



VIÑEDOS DE ALCOHUAZ

Rhu

Marcelo, or Reta as he prefers to be called, is one of Chile's most esteemed winemakers and a leader in a burgeoning back-to-the-soil movement sweeping through the country. When he joined Viñedos de Alcohuz, he was the iconic winemaker of DeMartino where he was already a proponent of site expression, heritage vines, non-interventionist winemaking, and a champion for wines made outside of Chile's Central Valley. Given the opportunity to not only work with vineyards organically farmed from the start, he could also implement a series of practices (or, more precisely, non-practices) to ensure that the uniqueness of Alto Elqui isn't lost in the cellar. Each variety is picked by hand and crushed by foot in stone lagars. Fermentations are spontaneous. After pressing, the wine is gravity-fed into concrete eggs, Stockinger foudres, or French oak vats for undisturbed aging. Some wines are made from single varieties and parcels, while others are blends where each variety supports the others. After fifteen years of tasting and blending, each cuvée has suggested itself rather than being imposed by some formula or plan.

All these steps reveal and preserve the natural acidity and freshness innate to this mountain fruit. They combine the radiant abundance of warm sunny days, a backbone of minerality from the granite, and the liveliness of cold summer nights in the mountains. These lo-fi wines are pure, vibrant, thrilling, and vital. Perhaps it has something to do with all those the ley lines that draw the new-agers to the area. We're more inclined to believe Alvaro's vision and Reta's confidently minimalist instincts.

Rhu is a portal to the spiritual realm which may sound odd if it wasn't for the fact that this part of the Elqui Valley is quite popular with new-age adherents not only for the quality of the stargazing but a belief that the valley is a magical place. Looking at the photos it is not hard to believe that Alcohuz is indeed quite magical even more so when you try the wines! Rhu is the flagship wine of the property and features Syrah (about 3/4 the blend) with the remainder being selected from the other grape varieties planted on the property – usually Garnacha and Petite Syrah.

ORIGIN

Chile

APPELLATION

Elqui Valley

SOIL

Sand, decomposed granite

AGE OF VINES

9-14

ELEVATION

1700-2200 meters

VARIETIES

Syrah, Garnacha, Petite Syrah

FARMING

Sustainable

FERMENTATION

Hand harvested, destemmed, natural yeast fermentation in stone lagars, crushed by foot

AGING

24 months in Stockinger foudres

ACCOLADES

96 – 2020 Rhu – Wine Advocate

93 – 2019 Rhu – Wine Advocate

94 – 2019 Rhu – Vinous Media

