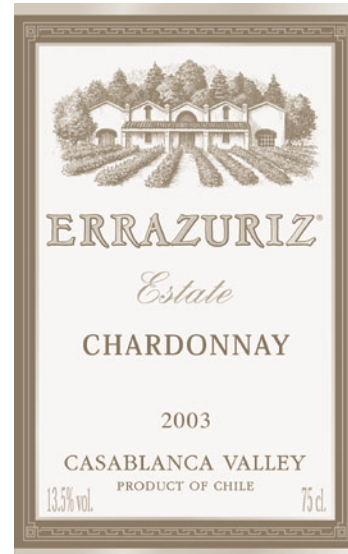


# Chardonnay

## 2003

|                  |                          |
|------------------|--------------------------|
| APPELLATION:     | Casablanca Valley        |
| VINEYARD SOURCE: | La Escultura Estate      |
| ALCOHOL:         | 13.3 % by vol.           |
| PH:              | 3.31                     |
| TOTAL ACIDITY:   | 5.80 g/l (tartaric acid) |
| RESIDUAL SUGAR:  | 2.62 g/l                 |



### Vintage Notes

The spectacular 2003 vintage is a clear example of why Chile is called a viticultural paradise. All the winegrowing regions received plenty of rain in winter and early spring. The Casablanca Valley lies just inland from the Pacific coast, so it generally experiences less variation in climate than the interior valleys. This year, however, the usually cool region had an exceptionally warm growing season, with temperatures reaching 39° Celsius for the first time in 12 years. Picking started very slowly until an unusually warm week in March got the sugars climbing and speeded up harvest. Our Chardonnay vineyards produced very good fruit-driven wines, with forward citrus and tropical fruit flavours and good acidity. Chardonnay yields were as expected, at about 9 to 11 tons per hectare.

### Winemaking

The grapes were hand harvested in mid- to late March and then whole-cluster pressed. After settling for 24 hours, the juice underwent a slow, cool fermentation at 12-16° Celsius. About 39% of the blend was fermented in French oak barrels at 15-23° Celsius. About 35% of the blend underwent malolactic fermentation. Most of the wine was aged in stainless steel tanks to maintain the fresh fruit characters, while 40% aged sur lie in French oak barrels for three months to contribute a broader flavour profile. The wine was fined and lightly filtered before bottling.

### Vineyard

La Escultura Estate in the Casablanca Valley enjoys a cool ripening period with a moderating effect from the Pacific Ocean, located just a few miles away. The soils are a very deep sandy loam with low vigor. The vineyard was planted in 1991 with Mendoza clone Chardonnay. Vineyard management practices include drip irrigation and vertical shoot position trellising. We are expanding our plantings in this valley, as its climatic and soil conditions are well suited to Chardonnay, producing finely structured wines.

### Winemaker's Comments

Our 2003 Chardonnay presents a clear, golden yellow colour. The ripe tropical aromas feature mango, guava and banana. On the palate, the wine is medium bodied and elegant, with excellent balance and natural acidity. The barrel fermented components add layers of toast and vanilla without overpowering the forward fruit. The medium-long finish carries a note of peach, together with a light mineral accent that is characteristic of the Casablanca Valley. The wine is enjoyable on release, but will continue to gain in complexity, if cellared correctly, for a few years after vintage.