierra del Fuego. In other words, it is located in the middle of the desert. The valley's microclimate is under the influence of two rivers deriving from the Andes, the Neuquen and the Limay which form into the Rio Negro, which throws itself into the Atlantic. The Rio Negro valley is an ex glacier which is 310 miles long and 15,5 miles large at 250 yards above sea level. In 1828, the British colonies, having observed the large amounts of water flowing in the river, decided to create hannels which would irrigate the valley thus forming a type of oasis in the middle of the desert.

The climate

Is dry. Maximum 30% humidity and 7 inches of rain/year make the area free of diseases. There is no pollution, meaning that there is a high purity of sunlight (great photosynthesis). There is vast thermal amplitude: in maturation season the temperatures are on average 28 °C at day and 9 °C at night. The four seasons are very precise; mild spring, hot summer, mild autumn and a cold winter.

The vineyard

The vines were planted in 1932. The grapes are 100% malbec. They are irrigated up to four times a year. A green pruning is effectuated in mid January during veraison thus leaving only 30 hl/acre. The picking period would range between March 20th until the first week of April.

Our vineyards at Bodega Noemia are certified Bio-Dynamic by Demeter. We produce 7 out 8 preparations (500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 506 and 507) on our farm exclusively from our own resources. We also make our own Bio-Dynamic composts each year.

The wine

Bodega Noemia 2008 is a 100% Malbec with:

- 14% Alcohol
- pH 3,70
- 5,66 g/l of Titratable acidity

Only 3,112 bottles and 30 Magnums were produced.

NB. As the wine is a 100% natural and unfiltered, it may present some harmless deposits in the bottle.

Bodega Noemia de Patagonia S.A.

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