



# PRESS KIT







**ALTOS**  
LAS HORMIGAS

## ALTOS LAS HORMIGAS

STYLE • THE STORY • THE NAME • THE TEAM OF ANTS • THE TERROIR PROJECT  
A SENSE OF PLACE • PORTFOLIO • BUSINESS • PRESS

### Is the New World capable of producing Terroir driven Wines?

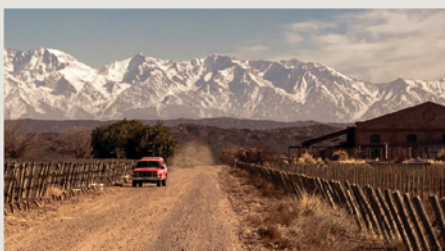
Since 1995 our goal has been to produce an Argentine Malbec that would show a unique, local character, overcoming the industrial winemaking and viticulture that was dominating this great wine producing country. At that time Argentina was looking for ways to start exporting its wines, focusing on Cabernet Sauvignon, the hype grape variety of the moment, and international consultants were called by corporate wineries to help produce wines suited for the main world markets.

When Antonio Morescalchi and Alberto Antonini arrived to Mendoza from Tuscany, they were deeply impressed by the **vast wine heritage of Mendoza and by an obscure grape**, that nobody paid attention to: **Malbec**. At that time this variety was largely unknown to the consumer, its plantings were in steep decline in Argentina and most local professionals considered it a “fruity” grape, meant to produce simple, every day wines. For two Tuscans using local grapes is a second nature, so they started a project that according to most had no commercial viability: a Malbec only winery.

Since its first vintage (1997) the winery sold out its products in a matter of months, getting praise and attention in the world most exiting markets, receiving high recognition from the leading press outlets of the time, and creating a sensation abroad and at home, giving the ignition sparkle to the Malbec revolution that ensued and brought the varietal to be the most planted and most exported of the country. A true international hit.

In 2003 we started working with the even more obscure Bonarda grape and in 2007 our quest focused on applying the concept of Terroir to Mendoza and its viticultural practices, looking for that complexity and subtlety in wine characters that can only be produced by great viticultural regions, and by people that respect and understand Terroir.

We consider ourselves the followers of the immigrants that arrived in Argentina in the 1800's and 1900's and were given a small plot to cultivate. They are the true creators of Mendoza viticulture and we are the lucky ones that can develop their legacy.





## Style: what to expect when you drink an Altos Las Hormigas wine

We like wines that drink easily, wines that develop in the glass, and leave an intriguing taste in the mouth. We do not seek powerful characters made to impress tasters, we want our drinkers to have a second glass, and not be blown away at the first sip. Our work on Terroir led us to make wines of **uncommon depth and persistence**, wines with texture and tension where the aftertaste is the most important and distinctive aspect. Our wine is meant to be enjoyed with food, which is only natural given our heritage. We strive to limit alcohol content naturally, do not expect 15%: hot alcohol wipes out Terroir and texture.

We care only for **flavours that come from the grapes**, not for those that are imparted by new oak or other winemaking techniques; our wines will not satisfy drinkers who identify quality with oak flavours. We believe that big ripeness make wine taste all the same, which is why we harvest early, seeking natural acidity in our wines. Do not expect fruit bombs.

Mendoza naturally gives wines of pleasure, thanks to its sunny climate the fruit character is always present, but in our wines it is balanced by a backbone of natural acidity and fine tannins. By the way, if you like red wine with residual sugar, these wines are not for you.

## The Story

In 1995 Alberto Antonini, the now famous Tuscan winemaker, and Antonio Morescalchi, a young entrepreneur, took a trip to visit the burgeoning wine areas of South America. They toured both sides of the Andes and they remained impressed at first sight by the vineyards thriving in the high altitude and dry climate of Mendoza. Both the nature of the region, and its viticultural tradition, established by European immigrants in past centuries were surprising to the newcomer's eye.



They returned to Tuscany convinced of the unexplored potential of Malbec, a grape that had a strong local tradition but was largely ignored and misunderstood. While the rest of the wine world saw Mendoza struggling to shed its bulk wine image, the two young Italians saw the region as a place where traditional viticultural values and unblemished Terroir could be reinvigorated with a careful winemaking approach, taking the risk of betting on a grape with an unproven record. Against all odds and local advice, they decided to start a Malbec only winery in Mendoza.

## The Name

The next step came with the purchase of 206 hectares (530 acres) in the rural township of Lujan de Cuyo. When the vineyards were planted in 1996, workers faced a stiff altercation with the local ant (*hormiga*) colonies. The "*Italianos*" newcomers refused to poison the ants and started looking for natural ways to deflect their attention. During this time the workers' joke was that the ants were **the real owners of the place**, since they were allowed to roam the vineyard at will and feed on the precious vines.

