



DON MAXIMIANO

Founder's Reserve



VINTAGE:	1996
DENOMINATION OF ORIGIN:	Aconcagua Valley
COMPOSITION:	100% Cabernet Sauvignon
ALCOHOL:	13.1°
PH:	3.73
TOTAL ACIDITY:	6.07 g/L (in tartaric acid)
RESIDUAL SUGAR:	1.84 g/L
AGEING:	22 months in French oak, 65% new

VINEYARD

Sector II of the Don Maximiano Vineyard is planted on gravelly, sandy soils on a northeast-facing 5° slope, which rises gently to 20° in the upper blocks. The vineyard has recently been converted to drip irrigation, and all vineyard practices are aimed at achieving the highest quality possible. The mesoclimate has warm to hot summer mornings with sporadic fog and is cooled by afternoon coastal breezes.

VINTAGE NOTES

The overall weather pattern in the 1996 growing season was somewhat cooler than normal, with peak temperatures registering 5° Celsius lower than in 1995. Two days of rain at the end of March brought some concern for the Aconcagua Valley Cabernet Sauvignon, which had not yet been harvested. But the weather quickly turned dry after the rains, so the fruit was not affected by mold. In fact, the rain may have been beneficial in that the humidity allowed the vines to work more effectively to ripen the fruit. We did not pick for three days after the rains, and the fruit displayed ideal ripeness at harvesting.

WINEMAKING

The grapes underwent whole-berry fermentation at 28–30° Celsius, followed by 21 days of maceration. The individual lots were aged separately in French oak barrels for 16 months. The lots were then blended and returned to barrel for an additional two months of ageing, with 15% of the final blend in new barrels after minimal fining, the wine was bottled in January 1998.

WINEMAKER'S COMMENTS

The 1996 vintage displays more herbal characters than previous vintages, probably due to the cooler growing season. The Bordeaux-style wine has rich berry fruit, with an intriguing mushroom note. Ripe tannins give the wine length on the mouth.

