



BODEGAS Y VIÑEDOS O. FOURNIER





1. DESCRIPTION

BODEGAS Y VIÑEDOS O. FOURNIER GROUP

Bodegas y Viñedos O.Fournier Group was founded in 2000. Our main objective is to become an international group focused high quality wines. Our plan is to produce approximately 1.5 million bottles in different regions: Argentina, Chile, Ribera de Duero, Rioja and Douro (Portugal). To date, the Group owns estates in Mendoza and Ribera de Duero. In total the Group owns over 400 Has. of land of which 160 Has. are planted with vineyards of up to 57 years of age.

The main features of our group:

- ownership and/or control of old high-quality vineyards
- use of latest viticultutral and winemaking technology
- local winemakers with international experience
- professionalism in all aspect of the business
- financial soundness and strength of shareholders
- balance between winemaking and selling between Europe and New World

THE MISSION

Bodega y Viñedos O. Fournier´s mission is to become one of the most outstanding high-quality group of wineries. It aims to achieve this goal using the competitive advantages the vineyards and the weather offer as well as the enabling technology and the relevant local and international winemaking knowledge.



BODEGAS Y VIÑEDOS O.FOURNIER **Valle del Uco winery and vineyard** **Argentina**

THE FOUNDERS

At the turn of the millennium, the Spanish family Ortega Gil-Fournier founded a small "boutique" winery, at the foot of the Andes, in La Consulta, in the Argentinean province of Mendoza.

THE MICROCLIMATE

The La Consulta region is located in the well-known Uco Valley, approximately 1,200 metres (3,950 ft.) above sea level. At this altitude, there is a significant fluctuation between daytime and night-time temperatures of up to 20°-25°C. This variance particularly favours the production of wines with an excellent colour and suitable for long ageing in oak barrels.

The region's stony and sandy soils offer excellent drainage during the summer season. The lack of organic material, limited rainfall and prevailing winds are also conducive to high quality, healthy grapes. Furthermore, the water that irrigates the estates comes pure and clean from the snow thawing on the Andes.

THE ESTATES

Bodega y Viñedos O. Fournier owns three estates some 15 km from the Andes Range, covering 286 ha. A total of 94 are currently planted with vines, some of which are over 30 years old.

1) FINCA SANTA SOFÍA

Finca Santa Sofía has a total area of 263 ha., out of which 74 ha. have been planted. There are plans to plant the remaining area in the near future as a part of an expansion programme.

The grape varieties used to date are Tempranillo, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Malbec and Syrah. The focus is on cultivating the Tempranillo variety due to its great potential for development in this area and the quality of its grapes. With the exception of the Malbec variety, the plants come from France and Italy and have been grafted onto American rootstock.

Although experimenting with other training systems, Bodega y Viñedos O. Fournier prefers "vaso," the traditional Spanish bush vine system as this method leaves the grape clusters exposed while protecting them from the intense solar radiation. It also results in a potential lower yield per plant, leading to more concentrated aromas and a better wine structure. Planting densities on the estate vary from 3,000 to 10,000 vines/ha.

2) FINCA SAN MANUEL

Finca San Manuel, located 2 km from Finca Santa Sofía, covers an area of 13 ha. Eight ha. of this estate were planted with Tempranillo vines over 30 years ago; in November 2001 the rest of the estate was planted with Tempranillo and Malbec. The planting density is 5,100 vines/ha.



3) FINCA SAN JOSÉ

Located next to Finca San Manuel, Finca San José covers an area of ten ha. of which seven have been planted with a density of 3,800 vines/ha. The vines are Tempranillo, planted in 1972, and Cabernet Sauvignon.

Bodega y Viñedos O. Fournier purchased the last two estates to allow it to meet 30 per cent of its grape requirements for the first harvests. It buys the other 70 per cent from high quality vineyards of local producers, with whom it has established long-term agreements. The company aims to acquire more old vineyards, bringing its total to 40 ha.

THE GRAPES

As its vines will take ten to 15 years to mature to the quality it requires, Bodega y Viñedos O. Fournier is currently co-operating with local producers. The company analysed over 170 estates, examining the quality of the grapes and the producers' willingness to manage their vineyards in line with the recommendations of the Bodega's technical experts. After this analysis, Bodega y Viñedos O. Fournier signed long-term contracts with all 12 of its selected producers.

To ensure the grapes are of the highest quality, the suppliers co-operate closely with Bodega y Viñedos O. Fournier in vine and grape management, in particular by: limiting the use of fertilisers, treatments and irrigation; green harvesting; and harvesting the grapes manually with the company's own workers. This will allow Bodega y Viñedos O. Fournier to secure high quality grapes with an average yield of 1-1.5 kg. per vine.