In Argentina the saying: "a job for ants" describes a task requiring a humble, patient and extended teamwork. Embracing (rather than fighting) this first **cultural test**, the team decided that the venture had to be named after the hard-working, team-playing, persistent *hormiga*.





## The Team of Ants

The different cultural heritages that make up Altos Las Hormigas provide a richness of ideas and character, always challenging each other. Old World ideas are applied to Argentine viticulture and merged with local knowledge.



### **Alberto Antonini | Founder, Winemaker**

Alberto is one of the most recognized winemakers across the globe, and brings new ideas and an unparalleled palate to the Altos Las Hormigas team. His education includes a degree in Agricultural Studies from the University of Florence and Oenology degrees from the University of Bordeaux and the University of California - Davis. He was director of winemaking for the famed Antinori group, and has worked for many of the largest wine producers of the world. Having worked for almost all the mayor wineries in Argentina, Alberto is probably the most relevant contributor to modern Argentine winemaking.



### **Antonio Morescalchi | Founder, Vice President**

Antonio studied in Milan and Florence, speaks five languages and holds a degree in electronic engineering. He discovered wine early, and at the age of 22 he started making wine in his father's cellar in Montecatini Alto, Tuscany. He travelled from Tuscany to Mendoza for the first time in 1995, and immediately fell in love with the beautiful, old vines of the Andean region, founding Altos Las Hormigas at the age of 26. Antonio is fully dedicated to Altos Las Hormigas, from its humble beginnings to date, and has contributed a personal, authentic touch to the project. Creator of the name and the brand, he is Altos' most ardent promoter.



### **Attilio Pagli | Winemaker**

Attilio is one of Italy's most respected winemakers and one of Altos' most passionate. He studied at the Technical Agrarian Institute of Siena, Italy, at a time when winemaking was still considered a hands-on career. He had the fortune to work under Tuscan winemaking legend Giulio Gambelli, whom he considers his mentor. Attilio first arrived in Mendoza under instruction to create a Sangiovese similar to those he was known for in Italy, but quickly learned that Mendoza had no intention of being Tuscany. Instead, he fell in love with the old vines of Malbec. Although he has two 100 point wines in his personal record, he believes that the personality of terroir is what really inspires his commitment to winemaking.



### **Pedro Parra | Terroir Specialist, Ph.D.**

Pedro is today arguably the most recognized Terroir and soil specialist, one of five people in the world to hold a Terroir PHD, with a vast international field experience to complement his title. Pedro received a Master Degree in Precision Agriculture from Montpellier, France and a Ph.D. in Terroir from the National Agronomy Institute, Paris Grignon. During his time in France, he studied in Burgundy and Bordeaux with the most respected French Terroir experts, such as Michel Claude Girard and Pierre Becheler from Bordeaux. Pedro has devoted his career to studying soil profiles and their influence upon wine. His work has been featured in numerous publications, including Wine Spectator and Decanter - where he ranks among the world's 50 most influential wine personalities – as well as Wine & Spirits Magazine. He plays an indispensable role in Altos Las Hormigas' progress towards terroir-driven, age worthy Malbec.

## **The Terroir Project**

### **Our Method**

The Altos las Hormigas Terroir Project stems from the idea that the place of origin is the starting point, the foundation, the deep and true character of a wine. Terroir has a natural aspect - grounded in soil and climate - and a human aspect - formed by the shared culture of local vintners and by the legacy of those who preceded them. The vine stands in the middle of these two worlds, tended by man, and supported by the environment. Creating a portfolio of wine is like building a stair that will take the wine drinker from the most simple to the most refined pleasures of wine; from a liquid that can be understood by the beginner and the expert alike, to a wine that will speak to the drinker that approaches it with attention and care.

Our site specific wines are made of a single variety, while we use blends to produce wines of pleasure that rejuvenate the long lost tradition of field blends. While a blend can be a great testimony of the tradition of local Terroir, single varietal wines allow a transparent comparison of different sub regions, and highlight the character of each one of them.

**If Terroir is the music score, man is the player**, and taking a score to its full potential rests on the talent and hard work of the player. A vintner shall have a deep understanding of its terroir and what makes it unique, he should be able to unearth the beauty that is hidden in the vineyard and make it shine in the bottle.

Mendoza history has gifted us with **four centuries of viticultural heritage**, developed by many generations of vintners, people that overcame the specific challenges of this amazing land and that were able to devise practices that give balance to the vines and the wines of Mendoza. We strongly believe that Malbec is the best vehicle for this Terroir.



