



RATED THE BEST CHARDONNAY IN CHILE

Cousiño-Macul's 2003 Chardonnay Antiguas Reservas took top honours in the Chardonnay category at the annual judging conducted by the Guia de Vinos de Chile. The results will appear in the Guide's 2005 Edition, now in its eleventh year of publication. The announcement was made at the Awards Dinner held at the Polo Club in Santiago on November 30, 2004. Matias Rivera, Head Winemaker, received the award on behalf of the Cousiño-Macul team.

Published in both Spanish and English, the Guia de Vinos de Chile is the most influential consumer guide in Chile. Similar to the French Hachette Guide to Wines, the Chilean guide ranks wines by numerical scores, by symbols, and also by price category.

Cousiño-Macul's 2003 Antiguas Reservas Chardonnay was the highest-rated Chardonnay overall and was the first-place finisher in the over \$10 category. It retails for just \$13.99 in the United States which makes it an exceptional value considering its stellar rating.

The 2005 Guia de Vinos de Chile's top ten Chardonnays are:

- 2003 Cousiño Macul Antiguas Reservas
- 2003 Aquitania Sol de Sol
- 2003 Tabalí Reserva Especial
- 2003 Undurraga Reserva
- 2003 Concha y Toro Amelia
- 2003 Garcés Silva Amayna
- 2003 San Pedro Castillo de Molina
- 2003 Casa Lapostolle Cuvée Alexandre
- 2002 Dallas Conté Dallas Conté
- 2002 Valdivieso Chardonnay Reserva

"Of course, we are honoured by the results," said winemaker Matias Rivera, who developed the winery's vineyards in Buin. *"Chardonnay was the first variety we planted at Buin and we believed that going with regulated deficit irrigation, strict canopy management, and dense vine spacing would yield great results. We also have certain advantages because the vineyards are located in the cool Alto-Maipo, with an ideal grape-growing climate and with calcium-rich water"*.

Cousiño's vineyards are located in the "Alto-Maipo", the area of the Maipo Valley closest to the Andes where certain sites benefit from the "Andes Effect". This refers to the cooling mountain air that descends during the evenings to create a wide range in daily temperature readings. Typically, during the growing season the daytime high of 90F will

see the evening temperature drop to 50F. Because of the Andes Effect, Buin Chardonnay preserves unusually crisp acidity even when the grapes are fully mature, so the wine is naturally full-flavored and structurally balanced.

Secondly, the well-drained alluvial and granitic soils of the Alto-Maipo take on a special character in Buin, again due to its proximity to the Andes and also to the Maipo River. As the snow melts in the Andes, the Maipo River flows and makes its way over rocks and gypsum becoming rich in calcium. The calcium-rich water that eventually feeds the vineyards is ideal for Chardonnay.

Adds Rivera: *“The vineyards give us excellent fruit and we try to accentuate that. This is where the character of our wines comes from and the fruit has been enhanced, not hidden, by the cellar treatments. For the final blend of the 2003 Antiguas Reservas Chardonnay, 55% was barrel fermented, 45% tank fermented, and only 14% of the wine went through malo-lactic fermentation. The wine was then aged in French oak for 7 months. This moderate use of malolactic and of oak aging results in a Chardonnay which is fresh, lively and complex.”*

As a long-time believer in the potential of the Alto-Maipo region for Chardonnay, Arturo Cousiño, President of the family-owned winery, was also pleased. *“Many Chilean wine producers are making great headway with Chardonnay and we are very proud of the advances made by our winemaking team. The Guia de Vinos de Chile judged Chardonnays from all of the regions, including Casablanca, Limari, Leyda, and Traiguen, so it was particularly gratifying to see our Chardonnay shine so well against the competition.”*

2003
ANTIGUAS RESERVAS
Chardonnay
MAIPO VALLEY

TECHNICAL DATA

100% Chardonnay
55% Barrel Fermented
14% Malolactic Fermentation
Aging: French Oak, 7 months

Total Acidity: 5.92 gr/L
pH: 3.25
Alcohol: 13.7%

Average Retail, USA: \$13.99

