

INTERVIEW MARCELO GARCÍA

'WE WILL CONTINUE LISTENING ABOUT THE MAULE VALLEY AND IT'S CARMENERE'

We are happy to share with you an interview in the April 2020 issue of **@ClubPlaceres.cl** magazine to our winemaker Marcelo García. In it Marcelo shares his vision of the Maule Valley, home of TerraNoble and of the Carmenere grape variety, to which our winery has been dedicating its best efforts since its rediscovery in Chile more than 25 years ago.



Let's start with the Maule Valley. In recent years, it has moved from being a producer of massive wines to become one of Chile's most diverse valleys, producing high quality wines.

IN THIS, CONTEXT, HOW DO YOU POSITION YOURSELF AS A WINERY?

More than 25 years ago, TerraNoble was born in the Maule Valley not just by chance but due to the firm conviction that it was possible to obtain grapes and wines of great quality in its terroir. Initially, Merlot and Sauvignon Blanc were planted, but shortly after, Carmenère was rediscovered in Chile. Unlike other producers, TerraNoble decided not to uproot its vines but to keep Carmenère and specialize in the variety. Several plots of our La Higuera vineyard in San Clemente are witnesses of that story.

Maule is part of our history, our DNA and our home. But as we began to learn about Carmenère and to look for other varieties, we explored other regions that would allow our wines to transmit their sense of place and express a diversity of aromas and complexities. Today our wines originate in four different regions.

Maule offers a great diversity of soils and climates,

enabling thus a perfect development of different varieties. This, in addition to its old plants, its different reliefs, its flood-irrigation system, its dry-land condition, its traditions and family work (heritage), allows us to make wines that are unique, different, interesting, vibrant and with a defined personality.

Two wines identify TerraNoble with Maule: Gran Reserva Carmenère and Merlot, both made with grapes from our San Clemente vineyard, sourced from balanced plants that are more than 25 years old. In the last two harvests we innovated by introducing changes in the harvest dates and by using lots of micro-vinifications. We have also changed the aging style of our wines, always favoring a good acidity and respecting the fruit and terroir. We have also included Carignan (which comes from Melozal) in our portfolio, both in our Gran Reserva range, and in Disidente, a blend of Carignan, Mourvèdre and Grenache (from Melozal and San Clemente).

Maule will continue to be much talked about. Many interesting things are being done regarding varieties and places. It has a powerful diversity that gives life to very different wines. So it is in our hands to continue discovering and developing its potential.

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MAULE'S CARMENÈRE HAS ALSO GONE FROM BEING A PIONEER IN THE PRODUCTION TO A SPECIALIST IN THE VARIETY. IN YOUR OPINION, HOW IS CARMENÈRE DOING TODAY IN CHILE AND PARTICULARLY IN TERRANOBLE?

It's true: we have taken different paths with Carmenère. A few years ago, it was Chile's flagship variety, but it later lost strength due to the very different styles of the wines. As a country, we have showed very different styles of Carmenère, reaching from very pyrazinic to jam or with lots of wood, all of which failed to show the variety's real expression,

THAT'S CONFUSING FOR CONSUMERS AND THE SPECIALIZED PRESS. SO, WHICH IS THE REAL CARMENÈRE?

For me, the key with Carmenère is in the soil. And very closely related to that, with its management along the year. More than looking for a warm place, it is important to have a good drainage, a balanced plant and, hopefully –something we look for in TerraNoble– old vines.

We have 70 hectares planted with Carmenère in Maule, Lolol, Peralillo Marchigüe and Los Lingues. And in our curiosity to get to know the variety, we also had ½ a hectare in Casablanca.

We have only been making Carmenère for 25 years, a time during which we have had to learn through experimenting. It is noble and fair to recognize that we have made mistakes, but in the last years we've been achieving exceptional Carmenères that stand out for their fruit, acidity, elegance and complexity. It is interesting and even romantic to remember that Carmenère used to be harvested in May, while now, without any fear, some are picked by the end of February or beginning of March (harvest 2020). Wines were aged in highly toasted oak to mask the pyrazines which later showed up anyway in the glass. We now dare to use untoasted foudre, concrete eggs or amphorae to maintain its typicity and in some cases its minerality.

During the last 4 years, at TerraNoble we have been gradually working in the search of a new identity for the wines, emphasizing the fruit, the acidity and the honesty of their origins. A methodic work, with lots of patience and passion that has led us to make numerous micro-vinifications to evaluate plants, varieties, harvest times, agricultural management of the plots to thus find the greatest potential for each wine.

For us, Carmenère is part of our history but also of the



future. We believe in the variety's potential which, combined with our team's effort and passion, will give us many pleasant surprises.

WHAT NEW THINGS CAN BE DONE WITH CARMENÈRE? TELL US ABOUT THE CA PROJECT.

Searching for new Carmenère developments, TerraNoble raised the question of how terroir affects the variety. Since we already had our Carmenère Gran Reserva from Maule, we went out looking for new places and, in 2009 the CA project, which originated in Colchagua, was presented. Two vineyards were chosen on opposite ends of the valley: one close to the Andes Mountain Range, specifically in Los Lingues, which gave birth to CA1 Andes, and the other, that gave rise to CA2 Costa, from Lolol, located in the Coastal Mountains.

We were very careful in carrying out the same pruning and agricultural managements, in addition to the same vinification and aging in the winery to isolate as much as possible the terroir effect and see the differences that Colchagua exerts on Carmenère.

The vineyards are 15-16 years old, a key factor to produce good Carmenère from old and well-balanced vines.

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THE APPLAUDED CHILEAN WINES ARE CURRENTLY ASKED FOR DIVERSITY, INNOVATION AND A STORY TO TELL. LET US KNOW ABOUT YOUR DISIDENTE PROJECT AT TERRANOBLE. TerraNoble's Disidente range was born due to my quest and desire to step out of tradition, to dare making new and different wines in which the variety and the place are the main characters, always respected and without hiding their personality. With this motivation in mind, three wines were born. We presented them this year with a very enthusiastic response from consumers and specialists:

Disidente Naranjo, from Casablanca, Disidente Carignan, Mourvèdre and Grenache from Maule, and Disidente Syrah-Tempranillo from Casablanca.

I had dreamt of these wines for many years, but they needed to become real in the bottle, and at TerraNoble I had the chance to do it. The one that first was clear to me was the blend of Syrah-Tempranillo. I love cold climate Syrah, its notes of olives, ashes and minerality that throw you off, making it a love or hate wine. You either like it or you don't.

These wines are conceived for my taste and for experimentation. There are no rules, no protocols. I don't think this is not the 'classic' way of making wines... Here are the passion, dedication and love for what I like and, therefore, in the future, everything can change, the varieties, places, percentages, everything.

The second generation of Disidente is already in the bottle. The percentages of the blend have changed since we are still in a learning mode...

Chile has many special places with much history. There is still a lot to be done. Fortunately the goal is endless, and Disidente is TerraNoble's and my contribution to raise Chile's acknowledgement associated to lively, pleasant, vibrant and joyful wines.

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