Just until a few years ago, in Mendoza **it was widely believed that the potential of a vineyard site was all in its altitude**: the higher the better. Our method departs from this vision, and identifies each **Terroir Unit** on the base of the interactions of its climate, soil structure and morphology, with vines. Based on the work of our Terroir Specialist, Pedro Parra, and the experience of our winemakers, a clear reading of the Terroir Unit is the differential tool of our approach. All our farming practices, from the moment of planting the vineyard up to the final stage of harvesting and making wines of its grapes, are grounded in this separation of the Terroir Units.

### Taste with your Mouth

As Jackie Rigaux, the famed Burgundy specialist teaches, **Terroir wines are to be judged in the mouth with our tactile sense**. It is a different approach to evaluating wine, which he calls “Geo Sensing” or tasting the land. Tannin quality and persistence cannot be technically reproduced; they are a product of Terroir unicity. International sommelier culture focus most exclusively on smells, and even though it is true that the smell of a wine is one of its key features, for our work the mouth experience is more important. The analysis of consistency, texture, depth, tension and persistence needs to be brought forward and get the attention it deserves. Nobody ever has drunk wine with their nose!!!

### Caliche Limestone Soils



Since 2006, Altos Las Hormigas has been producing the higher end, age worthy wines only on Caliche soil vineyards. Caliche is a type of soil of eolian origin, rich in calcium carbonate, which is found in a small percentage of areas in Mendoza. Our technical team's vast experience and knowledge of Mendoza Malbec has led us to the Valle de Uco, with its mountain-influenced climate and soil profiles, to attain wines of superior Terroir expression and ageing potential. As of late, we have found very promising soils in our Lujan de Cuyo

estate where the combination of deep, silt rich profiles, with very little clay and abundant calcium carbonate has given wines of unexpected personality, a new and exciting discovery from the Altos Las Hormigas Team. When you savour such wines, vinified with a gentle hand, the texture and the aftertaste cannot be mistaken with anything else. It's pure Terroir.

### Holistic Farming

The late Alan York, pioneer of natural farming in California, has been our mentor in this path. Alan used to say that a vineyard needs an approach that takes into account its complete balance, its location, the flora that surrounds it, its root development, etc. We miss his contribution, but we wish to make his legacy live and be passed on. The value of life in the soil is one of our firm beliefs. The foundation of a good wine is a healthy soil with all species and life in it, from micro fauna to mycorrhiza, to create a cycle of fertility, based on self-produced compost, which does not depend on external contributions. This is the cornerstone of our farming methods, with the use of natural preparations and the avoidance of all synthesis products - specially all weed killers - the true enemies of Terroir.





## Irrigation



Manage irrigation is crucial in Mendoza. To achieve the goal of a fine Terroir expression, the precision and the knowledge needs to be just perfect. Our irrigation systems are designed to service separately each Terroir unit; for each of them a different watering regime is designed, according to the natural rains and the season weather, to achieve the desired maturity and to hold back the alcohol levels. While in Mendoza it is not uncommon to find irrigation sectors of 10 and even 20 Ha each, our vineyards are divided in sectors of less than 4 Ha each, and sometimes less than 1 Ha. This pattern, though extremely expensive to build, makes a crucial difference in terms of quality and personality of the wines.

## It's the Roots, Baby!!!

All farming practices should be aimed at the development of a **deep and healthy root system**. Many critics of irrigated viticulture say that irrigated vines do not feed on the soil but work like hydroponic crops, feeding just on water and artificial nutrients, and this produces wines with no Terroir character. These critics are only partially right: if viticulture is managed industrially, irrigated vines only develop superficial roots that don't go deep in the soil, roots fed by artificial nutrients. All life in the soil dies, poisoned by weed killers, and the soil after a few years becomes a lifeless mechanical support of the vines. On the other end, if irrigation is managed by soil unit, aimed at deep root development, and soil is fertilized naturally, developing its flora and fauna (mycorrhizae, earth worms, micro fauna...) the vine develops a healthy and deep root system, becomes balanced, resilient to weather vagaries. This vine will feed on the nutrients made available in the soil by its biological activity and on the minerals of the soil matrix, making the taste of the wine unique and non-replicable: the true path of Terroir.

