

Alto Cabernet Sauvignon 2000

VITICULTURAL ASPECTS

A 100% Cabernet Sauvignon from the CS 46 clone, grafted onto R110 rootstock and planted in deep, red, decomposed granite soil with a clay subsoil. The vineyard blocks are situated at 135 - 475 metres above sea level, facing north. They are between 8 and 18 years old. A four-wire fence was selected to trellis the vines which yielded a low 4 - 6 tons the hectare.

Alto received 500 mm of rain prior to the vintage. The vines were not irrigated during the growing and ripening season as they did not show any sign of moisture stress.

PRODUCTION TECHNIQUES

The grapes were hand-picked at the end of March 2000 after reaching a Balling of 23 – 24 degrees. After destalking and crushing, the mash was fermented in stainless-steel tanks at 26 – 28 degrees Celsius, using the selected N96 yeast culture. The juice was separated from the skins after 10 days. After malolactic fermentation, the wine was racked into first-, second- and third-fill French-oak barriques where it spent the next 24 months maturing. After a light sterile sheet-filtering, an egg-white fining was used to “polish” the wine before it was bottled in August 2002.

As with all the Alto wines, this Cabernet Sauvignon was first bottle-matured, for 24 months, before it has been released.

DESCRIPTION

COLOUR	Dark opaque with a cerise rim.
BOUQUET	Ripe blackberry and plum aromas, with lead pencil, cigar-box, concentrate and aromatic liquorice whiffs. A good integration of peppery-vanilla aromas from the oak.
TASTE	A solid structure with a good, but rounded tannic backbone. Classic cabernet-fruit flavours of blackcurrant and blackberries linger on the finish.

MATURATION POTENTIAL

All Alto wines are known for their longevity. Although this wine is easily enjoyed at this stage, the fruit backed by the excellent support will carry it for at least another 8 to 10 years of cellaring.

VINTNER'S ADVICE

Alto enthusiasts will love this style of cabernet. It can be enjoyed with or without food. Serve at 18 degrees Celsius with uncluttered dishes such as fine roast lamb or beef, best quality steak or Chateaubriand. Also partner with herb-crusted roasts, stuffed poultry and thin slices of well-matured, air-dried cheeses like a real Parmigiano.

CHEMICAL ANALYSIS

ALCOHOL	14.05	% vol
R/S	2.3	g/l
T/A	5.5	g/l
pH	3.54	
EXTRACT	31.5	g/l