

This wine makes our dream come true! Located at an altitude of 2,400 meters above sea level the vineyard Pucará is situated in the Northwest of Argentina. It is an oasis in the middle of a fabulous mountain landscape, idyllic and far away from civilization. This unique terroir at the foot of the Andes is part of the highest vineyards of the world, and is only reached by a gravel road through rocky country-side. We believe in organic farming, and the vineyards and the farm are cultivated through biodynamic methods. The combination of terroir and our passion for grape growing result in a complex wine with character. It has a deep ruby colour, the wine's nose is dominated by blackcurrant fruit, and the profile is aromatic and elegant. So that the terroir can fully display its quality the vinification is done by natural yeast and through spontaneous fermentation. The wine is left two years in the bottle to mature, there is no maturation in oak barrel. Our dream put in a bottle!

OUR WORLD

Beatrice and Stefan: In 1997 we were living with friends at their house at the foot of "Los Castillos" close to Cafayate. We were impressed by the desert and mountain landscapes which seemed to be masterpieces of color, sculpted by the wind. In 2004 we heard that Finca El Recuerdo in Pucará was up for sale. At that time Beatrice was co-responsible together with Constanza Bearzi of Estancia Colomé, while Stefan was CEO of the wine growing estate. From one farm to the other it is a 1 1/2 hours' drive through a fascinating landscape with hundreds of giant cacti, and goats and cows live free in this vast expanse. When we first visited Pucará we were fascinated by the beauty and idyll of this magic place. Weeping willows and an alley with carolina poplars hemmed the way to the farm. Three colours predominate the gem: the red ochre of the soil, the mint green of the vegetation and the deep blue sky.

Our dream

With the purchase of that farm a dream emerged: to produce a unique Malbec wine at 2,400 meters above sea level. Besides the risk of early or late frost due to the altitude, the conditions could not be better. The water of the river Huasamayo is cristaline and pure, the soil is rich in minerals and the climate perfect for biodynamic agriculture. The surrounding hills give the vineyard protection and a frame so that best Malbec grapes can mature. Ten years have passed since we first visited, but our affection for land and people still continues. In 2011 we produced our first wine and ever since Beatrice passes spring and autumn on the farm: "To work on such a beautiful spot is a real gift. In the morning the sun paints the mountains golden, the birds sing, and while I wander through the vines I listen to the bees humming and feel humble. I give thanks to the Creator of such beauty."

Vision

Is there anything more valuable than to savor a powerful wine "with soul" with family and friends? The individual organism of the hidden farm, our decision for biodynamic agriculture, and the traditional winemaking with spontaneous fermentation make it possible. From high quality grapes we produce an authentic high altitude wine.

People

From the very beginning we could count on Gregorio Ríos whose family is from Pucará where he grew up. In 2004 he worked for the former owner of the farm "El Recuerdo". Gregorio knows each corner of the farm, and he reads each cloud and wind as they were a map. Thanks to his disposition to convert to biodynamic agriculture our dream took shape. Today Gregorio is responsible for the biodynamic preparations which are processed on the farm. After the first harvest and considering further projects in producing seeds we decided to hire a second person. Albino Alancay lives and works since 2012 on the farm. The two men share the multiple challenges and workload. Our friend and consultant Fabián Baumgratz has been visiting the farm for over eight years. Not only his tireless commitment and his knowledge of biodynamic farming

which he imparted but also the transformation of flora and fauna on the farm led in 2012 to the compliment: "Finca El Recuerdo is the most biodynamic farm in Argentina". With this statement the surveyor of Demeter recognized the effort and this was a great motivation to continue. We also count on the most appreciated support of our friend and consultant Raúl J. Dávalos jun., Bodega Tacuil. His knowledge of how to cultivate vines at this altitude is invaluable. His younger brother, Álvaro Dávalos, is enologist and dedicates himself to our wine with enthusiasm and love. In the city of Salta we count on the valuable cooperation of our friend and manager Rafael Cornejo.

Pucará

The mountain landscapes surprise and mesmerize the visitor when he is arriving with spectacular colours: red, white, grey, black! Depending on the hour of day and on the incident solar radiation the mountains seem to be very close or far away, they seem to highlight sculptures or they mold a plateau. Here fox and rabbit say good night to each other. The road leading to El Recuerdo starts one kilometer before arriving to the school of Pucará. Aproximately 90 primary and secondary scholars visit the school, and have long walks. Also Gregorio's sons walk about two hours daily. Many years ago and for heritage reasons the 54,000-hectare estate Pucará was divided in five parts. Aproximately 400 persons live on the estate, and the houses are a long way away from each other. The people are used to walk long distances.