## Winemaking



How do you pursue the true expression of a vineyard site, or in a larger scale, of a wine region? Our answer is: first **learn what makes it different and then, treasure it**. Natural yeasts, low sulphur, natural acidity, are just a few pre-requisites. We got rid of new oak, using only **large Italian casks (Botti)**, neutral oak with thicker staves and less oxygen intake, which make wine ageing a much slower process, a cocooning of the tannins structure. The revival of these large casks, once dominating in Argentine winemaking but then forgotten in favour of small barriques, is another of the intellectual legacies of the Altos Las Hormigas group of professionals to contemporary Mendoza winemaking. Another step towards minimal intervention was converting to gravity fed winemaking, eliminating pumps. All

these practices are meant to work towards a **balance** capable of bringing forward the subtle variations that Terroir imparts on Malbec.



## A Journey in Wine

Our experience in the world of wine has led us to believe that the ultimate source of inspiration for winemaking sits in the place of origin. Nature is much more creative and diverse than man, and the bag of tricks of a winemaker cannot compete with billions of years of geology and climate and thousands of years of viticultural heritage. **Terroir is not just nature**, it is built by the work of generations of vintners, their negotiations with nature, and their creativity in inventing ways to overcome the natural challenges that farming a vine and making a wine poses in every corner of the planet. **Terroir is ultimately a way of looking at wine and at winemaking**, and therefore pursuing Terroir translates into an endeavour that never ends.

Every vintage we feel that we are moving one step forward, getting closer to a soulful expression of Mendoza and a full accomplishment of its unicity.

The group of professionals that forms Altos las Hormigas has had in over twenty years an enormous impact on Mendoza wine culture: the focus on the Malbec grape, the introduction of the concept of modern Terroir viticulture and winemaking, the revival of the large cask, the rekindling of the Bonarda grape, the introduction of biodiversity viticulture, are all intellectual highlights of our work here that have profoundly influenced the local industry, and we are very proud of them. We do not copyright our ideas, **we believe that wine is also a cultural product and we are proud to see our practices, once opposed by most, becoming part of the widespread winemaking knowledge pool in Mendoza.**

## A Sense of Place

Mendoza is a mountain region; its wines should show where they come from. Modern fruit bombs are but a caricature of Mendoza Terroir, made to please the wine beginner and the casual consumer, and not **making the effort to find a balance that respects origin.**

We want the freshness of the mountains to shine in our wines, and at the same time we want the different fruit characters of the various sites, to show the sunny climate that begot them.

Altos Las Hormigas is situated in **Luján de Cuyo**, one of the truly traditional viticultural areas of Mendoza, facing the Andes to the east and protected westward by a minor geological fold.

Further southwest, our team terroir hunting has uncovered the most impressive areas in the **Uco Valley**. These soils show a high active limestone content in deep stone layers with clay presence and good topsoil. The most notable of these areas are **Gualtallary** and **Paraje Altamira**.

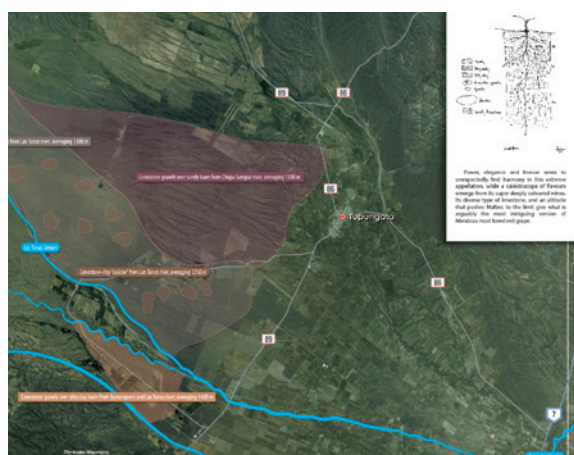




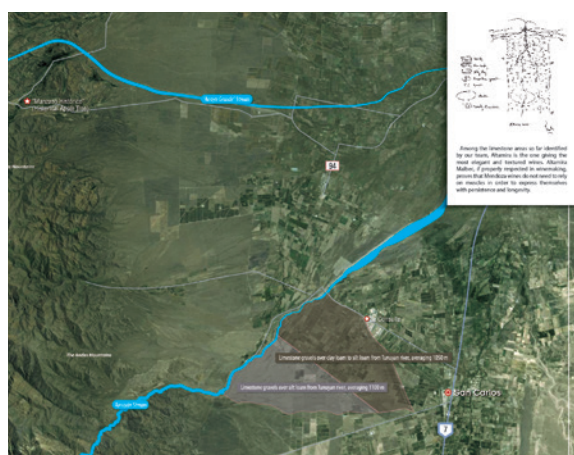


**Finca Altos Las Hormigas (Luján de Cuyo)** is situated about 800 meters (2624 ft.) above sea level. The radical changes that we introduced in viticulture led us to produce wines that break away from the industrial, highly productive tradition of the area. Here we looked for deep, fresh soils, with low clay content. These are silty loams with high calcium carbonate content. Our Terroir driven viticulture, with small irrigation plots, and a natural viticulture aimed at developing a deep and healthy root system allowed us to produce highly drinkable wines, with tension and finesse.

