

# ALTAÏR | Red Blend 2017

*The elusive Altaïr is one of the brightest stars in the sky. Especially visible in Chile during August and September, this seasonal attraction is well worth waiting for. It reminds us that the vines are waking up ready to put forth shoots.*

*Altaïr inspires us to create something memorable; a blend representing the characteristics of this unique valley, where the soil in our vineyards in Cachapoal Andes was formed as a result of millions of volcanic eruptions and violent earthquakes that shook the mountain and caused the rocks to tumble down towards the valley.*

*Altaïr: the brightest star in the Andes.*

**D.O:** Cachapoal Andes Valley

**VARIETY:** 81% Cabernet Sauvignon - 11% Syrah - 8% Cabernet Franc.

**YIELD PER HECTARE:** 5-6 tons/ha.

## SOIL

The soils in the Andes area of Cachapoal where Altaïr comes from are diverse because of the area's different geological and geomorphological origins. We have volcanic soils containing fractured yellow basalt, with minerals mixed with sand and clay, with good permeability. These soils contribute minerality and structure to both the Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc grapes. There are also significant deposits of alluvial gravel ranging from irregular and medium-sized through to fine gravel with sand. We use these soils for Cabernet Sauvignon and they lend the wines structure, elegance, volume and smoothness. Finally, we have decomposed volcanic soils in clay for the Syrah, which contribute fresh fruit and a structure that gives length to the wine.

## CLIMATE

The 2017 vintage in the Andes area of Cachapoal was characterized by the harvest being early. The grapes began to ripen early, with veraison beginning in mid-December. The harvest was 3 to 4 weeks early compared to prior years. This was because the maximum temperatures in December, January and February exceeded 38°C. These high temperatures caused very high levels of evapotranspiration in the vines and inhibited photosynthesis. This in turn halted the development of sugars and the accumulation of total polyphenols in the grapes. The resulting wines are lower in alcohol with great fruit expression and elevated levels of acidity.

Another characteristic of this vintage was the very low yields obtained, above all from the vines reproduced through massal selection. The average decrease in yields for the red varieties was around 10%-12%. However for those vines propagated through clonal selection, the drop in yields was lower, at around 3%-5% below that of a normal year. These low yields concentrated the nutrients in the grapes and we obtained fat wines that are expressive in the mouth.





### WINEMAKING

The Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc and Syrah grapes were manually harvested into 10kg bins. They were selected three times: in the vineyard during the harvest, at the reception table and after destemming. The harvest was protected throughout with carbonic snow to avoid oxidation and the loss of aromas. Then the grapes were macerated at cold temperatures (8°C) for 3 to 5 days to gently extract polyphenols, enhancing the colour and aromas. The alcoholic fermentation took place with selected yeasts in stainless steel tanks for 8 days at a controlled temperature no higher than 26°C. During the fermentation, there were 8- short pump-overs per day (depending on the variety) in order to gently extract tannins and anthocyanins. Once the alcoholic fermentation was complete, the wines underwent a post-fermentative maceration for 15 days (decided by daily tasting) in order to refine and enhance the balance of the wine. Then the wine was racked off and settled before being racked into barrels.

The ageing took place in French oak barrels and foudres for 18 months, (40% of them new, 40% used and 20% foudres). The levels of toast and types of wood were adapted to each variety and terroir. The malolactic fermentation took place spontaneously in the barrels. Finally, Altair 2017 was bottled on 16 November 2018 and was bottle-aged for at least a year before being released onto the market.

### TASTING NOTES

**Appearance:** deep ruby red.

**Nose:** intense aromas of fresh red fruit like cherries, intermingled with a subtle note of wood that is perfectly integrated in the wine.

**Palate:** Good acidity with a concentrated palate that achieves a good balance between the alcohol level, sweetness and tannins. Smooth texture and a long finish.

### CHEMICAL ANALYSIS

Chemical analysis:

Alcohol: 14.6%.

pH: 3.53.

Total Acidity (Tartaric Acid): 5.7 g/L

Residual sugar: 2.5 g/L