Festival of the Patron Saint

The Saint's day is celebrated October 15. This is a special day for all inhabitants since the feast is held in commemoration of Saint Teresa of Ávila who is venerated in Pucará. Many visitors and family members from Cafayate or Salta travel to the farm for this day. After the catholic mass a procession of the community takes place, followed by performances of students and teachers, of the "Fortines" by horses and by folcloristic music and dance. Everyone is invited to take part in the traditional "asado" for lunch. In the afternoon there is a football game, and eventually some more music to end the day.

History

In 1965 the Saravia family put the estate on sale. As a sign for their gratitude to the longtime foreman, Anatolio Tapia, they decided to donate him a piece of land. Tapia was allowed to choose the place, and decided for the 24,5-hectare gem at the Huasamayo river, hidden and protected by the surrounding hills. Tapia was an excellent farmer, and he planted many trees which by today make the difference in beauty. He also built a chapel. Today no church services are held in that chapel, but the structure still serves for prayer. In 2004 Tapia's inheritors sold the farm, and two years later we planted the 1,5-hectare vineyard.

WINE

With 15,5 alcohol by volume our "Pucará" is a complex wine: a typical representative for the traditional wines of the upper Calchaquí valleys. For the vinification we only use grapes from El Recuerdo in Pucará at 2,400 meters altitude, we do not buy any grapes. The taster will be surprised by a full-bodied wine. A typical attribute of the Pucará is the spicy and fruity flavour. We decided to present the Pucará within a high quality packaging.

Winemaking

The combination between traditional winemaking and new technology allow the grapes to expand their whole potential in the wine. Within 20 days the handpicked grapes ferment spontaneously without additional yeast. After malolactic fermentation and clarification the wine matures in the bottle for 18 months, without any oxygen. We decided not to let it mature in oak barrel. The winemaking in the bottle allows the enzymatic process, but this is slow because of

minimal oxidation process. This helps to guard the intensity of black fruit and the spicy character. The adequate cellar temperature is a requirement. Two years after harvest the wine is launched.

High altitude wine

Pucará lies at 2,400 meters above sea level in a region with semi-arid climate. This is the precondition for a special terroir which is not found in any other part of the world. In this extremely high altitude wine growing area the radiation of sun is very intense, the air is clear and the melting water of still higher sources is pure. But the most important factor for the wine's quality is the high amplitude of temperature within day and night. In Pucará we have a mean daily difference in temperature of 25 degrees Celsius. In winter nights the temperature can be 14 degrees Celsius below zero so that the amplitude reaches 35 degrees Celsius. These differences in temperature distinguish our wine "Pucará".

VINES

Our vines came as rootlings from the famous Bodega Catena Zapata, Mendoza. Over the years the agronomists in charge have selected rootlings from old vines aiming to multiply the best vines. The result: four different "selección masal" of Malbec. In 2005 we could buy two of them: Malbec Cartel 18 and Malbec Consulta. Our vines are not grafted since there is low risk of nematodes nor phylloxera. The structure of the vineyard is called "VSP - double cordon". In order to obtain a maximum on quality we planted our vineyard with a denseness of 7800 vines per hectare. Thanks to the beneficial climate conditions with 25 degrees Celsius to 35 degrees Celsius difference between day and night and the very good soil the vines can produce high quality grapes. The first harvest took place in 2011 with a result of 220 bottles. At the tasting we were surprised by the quality and the evident potential of the wine. "Our dream to capture the unique characteristics of a terroir in a bottle".

Terroir

We aim to revive the former and well-known wine style of the "upper Calchaquí valley", and to satisfy with a unique terroir. The soil in Pucará is rich in minerals and iron which explains the peppery and spicy note of this wine. During 340 days the sun shines. The moderate daily temperatures help to mature and give dark ruby colour to the grapes while the chilly nights are responsible for the acidity in the grapes and the wine's structure. The average in rainfall is at 120ml/m² per year. The irrigation is managed by a canal system which allows to water the vines according to necessity. Due to the remoteness of the farm no pollution of air or water nor e-smog have negative impacts on the vines. The management practices of the biodynamic agriculture are essential to us.

Biodynamic Agriculture

Shortly after having bought the farm we decided to exclude the use of artificial chemicals on soil and plants. In 2007 we were happy to further count on the support and consultancy of our friend Fabián Baumgratz in order to convert to biodynamic farming. This is a method of organic farming originally developed by Rudolf Steiner in 1924 (Steiner also founded the Waldorf education and Anthroposophic medicine) that employs what proponents describe as "a holistic understanding of agricultural processes". It treats soil fertility, plant growth, and livestock care as ecologically interrelated tasks. On our farm we produce each year some tons of compost with the dung of the sheep and horse, and incorporating cutting parts of several plants. In our experience we work with healthy vines that produce high quality grapes. Since 2012 we are certified following the international biodynamic standards of Demeter, and we hope that many more wine growers will take up biodynamic methods.