

# MONTSECANO

ARTISAN TERROIR CHILEAN WINE



C E L L A R H A N D



## MONTSECANO OFFER

Alsatian winemaker André Ostertag refers to it as “a quest for terroir wines at the edge of the world”. It’s also an adventure in friendship, a project initiated by four mates sharing their love and views of wine. It’s a Franco-Chilean alliance – all of them have lived, or are living, in France. In addition to Ostertag, the quartet comprises estate manager Julio Donoso, a Chilean photographer who lived in exile in France, plus fellow photographer Álvaro Yáñez and entrepreneur Javier de la Fuente. Together they cleared out and planted just over five hectares of vines on this pristine, dry, granitic hill in 2005. Montsecano is located 35km from Valparaíso and 90km from Santiago in the premium cool-climate winegrowing region of Casablanca in Chile. The Montsecano vineyards are just 10km from the Pacific as the crow flies, making them the coolest and nearest to the ocean within the Casablanca Denomination of Origin.

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***Very lively. Bone dry and chock full of lively fruit.***

*Jancis Robinson on 2013 Montsecano Pinot Noir*

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It’s a breathtakingly beautiful corner of the planet, with overwhelming light, a rainless sky and morning spray off the ocean, allied to pristine and previously unfarmed soil – a pure picture undistorted by civilisation. Even mobile phones can’t encroach upon it. “The energies are strong and palpable, raw and untamed,” says Ostertag. “On top of that

the place is so charming. Montsecano's beauty reminds me of the way I've always felt about (Ostertag's beloved Alsatian grand cru) Muenchberg."

As anyone familiar with his methods would expect, André and the gang respect this beauty and energy to the hilt. Vines are biodynamically grown and the team ploughs by horse, hoes by hand and uses biodynamic composts, as well as moderate irrigation to supplement the ocean spray and help the roots grow deeper.



*Art house wine: Julio Donoso is no stranger to capturing beauty*

The Montsecano cellar was designed by Donoso, who made his name as an international photographer in the 1980s, immortalising the likes of Claudia Schiffer in the process. The cellar is the shape of a half-buried egg, which naturally ensures cool inside temperatures all year round. The thatched roof enables the building to breathe.

"Harvest is a very special opportunity to get the four of us together and share our efforts, sweat, dreams, joys and pains - with wine around," says Ostertag. Their winemaking processes are smooth and natural. They pick the fruit by hand, destem the grapes and ferment the musts with indigenous yeasts. The wines spend between 12 and 18 days on skins and are then aged in 16hl egg-shaped concrete vats for 12 to 18 months. Ostertag foregoes fining and filtering so as to preserve texture. The wines are bottled with a pinch of highly diluted volcanic sulphur, added in homeopathic doses. The four friends produce two wines: the top label is Montsecano, which comes from their own vineyard, while Refugio is grown on a leased two-hectare plot owned by a prominent local winegrowing family. In a short period of time, the wines have built quite a name for themselves. The 2010 and 2011 vintages of Montsecano won **Best Chilean Pinot Noir** in the *Descorchados* guide by local wine authority, **Patricio Tapia**. Meanwhile **Jancis Robinson** picked the 2010 Refugio as one of her top festive wines for the **Financial Times**.

## **The Wines**

### ***André Ostertag's 2013 vintage report***

2013 was a vintage of heavy rain in the Casablanca valley, with 487mm coming down - twice as much as 2012. Still this is much lower than the 600mm average precipitation in Alsace!

The temperature range was wider than in 2012, with a rather fresh early cycle and then

quite hot weather from the end of January. We harvested Refugio on March 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> and Montsecano on March 13<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup>.

We're very happy with the yields which are up to 15hl/ha for Montsecano, so we'll have a little bit more wine to sell in order to meet pending customer requests. It's been eight years now, and the vines have gradually settled in. Triple ploughing and heavier rains have also been of great help. A lot of work, but what a reward! Musts are very well-balanced with lovely acidity and a saline finish. And, thanks to the cooler average temperatures, we could even find an Old World side to the 2013 vintage.

### **2014 Refugio Pinot Noir \$47**



REFUGIO  
PINOT NOIR  
UNFILTERED - UNFINED WINE  
CASABLANCA VALLEY - CHILE

ARTISAN TERROIR CHILEAN WINE

The Refugio vineyards belong to the Viollier family, who grow 300ha of vines in the Casablanca Valley. The Montsecano estate has been leasing 2ha of Pinot Noir from them, so as to produce a second offering. Refugio is located on smooth granitic slopes whose microclimate is a touch less cool than Montsecano's. Vines are organically grown, with no chemical inputs allowed.

### **2013 Montsecano Pinot Noir \$68**



MONTSECANO  
PINOT NOIR  
UNFILTERED - UNFINED WINE  
CASABLANCA VALLEY - CHILE 2013

ARTISAN TERROIR CHILEAN WINE

The estate has a total surface area of 21ha, of which 5ha are planted to vines. The rest is kept as an ecological niche. These are terraced vineyards of ungrafted Pinot Noir at a density of 8,500 vines per hectare. It's a granitic hill rich in magnesium and manganese, on a steep slope ranging in altitude from 300m to 500m, with north-eastern, northern and north-western aspects, up to a flat hilltop. The climate is notable for its dazzling sky and the tremendous discrepancy between day and night temperatures. It's fairly rainy

in winter and dry the rest of the year, eased by the soothing morning mist from the Pacific ocean. The vines are biodynamically grown.

*"Bright crimson. Smells very 'natural' to me, even down to the lightest suggestion of mousiness on the nose (there's a picture of a working horse on the label) but it has real energy and grip on the palate. Very lively. Bone dry and chock full of lively fruit. Distinctive but just a little short of juice in the middle. 16/20."* **Jancis Robinson**

WINE	RRP
<b>2014 Refugio Pinot Noir</b>	<b>\$47</b>
<b>2013 Montsecano Pinot Noir</b>	<b>\$68</b>

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