In our property only 60 of the 230 Ha are planted, with a selection of the soil types that shows a character of Lujan de Cuyo very far from the muscular, very ripe examples that most consumers are familiar with.



**Gualtallary** is an extreme location for vines in the Uco Valley, climbing from 1,100 meters to 1,600 meters high. In this very cold climate, protected from frost by its slope, soils are very diverse. Micro-zoning has resulted in discovering small areas of super calcareous gravels resulting in super fresh, floral wines with beautiful acidity and an intriguing nose that blends fine herbal notes with red fruit and meaty hints. Gualtallary can bring a powerful tannic backbone to wines, with a fine grained texture, that brings some tasters to dub this region as the “Barolo” of Malbecs. The “Caliche” soil, a typical calcium carbonate formation present in very dry climates, has a very high concentration in the best areas of Gualtallary.



**Paraje Altamira** is a cool, windy small region at 1,105 meters in the southwest corner of the Uco Valley, just a stretch away from the Andes snow line, sitting on an alluvial deposit of huge boulders. It is today regarded by the local industry as one of the handful of Mendoza’s “Grand Crus”. Paraje Altamira can be further divided in areas, depending on the size of the stones in the soil and the amount of calcium carbonate; areas where the ancient river that formed the soil had more or less strength, which determined the alluvial deposits. Paraje Altamira can give wines of great finesse and persistence, wines with tension and light weight. If Gualtallary is the “Barolo” of Malbec, Paraje Altamira is its “Barbaresco”. After extensive soil research, super calcareous, stony soils with 15% to 17% active limestone were found here by our Terroir specialists, arguably the best area of Paraje Altamira. We acquired here 55 Ha (136 acres) in 2011 and planted them in 2017.



## Jardin Altamira



Our vineyard in Paraje Altamira is a truly unique project, **the next revolution introduced by Altos Las Hormigas to Argentine winemaking and viticulture**. Here the concept of biodiversity is developed to highlight Terroir in its purest form.

Just by looking at an aerial picture of Jardin Altamira, its shapes strike the eye as something completely different from everything around it. The vineyard was organized by Terroir Units in small plots (22 plots for 32 Ha, less than 1.5 Ha average, each with independent irrigation), farmed organic from the start. The plots of vineyard follow the natural lines that separate the different soils units, in order to keep isolated the different types of soils that the property has. Only 60% of the land carries vines; the vineyard is crossed by plots of native flora, the original bushes of Mendoza landscape. The plots best

suited for vines are planted, while everything else is left in its natural condition. As Terroir development is an ongoing negotiation of man and nature, we want to overcome monoculture, keep the species of native flora side by side with vines and invite all wild species to populate the area, as we believe that biodiversity is crucial to a full Terroir expression.

This super calcareous Terroir will produce wines never before seen in Mendoza.

## A Conclusion?

- We thank Mendoza for all the gifts, and most recently we thank Cahors.
- We will keep our quest to make soulful wines from places that we love.
- We cannot really be part of any “Club”, School or Movement, not because we think to be “special” but just because we need to follow the values we believe in.
- There are good wines and bad wines in more areas of the world that we know of. Keep your mind open, and **#StopDrinkingLabels #StartDrinkingWines #BelieveYourBuds**

Cheers!

**Altos Las Hormigas**





## Altos Las Hormigas Wine Portfolio - The Classics



### **Altos Las Hormigas Tinto, Mendoza:**

Malbec co-fermented with Semillon Blanc and blended with Bonarda, the ultimate expression of Mendoza tradition. This is a wine of pleasure with a unique flavour profile of fruit and flowers, with a touch of spice.



### **Altos Las Hormigas Blanco, Valle de Uco, Mendoza:**

Altos Las Hormigas' first white wine is a blend of Semillon and Chenin, two grape varieties that keep their natural acidity in Mendoza's climate. The elaboration process is inspired by old traditions, using stems and fermentation with skins, while aiming to achieve a clean and pure wine.



### **Altos Las Hormigas Malbec Clasico, Mendoza:**

Authenticity, we believe, means to make a wine that identifies who we are, a wine that we drink and enjoy. This Malbec unites fruit and freshness, unhinged by oak or big ripeness, with a touch of complexity and a good articulation in the mouth; this is the true character of Altos Las Hormigas.



