

Yes, I know the weather is fabulous! I hope you will take some time to come to this fascinating wine tasting, I think this is the first Carmenera Wine Tasting ever at Santiam Wine Co. The grape is excellent and I am seeing more and more of this varietal in the market. It makes a wonder food wine with Lamb, steak, pork loin, poultry, pastas with meat-based sauce, game, grilled meat and food with spice.

- **DATE: Friday, 07/12/12**
- **THE PLACE: Santiam Wine Co & Bar! 1555 12th ST Se Suite 130**
- **Time: 4-7 PM**
- **Cost: \$20 Full Pour**
- **1/2 Pour \$12**

### **Carmenera Color and Flavor:**

It is a red wine grape with intense, inky violet color. The aromas most often associated with Carmenera are tobacco, tar, leather, bell pepper, dark fruit, coffee and chocolate. The palate profile can echo the nose, but is largely dominated by cassis, cherry, blackberry, blueberry, plum, pepper, earthy nuances, vanilla and spice. It is typically a medium-bodied wine that is best enjoyed in its younger years.

The Carmenera grape varietal was originally from France (the Medoc region of Bordeaux to be precise), but has since found favor in Chile, where it is grown with gusto. This grape has an interesting heritage in Chile, with many mistaking it for Merlot initially. Not surprisingly, "Chilean Merlot" was known for having a different palate profile than other New World Merlot bottling's. However, once DNA tests confirmed it as Bordeaux's long lost Carmenera (destroyed by phylloxera), thriving in Chile's unique, phylloxera-free terroir, the grape became known worldwide as Chile's red grape and they've had immense success with its cultivation. It is bottled as a single varietal wine and as a blend, most often with Cabernet Sauvignon.

Carmenera is a dark-skinned red wine grape variety originally from the vineyards of Bordeaux, but which has found a particularly suitable home in Chile, where it is sometimes also known as Grande Vidure. A late-ripening variety, Carmenera needs high levels of sunshine and a warm summer to show its potential, but in the right environment it can produce fine, deeply-colored red wines with the attractive meaty plumpness of Merlot and the gently herbaceous, cedary notes of Cabernet Sauvignon. These similarities are not altogether surprising, as Carmenera is considered by some to be the 'grandfather' of Bordeaux varieties.

### **THE WINES:**

#### **2009 Chono Carmenera Maipo Valley, Chile \$12**

A wine with great elegance and character, good structure and balance. It shows a strong and deep ruby red color, with intense and outstanding aromas of red and black fruits, black spices, and a sweet vanilla complexity deriving from the oak. On the palate this wine shows very nicely balanced with good volume and a balanced and persistent acidity. The tannins are soft and mature. Our Carmenera comes from the Maipo Valley, where the complex structure of its soils and the temperate climate allow a slow ripening of the grapes. These outstanding conditions are reflected on grapes with good structure and balance.

#### **2009 Concha y Toro Carmenera Rapel Valley \$18**

The 2009 Marques de Casa Concha Carmenera contains 14% Cabernet Sauvignon in its makeup. The fruit was sourced from the superb Peumo Vineyard in Rapel Valley with the wine aged for 18 months in 42% new French oak. It displays a more brooding personality in its promising bouquet of sandalwood, exotic spices, dried herbs, floral notes, plum, and blackberry. In the glass it is full-bodied, rich, plush, and structured. The wine conceals enough fine-grained tannin to evolve for 3-4 years. This lengthy effort, stylistically similar but less expensive than the Terrunyo Carmeneres, is a great value that will be at its best from 2014 to 2024. **91 Points Robert Parker**

Cocha y Toro is the largest wine producer in Chile as the above list attests. Remarkably, they are also one of the quality leaders and innovators leading the country forward. The Gran Reserva Serie are wines made from a single vineyard meant to display a particular terroir. The Marques de Casa Concha wines are also sourced from single vineyards but exposed to more new oak and a longer élevage. Some of the finest wines produced in Chile, particularly from the Carmenere grape, are being bottled and sold under the Terrunyo label under the direction of veteran winemaker Ignacio Recabarren.