PRODUCING THE WINE

The winery works with leading international suppliers, mainly from France, Italy, Portugal and Spain, for the following winemaking processes:

Harvesting: The grapes are picked manually, by the company's own workers, and placed in 18-kg. boxes, allowing the Bodega to control the quality of the grapes right from the vineyard.

Grape selection: The best grape clusters are selected at a sorting table. Moreover, from the 2002 harvest, there is a second sorting table for the removal of stalks.

Crushing: The winery uses a crushing-destemming machine, with adjustable stainless steel rolls. Only half of our grapes are crushed. The grapes fall inside the vats through gravity, avoiding the use of pumps.

Fermentation: The winery's stainless steel vats are equipped with a hot and cold water device. Since the 2002 harvest, the company has used dry ice for the cold maceration of its best wines.

Pressing: The winery uses a vertical hydraulic basket press with electronic pressure control for pressing the marc.



Ageing: The ageing process takes place in 225 litre barrels, 80 per cent are made of French oak and the rest of American oak. The barrels are stored in underground cellars, where the temperature and humidity are strictly controlled. The winery purchases barrels from prestigious coopers as Seguin Moreau, Radoux, Demptos, Saury (France), Murúa (Spain) and Nacional (Chile).

THE WINES

The names of the " Λ CruX" and " β CruX" wines are based on the stars of the Southern Cross. This constellation is only visible in the Austral Hemisphere. The characterisation of the ostrich on the label symbolises the joining of the earth and the sky. The Argentinean Mocovi Indians captured this through paintings in the caves they inhabited and through different legends that were passed from generation to generation.

After selecting the barrels individually, Bodega y Viñedos O. Fournier will offer its best wine under the " Λ CruX" label. This wine will have spent approximately 18 months in new oak barrels and 12 months in bottles. The second wine, " β CruX", will age in oak barrels, 50 per cent new and 50 per cent second year, for 12 months and in bottles for a minimum of six months.

2001 HARVEST

The grapes were picked manually and placed in 18-kg. boxes. Then the grapes were selected at the sorting table, where the workers chose the best clusters. The fermentation and maceration processes were carried out in stainless steel vats for approximately 25 days (depending on the variety) at a temperature between 26 and 28°C. Malolactic fermentation took place in oak barrels, where the wines remain for approximately 12 to 18 months. Once the ageing process in wood is complete, the wine will be bottled and kept until it is ready for consumption.

Bodega y Viñedos O. Fournier has produced 44,000 bottles of its best wine under the " Λ CruX" label. This wine has spent 17 months in new oak barrels and 12 months in bottles. It has also produced 63,700 bottles of the second wine, " β CruX". This wine has aged in new oak barrels for 12 months and in bottles for a minimum of six months.

THE NEW WINERY

Bodega y Viñedos O. Fournier aims to build a winery equipped with the latest technology. It will have a capacity of 600,000 litres in stainless steel, oak and cement vats, ranging from 6,500 to 25,000 litres in capacity. The new winery has been designed to work with gravity to minimise the use of pumps.

The underground cellar will be able to hold up to 2,800 oak barrels at a constant temperature and humidity. In light of the company's commitment to continuously improve its wines, it has plans for the development of an innovative laboratory with microvinification capabilities. A small hotel and restaurant will also be built near the winery to accommodate visitors. The total investment of the project is eight million dollars, of which four million have already been invested.



2. HARVEST INFORMATION

ARGENTINA

2000-2001 Period

2001 Vintage

There were fair climate conditions with the exception of April. During this month, there was some rainfall in some areas of Mendoza.

From December to March, the weather was warmer than historical temperatures both in maximum and minimum. Temperature differential was larger than usual due to higher maximum temperature.

This condition made maturity of certain grapes larger than the average harvest. Rainfall during the winter and spring months were less than the historical average. After March, rain was higher causing some trouble with the late ripening varieties.

2001-2002 Period

2002 Vintage

This vintage was considered the best of the decade. Maximum temperatures were slightly lower than the average as a consequence of increased cloudiness and reduction in radiation from sun exposure.

Rainfall was larger than average during September, October and February. On the other hand, March and April were drier and warmer than usual.

2002-2003 Period

2003 Vintage

During January and February, temperatures were very high with strong color radiation and significant temperature differential. During these months, there was little cloudiness with hot and dry winds.

Throughout the year, rainfall was lower than historical average. This resulted in excellent sanity of the grapes with balanced and concentrated wines.