### **Altos Las Hormigas Malbec Terroir Organic, Lujan de Cuyo:**

You think you know Lujan de Cuyo? Think twice. This wine has tension and character, drinkability and depth. From Caliche soils with very low clay content, the svelte side of Lujan de Cuyo.



### **Altos Las Hormigas Malbec Terroir, Valle de Uco:**

This mountain region is an amazing Terroir; early harvest and an appropriate soil unit selection are crucial to make it shine. Cherry, violets and white pepper, together with a full mid palate. Enjoy.



### **Altos Las Hormigas Malbec Reserve, Valle de Uco:**

A wine that you will better enjoy if you give it a moment of attention: deep and bright, powerful and delicate, enjoy a high altitude Malbec from a prime selection of Caliche limestone micro Terroirs, aged in Italian Botti for 18 months.



## Altos Las Hormigas Wine portfolio - Vintage & Specialty Wines



### **Altos Las Hormigas Malbec Appellation, Gualtallary, Valle de Uco:**

The true mountains Malbec, with a full mid palate, it represents the most extreme departure from the fruit bombs that some associates with the grape. Super Caliche limestone character. Can power be elegant? Try this wine if the question is of your interest.



### **Altos Las Hormigas Malbec Appellation, Paraje Altamira, Valle de Uco:**

The expression of a great wine Terroir; flowers with depth, tense and delicate, with a chalky texture. Enjoy the most fine of Mendoza Malbecs.



# COLONIA LAS LIEBRES

## A BIT OF HISTORY

Being naturally attracted towards a distinctive grape, with a long local history, since 2003 we started producing an unoaked Bonarda wine under the Colonia Las Liebres label, a sister brand to Altos Las Hormigas. This variety is the second most planted of Argentina, and since generations of growers have chosen it, we can say that it truly belongs to Mendoza Terroir, and it is an essential element of the local wine culture. We have always regarded Bonarda as the “Bistrot” wine of our region - versatile with food and very pleasant - when made highlighting its freshness, with a part of whole clusters.

In 2018 we started producing under this label also a Malbec and in 2019 a Cabernet Franc. Colonia Las Liebres is now becoming our **organic brand**, and the banner of wines with a style that pushes boundaries of established categories, such as our ancestral method sparkling Bonarda.



## THE BONARDA GRAPE

The Bonarda grape varietal in Argentina has experienced a very adventurous history: classified until a few years ago as Bonarda Piemontese, a north Italian grape, its true identity has been recently revealed when a DNA test showed - to the surprise of most professionals - that it was really Corbeau (alias Doux de Noire) from Savoie, France, the same grape which California vintners call Charbono.

Bonarda has adapted extremely well in Argentina and in 2011 the name Bonarda Argentina was officially recognised by the National Institute of Viticulture, vindicating the long history of this grape in the country and its prominent role in Argentine viticultural tradition.

Mostly trellised in high horizontal “pergolas” or “parrales”, as this system is called in Spanish, Bonarda is a late ripening grape, with a delicate skin and a tight cluster. This farming style together with a careful vineyard management bring a natural balance to the plant vigour, resulting in a charming wine with a succulent fruit, supple tannins and a fresh mouthfeel.



# COLONIA LAS LIEBRES

## Colonia Las Liebres Wine Portfolio - The Classics



### Colonia Las Liebres Bonarda:

The pioneer of modern Argentine Bonarda. Unoaked, juicy and spicy, this organic wine strikes a balance between freshness and fruit. With its underground following of aficionados, it is one of the whispered secrets of wine lovers.



### Colonia Las Liebres Malbec Reserve:

100% estate grapes, organic certified, with no oak, this wine shows a subtle character of caliche limestone and a very pleasant drinkability. Can this Malbec be the missing link, in terms of flavours and textures, between a Mourvedre and a Pinot Noir?



### Colonia Las Liebres Cabernet Franc Reserve:

Made with 100% organic grapes and no oak aging, this wine shows a fresh and spicy version of Cabernet Franc. It is a wine that combines the tension and aromatic precision of the variety with the volume granted by Mendoza's sunny climate and altitude vineyards.

## Colonia Las Liebres Wine Portfolio - Vintage & Specialty Wines



### Colonia Las Liebres Bonarda Brut Nature:

Why a sparkling Rosé of Bonarda made with the traditional method and zero dosage? Because Bonarda in Valle de Uco makes a very fine wine - and more so on caliche limestone - and its tension is better appreciated with no dosage. Enjoy!!!!



### Colonia Las Liebres Brusca:

Thanks to Attilio Pagli's experience with Sorbara Lambrusco Ancestrale, we were able to develop this wine that recovers the lost pleasure of Vin Brusco, the young wine drunk at harvest parties. It has a very light red colour and natural bubbles, developed in the bottle. It's the perfect companions for Tapas, or Cicchetti - as aperitif finger food are called in Venice - or a picada Argentina.





