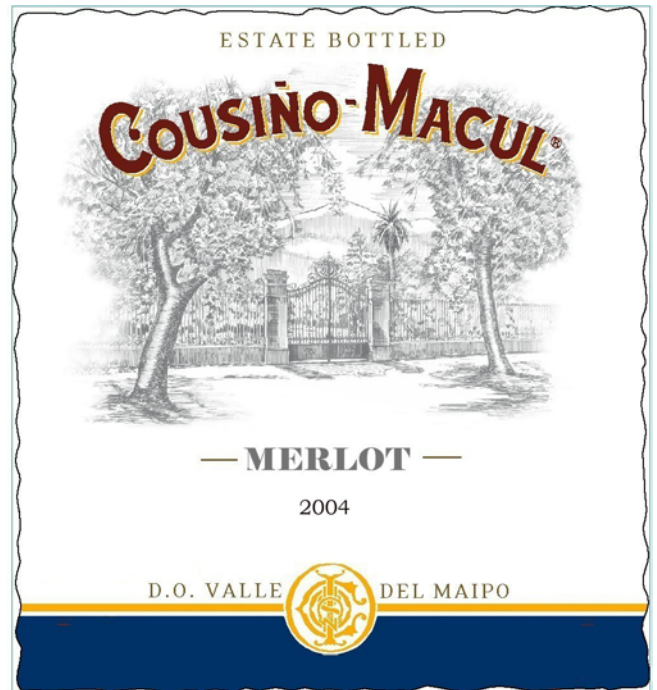


2004
MERLOT
Maipo Valley

TASTING NOTES

This Merlot is dark in colour and bursting with rich fruit flavours. Its aromas consist of ripe black cherry fruit along with red plum and rosemary spice. Medium bodied and smooth-textured, it offers a rich core of lively red plum and wild cherry fruit with light tannins. Supple in the middle palate, it has excellent balance. This wine can be enjoyed while young or aged for 2-5 additional years. Enjoy this wine with barbequed meats, roast turkey, and pasta.



HISTORY

Cuttings from the Merlot vines at Cousiño-Macul's original estate in Macul were used to propagate the vines at their new Buin Estate vineyards. These vines are direct descendants of the vines brought from Bordeaux and planted at the Macul estate in 1863. By the method of “massale selection”, the Cousiño's retain the unique and long heritage of their vineyards.

VINTAGE

In the Maipo Valley, the winter was drier (one-third below the historic average) than usual, and the spring and summer were warm and dry. The warm growing season was noted early as budbreak and flowering occurred 7-10 days ahead of schedule. As typically happens in a dry year, the vine tends to carry a light crop. However, the quality was high, especially for Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot. February and March brought much-welcomed sunny days and cool evenings to accelerate fruit maturity. The Merlot ripened smoothly and at full maturity, the fruit showed a remarkable combination of flavour concentration and fruitiness.

WINEMAKING

Early in the season, the winemaking team focused on a well-balanced Merlot vine for high quality fruit. They implemented rigorous programs of canopy management (removing excess leaves and shoots) and irrigation applications. Using new devices to monitor the moisture content of the soil and the leaves, the winemakers applied water only when the vine required it. Harvested over the first week of April, the Merlot grapes were immediately crushed and given a cold soak of 6 days prior to fermentation. At an average temperature of 25.5C, the fermentation continued for 10-13 days before reaching total dryness. For complexity, the winemaker used both native and prise de mousse yeast, and the must was pumped over three times a day during the first several days. The new wine was given an extended maceration of 8-12 days before being pressed off its skins. The wine rested in the cellars for several months before being bottled.

TECHNICAL DATA

Varietal Composition: 100 % Merlot

Origin: Buin Estate

Total Acidity: 4.95 gr/L

pH: 3.61

Alcohol: 13.8%