#### **2009 Montes Alpha Carmenere Colchagua, Rapel Valley \$21**

The 2009 Alpha Carmenere contains 10% Cabernet Sauvignon in its makeup. The fruit was sourced from a cool micro-climate near the Pacific Ocean which provides the long growing season Carmenere seems to require. It was aged for 12 months in a mix of new and used French oak before bottling without filtration. It offers up a brooding bouquet of wood smoke, herbs, spices, incense, violets, and assorted black fruits. This is followed by a rich, savory, incipiently complex wine that will benefit from another 2-3 years of bottle age. Drink this tasty effort from 2013 to 2021. **91 Points Robert Parker**

#### **2008 Concha y Toro Terrunyo Cabernet Sauvignon Maipo Valley \$40**

The fruit for the 2008 Terrunyo Cabernet Sauvignon (which contains 3.5% Cabernet Franc) was sourced from the Pirque Viejo Vineyard in Maipo It was aged for 18 months in 80% new French oak. It displays a more brooding personality than the Syrah. Notions of pain grille, graphite, violets, spice box, and black currants lead to a structured wine with loads of layered fruit, incipiently complex flavors, and enough ripe tannin to evolve for another 3-4 years. This impressive effort will be at its best from 2015 to 2023. **92+ Points Robert Parker**

#### **2007 Viu Manent El Incidente Carmenere Colchagua Valley \$50**

The 2007 Carmenere El Incidente contains 10% Petit Verdot and 5% Malbec in its blend and was aged for 21 months in new French oak. Purple/black in color, it offers up a captivating nose of sandalwood, exotic spices, brier, lavender, leather, and assorted black fruits. This sets the stage for a full-bodied, plush, layered wine with superior density and richness. It conceals enough structure to evolve for 5-6 years and offers a drinking window extending from now through 2027. **92 Points Jay Miller**

#### **2009 Montes Purple Angel Colchagua Valley \$50**

Not only a classic Carménère, but a classic New World wine. The colour, in a tip of the hat to the name, is deep purple-ruby. Aromas of blueberry pie, cedar boughs, smoked meat, cherry and tilled earth dominate. Dry, very flavourful, but impeccably balanced by moderate to firm tannins and lively acidity. Excellent blueberry and cedar replays. Full bodied with a very long, luxurious finish. There's a touch of Petit Verdot mixed in with this impressive Carménère. Enjoyable over the next 6-8+ years with grilled steaks or osso buco. (VINTAGES panel, Dec. 2011)

### **ABOUT THE VALLEY'S**

#### **Colchagua Valley:**

This is one of the most popular wine regions in Chile, famous for its full-bodied Cabernet Sauvignon, Carménère, Syrah and Malbec. With over 500 years of history, Colchagua is the heart of Chilean rural traditions and culture. Its beautiful landscape is surrounded by foothills that preserve their native flora and fauna and stand against the imposing backdrop of the Andes Mountains. Viewed as a tourist destination, this is the most sought-after valley due to the various options available in terms of wine, gastronomy and hotels. The traditional vintage festival and the wine train are also among its tourist attractions.

#### **Maipo Valley:**

One of the most traditional wine-producing areas in Chile, the Maipo Valley is located in the Central Valley, where the first grapevines were introduced by the Spanish Conquistadors. There, sheltered by the Mediterranean climate and favorable soil conditions of the Andes and Coastal mountainside, the

vineyards yielded the first musts. Most of the country's top wines are sourced from this land, especially Cabernet Sauvignon, which stands out for its intense color and delicate aromas, and for its incredible capacity to retain minerals. It also has good potential for the production of Syrah and Chardonnay. Due to its natural assets (closeness to Santiago city, variety of winemaking styles and several hotel and restaurant options), tourism has come almost as a given in this valley, which attracts the largest number of visitors.

**Rapel Valley:**

A large wine-producing region in Chile, located to the south of the capital city, Santiago, and named after the Rapel river which runs through its heart. The region stretches from the Pacific coast in the west to the slopes of the Andes 60 miles (100km) to the east, so it is not surprising that its landscapes and climates are varied. Rainfall is generally low and the region leans towards the drier, warmer end of the scale.

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