



TIERRA DIVINA 2015 WINEMAKER NOTES

It is a basic maxim of Latin American winemakers: if you want stability go to Chile and if you want drama go to Argentina. While the Chilean wine business has steadily and predictably inched forward, making incremental changes in wine quality and styles, Argentina has lurched ahead despite hail, rain, shortages, economic collapses, rampant inflation, political corruption and ineptitude to produce wines of occasional world class quality.

Back in 1998 I chose drama and have never regretted the turbulent ride. My first vintage was the year from hell: the vineyards of Mendoza were left sodden and rotten by the unrelenting rains of February. Amazingly, I came across one cabernet vineyard relatively unscathed in the Lunlunta area and reached an agreement with its owner Sr. Rollo to harvest it the following morning. I arrived with my picking crew to discover the grapes were gone. Sr. Rollo told me that someone had offered a better price and had taken the grapes the previous afternoon. But would I like to come over for dinner that evening? His wife had made some fine tomato sauce to go with her homemade pasta. I have always regretted not taking him up on the offer: he was a nice guy, and I realized that business should not stand in the way of friendship. That's Argentina.

The 2015 growing season in Mendoza was hot until three times the normal rain fell in February resulting in an early harvest with lower alcohol levels. While the wines in general from 2015 were leaner than in the previous year, the vineyards of San Carlos, far down in the Valle de Uco, was spared much of the rainfall and mildew that plagued many vineyards in the northern Luján and eastern zones. And its sandier soils evacuated the moisture quickly.

The 2015 Tierra Divina comes exclusively from our low-yielding San Carlos vineyard, which explains the richness and ripeness of its fruit compared with malbecs produced from other regions this year. It's a good drink: robust and full of that dark plum, mineraly fruit that comes from our high-altitude, ancient vineyard at the foothills of the Andes.