

EXTREME ALTITUDE CLUB

Bonner Private
Wine Partnership





The Beginning

It all began around 10 years ago when Bonner family patriarch Bill Bonner bought an old cattle ranch called Finca Gualfín. Upon arrival, his son Will Bonner discovered miles of desert in the high foothills of the Andes mountains, dry, barren, with a few herds of skinny cattle roaming the hills. The few roads are winding and steep, and travelers are lucky if they don't get stuck (or pop a tire on the jagged terrain).

So imagine the Bonners' surprise when, exploring the ranch on horseback, they crested a hill to see a green valley. There, they found an old, overgrown vineyard tucked away a couple hour's ride from their already-remote ranch house.

The vineyard was long abandoned; the gnarled vines had been surviving on snowmelt, still producing bunches of tiny berries with thick, dark skin.



Bill surveys his herd

Will knew about the high-altitude malbecs others in the Calchaqui were making, so he enlisted his closest neighbor (1 and a half hours away, by 4x4 truck) to vinify their harvest. The result was stunning, full of the Calchaquí's signature wild, herbal notes and flavors of rich plum. This became Tacana malbec, from Pucarilla vineyard at Finca Gualfín.

The next step was getting Tacana to the US. No small feat. Will would need a large group of private wine buyers — around 1,000 — to make the high transport and shipping costs worthwhile.

What better way then by partnering with other high altitude, limited production wineries to share this distinctive style of wine with the rest of the world?



The road to Cachi



Mayuco Malbec

Deep in Argentina's desert Calchaquí Valleys, the Mayuco river feeds a few acres of tiny black malbec grapes. Here, a 200 year old family tradition of producing handmade, critically acclaimed wines continues. Nose of fresh berry with a spicy kick. Leather, forest floor, and a wild, herbal note.

The Vineyards

Molinos, where these grapes are grown, is located more than 8,000 feet above sea level. Vineyards here are subject to intense UV light, hot days with freezing nights, and very little rain. Farming is organic less by philosophy than by the fact that the area is too remote and the environment too harsh for pests to be a serious problem.

Notes

- 9,000 bottles produced
- 5th generation Calchaquí winemaker
- Organic farm
- Aged without oak
- Cellar 1-5 years

Pair With:

Steak, lamb, poultry





Sunal Ilógico Criolla

This is winemaker Agustín Lanús' tribute to the criolla chica grapes grown all over the foothills of the Andes on small family plots. The criolla chica was first brought to Argentina by the Spanish Conquistadors over 300 years ago, making it the original Argentinian grape. A lighter red with a nose of dates, dried roses, and spice; a "Beaujolais of the Andes" if you will. Serve chilled down to around 50 degrees.

The Vineyards

Agustín Lanús works with small family grape growers all over the Calchaquí Valley to source the best Criolla grapes the region has to offer. These vineyards range from 6,000-9,000 feet in dry, sandy soils with intense sunshine and very little rain, which makes the naturally small berries even tinier and more concentrated.

Notes

- Organic farming
- Hand harvested
- 4,000 bottles produced
- Cellar up to 3 years

Pair With:

Chicken, mild cheeses, pasta dishes





Luca G-Lot Pinot Noir

Laura Catena, daughter of Argentinian wine pioneer Nicolas Catena, creates small batches of artisan-quality wines, striving to capture the nature of their individual terroirs. She works with locally-owned, high-altitude vineyards all over the valley. This pinot is made in the cool-climate Burgundian style, with strawberry, cola, and leather on the nose. Complex palate, with spices and raspberry jam.

The Vineyards

With this wine, Luca Vineyards made history as the first to plant pinot noir at 5,000 feet – the highest elevation in Mendoza for this varietal. Located in Gualtallary, they called the vineyard the G-Lot. Rocky-calcareous soils, wide temperature variations, and intense sunlight.

Notes

- Locally-owned vineyards
- Hand harvested
- Cellar 1-5+ years

Pair With:

Lamb chops, grilled salmon, roasted poultry