## CAHORS, Back to the Origins



In 2013 the Altos Las Hormigas group of professionals started a joint project in Cahors with local vintners. The Lot region, of which Cahors is the capital, is the region of origin of the Malbec grape, which was mostly called Cot here.

Cahors is a region with a long history that has seen a steep decline in the 1900's, both in planted surface and in recognition. Our group of professionals has joint forces with families of local growers to develop a product that aspires to overcome the image of Cahors as a rustic, powerful wine, and adopt modern Terroir techniques to rediscover this old appellation and its potential to make fine wines that do not mimic the international Bordeaux style.

### Famille de Causses

«Causse» in the Lot region is the name for the highland where mother rock limestone soil is found. Cahors limestone is of Kimmeridgian age and has the ability to produce extremely fine wines, under the right circumstances. The name of our Cahors project expresses our respect for the local culture, and the belief that this Terroir has the potential to produce a wine with world class credentials.

### The Region

The appellation has two major types of Terroir: the River terraces, alluvial formations created by the Lot river in the last tens of thousands of years; and the Limestone banks, created in a few hundreds of millions years. These are two very different soils that produce very different wines.

### Terrasse Line

We have two wines in this line, both coming from the best terraces formed by the Lot River. Cahors wines made in this Terroir have a deep character with juicy acidity and a bouquet that varies from forest underbrush to floral and red fruit, depending on the vintage. Tannins are always supple, with a good tension.

# Cahors

## **En Pente Line**

Very few vineyards on slope exist today in the region, and this line has just one wine issued from what is possibly today the best Terroir of the region. Slopes form where the limestone is less hard, and the weathering of the rock makes it fracture and allow more contact between vine roots and soil materials formed from the mother rock. The wine issued from this type of soil has a piercing tension and the most amazing finesse. Most slopes in Cahors are now covered by oak forests, or have lost soil to erosion, making slope Terroirs of Cahors an incredibly rare Terroir. The dry walls that can be found in those abandoned slopes are the silent testimony of ancient vines now disappeared.

## **A note on History**

Cahors wines, once preferred by tsars and kings, have fallen in production and recognition during the 1900's.



As the region has not been included in the main railroad network and waterways shipments have disappeared, Cahors has lost its connection to the export markets.

After the bouts of Oidium and Phylloxera that devastated France in the 1800's and the two world wars, the region suffered another severe blow in 1956, when a fierce frost reduced the planted surface, once counted in 60.000 Ha to a mere 200 Ha. As France was recovering from war, most vintners had to emigrate or to convert their farms to yearly crops, in order to sustain themselves... it was the last straw for the ravaged region. Today Cahors is coming back and its planted surface is close to 4.000 Ha, with a generation of young talented vigneronns that are making inroads in the wine lists around the world.





## Business

Altos Las Hormigas produces 1.000.000 bottles a year, exported towards more than 50 countries.

We are very proud to be promoted by some of the most prestigious distributors in the wine world, such as **Michael Skurnik** in New York, **Liberty Wines** in London, **Mottox** in Japan, **World Wine La Pastina** in San Paulo, **Vins du Monde** in France, **Angelo Gaja** in Italy, **Arvid Nordquist** in Sweden, **Felipe Motta** in Panama, etc.



We are present in many of the most exclusive restaurants and hotels around the world:

**GERMANY** Am Kamin - Sansibar

**ARGENTINA** Anchoíta - Aramburu - Basa - Cabaña Las Lilas - Chila - Cucina Paradiso - Dambleé - Don Julio Elena - Mishiguene - Oviedo - Puerto Cristal

**AUSTRIA** Doellerer

**BRAZIL** D.O.M.

**COLOMBIA** Carmen - Don Juan - Harry Sasson

**UNITED STATES** A Kitchen - Bond Street - Café Gratitude Beverly Hills - Charlie Palmer Steakhouse Corridor - Four Seasons NYC Downtown - Herb and Wood - La Mar Cebicheria Peruana - Madeo - North Fork Table and Inn - Savida - Strip House - Union Square Cafe

**FRANCE** Lavinia

**HONG KONG** Buenos Aires Polo Club - Ichu - Morton's Steakhouse - Tango Argentinean Steakhouse - The American Club - The Murray Hotel - 22 Ships

**ENGLAND** Aquavit (Michelin star) - Clove Club (Michelin star) - Coya Angel - Elystan Street (Michelin star) - Four Seasons Park Lane - Gaucho O blix - Zuma

**MEXICO** Au Pied de Cochon - Brasserie Estoril Gloutonnerie - Lipp La Brasserie - Xanat

**PANAMA** Maito

**PERU** Central - Maido

**SINGAPORE** PS Café Group Singapore



## Press, Scores & Awards

We are regularly presented and recognized by the international, most relevant, wine and gourmet press.



### The New York Times

- Eric Asimov: «To Move Beyond Malbec, Look Below the Surface» (2017). *“The malbecs of Altos Las Hormigas, from a range of different vineyards, have become progressively less oaky, more refined and mineral flavored”.*



-Eric Asimov: «12 wines under \$12» (2019). *“Violet-scented Argentine malbec is a good thing. Violet-scented Argentine malbec that is medium-bodied, unmarred by clumsy oak treatments or other cellar techniques, is a great thing. This bottle, from an excellent producer, is a superb value.”*



-Eric Asimov: «Argentine Malbecs with an eye toward Terroir» (2019). Asimov recommends our 2016 Malbec Appellation Gualtallary and writes: *“... the best producers are seeking terrain that is rocky and challenging, often at higher elevations.”*



### Wine Spectator

- Four-time recognition in Top 100 Wines of the World (Malbec Reserve '11, Malbec Reserve '05, Malbec Reserve '02, Malbec Reserve '01)
- Recognized three times as a 'Smart Buy' (Malbec Terroir '11, Malbec Terroir '10, Malbec Reserve '04)



### Decanter

- DWWA 2018: 92 pts - Silver Medal (Malbec Clásico 2017)
- Altos Las Hormigas Malbec Appellation Paraje Altamira received 95 points in Alistair Cooper's article «Ten wines pushing the boundaries» - Oct. 2017
- Altos Las Hormigas featured in 2016 in Andrew Jefford's article «For the love of limestone».
- Alberto Antonini & Attilio Pagli in the Top 10 Winemakers of the World: July 2015
- Pedro Parra, PhD listed in 2013 «Top 50 Top Influencers In Wine»
- DWWA 2015: Gold Medal (Appellation Gualtallary 2013)
- DWWA 2014: Two Gold Medals (Appellation Vista Flores 2012 & Appellation Paraje Altamira 2012)
- DWWA 2014: Two Gold Medals (Appellation Vista Flores '12 & Appellation Paraje Altamira '12)

Some of the Argentine media talking about Altos Las Hormigas are: Diario Clarín, IEco, Diario La Nación, Estrategias y Mercados, Planeta Joy, Vinos&Bodegas, Diario Los Andes, Revista Fortuna, El Cronista.



#### ROBERT PARKER THE WINE ADVOCATE

- **97 pts:** Malbec Appellation Gualtallary 2018
- **96 pts:** Malbec Appellation Paraje Altamira 2018
- **94+ pts:** Malbec Reserve 2018
- **92 pts:** Malbec Terroir Valle de Uco 2018
- **91 pts:** Malbec Clasico 2018
- **90+ pts:** Bonarda Clásica 2020

*"Readers may be sure I will be buying these wines for my own cellar"... "A tour de force Malbec."*



#### JAMES SUCKLING

- **94 pts:** Malbec Appellation Gualtallary 2018
- **93 pts:** Malbec Appellation Paraje Altamira 2018
- **93 pts:** Malbec Reserve 2017
- **92 pts:** Colonia Las Liebres Bonarda 2020
- **92 pts:** Malbec Clásico 2018
- **92 pts:** Tinto 2019
- **91 pts:** Cabernet Franc Reserve 2019

*"A great food wine."*



#### TIM ATKIN MW

- **98 pts:** Malbec Appellation Paraje Altamira 2019
- **96 pts:** Malbec Appellation Gualtallary 2018
- **94 pts:** Malbec Reserve 2019
- **93 pts:** Malbec Terroir Valle de Uco 2019
- **91 pts:** Malbec Clásico 2020
- **91 pts:** Bonarda Clásica 2020
- **91 pts:** Blanco 2020

*"...built to last and is ageing gracefully."*



#### JANCIS ROBINSON MW

- **17 pts:** Malbec Appellation Gualtallary 2017
  - **17,5 pts:** Malbec Appellation Paraje Altamira 2015
  - **17 pts:** Malbec Reserve 2015
  - **17 pts:** Malbec Terroir Valle de Uco 2016
  - **16,5 pts:** Malbec Terroir Luján de Cuyo 2016
- Speaking of Altos Las Hormigas Malbecs 2012 vintage in her article, 'Winemakers Do A U-Turn' - October 4, 2014: *"Any wines from this vintage and this producer are exciting and already available..."*





## Contact Us

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## Social



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